

Headline **AIDS: 17 pct drop in new infections**
Date **02 Dec 2009**
MediaTitle **Borneo Post**
Section **Home**
Journalist **N/A**
Frequency **Daily (EM)**
Circ / Read **57,529 / 166,173**

Language **English**
Page No **15**
Article Size **115 cm²**
Color **Black/white**
ADValue **662**
PRValue **1,986**



AIDS: 17 pct drop in new infections

KUALA LUMPUR: There is evidence that AIDS prevention programmes are working with a 17 per cent decline in new infections globally over the past eight years.

This was according to a report from the World Health Organisation (WHO) and UNAIDS.

Standard Chartered Bank revealed this in a press statement yesterday when marking World AIDS Day by urging communities to focus on education and testing to prevent further spread of the killer virus.

Since 2001, new infections had declined 15 per cent in sub-Saharan Africa, 25 per cent in East Asia and 10 per cent in South and Southeast Asia but prevalence had risen in Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

While the latest findings were encouraging, the rate of new infections remains high and had increased since 2007, from 6,800 to 7,400 per day.

Education remains the key to tackling the spread of the virus by providing people with the facts to make safe lifestyle choices in the absence of a cure

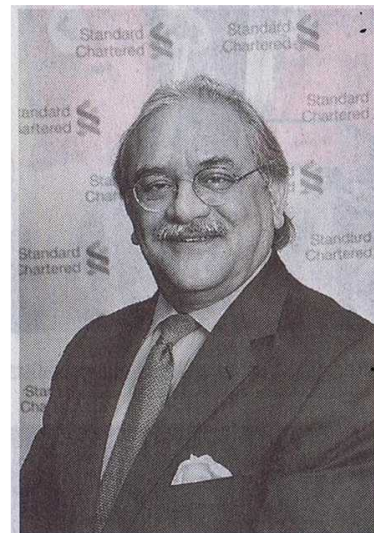
or vaccine.

Around 33.4 million people are living with HIV compared to 33.2 million in 2007. Less people are dying from AIDS related illnesses (5,500 daily compared to 5,700 in 2007) but for every two persons treated, five become infected.

Standard Chartered Malaysia CEO Osman Morad said: "In Malaysia, we have a team of staff volunteers who educate our stakeholders about HIV and reducing its stigma. We welcome corporations and other organisations to work with us to launch this education programme for their staff."

The bank made a Clinton Global Initiative commitment to educate a million people on HIV and AIDS by March 2010. This volunteer programme called 'Living with HIV' began as an internal workplace HIV education campaign before being rolled out to local communities.

It aims to educate people about HIV and AIDS using resources, models and tools including an online e-learning module and website www.vir.us. The tools are



Osman Morad

available in 10 languages.

The interactive website was developed to reach 15-24 year-olds, who account for 40 per cent of all new infections.

According to a survey, 80 per cent of young people use the internet to research sexual health issues.

'Living with HIV' also uses a volunteer network of 'HIV Champions' who educate their peers about HIV.