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72pc of HIV/AIDS victims Muslims

KUALA TERENGGANU: More than 70 per cent of the 87,710 HIV/AIDS sufferers in the country are Muslims, Malaysian AIDS Council vice-president Datuk Zaman Khan said Wednesday.

Therefore, he said, the celebration for this year's World AIDS Day would emphasise efforts to enhance the participation of and awareness on AIDS among Muslims.

He said what was more worrying a report by the United Nations General Assembly Special Session (UNGASS) on AIDS which stated that nine Malaysians were infected with the disease everyday.

Also of concern was the spread of the disease among women, from 9.5 per cent in 2000 to 20 per cent last year, he said when speaking at a function to commemorate World AIDS Day here last night.

He said that in 2000 the main cause of women being infected with HIV/AIDS was drug addiction, but lately, it had been attributed to heterosexual sex (30 per cent).

This happened because of lack of concern and cooperation from the society to protect women from the disease, he added.

On HIV/AIDS sufferers in Terengganu, he said, a total of 315 new cases were reported last year.

Kelantan recorded the highest number of HIV/AIDS cases at 596, followed by Pahang (431) and Selangor (378), he added. - Bernama