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Aim to reduce new HIV cases may be achieved earlier: Liow

KUALA LUMPUR: The Government's aim of reducing new HIV cases to only 11 for every 100,000 residents in 2015 may be achieved earlier, Health Minister Datuk Seri Liow Tiong Lai said Friday.

In a special message in conjunction with the World AIDS Day today (Saturday), he said through preventive measures that had been carried out, the number of new HIV cases that were detected had dropped to 6,756 since 2003.

He said last year, only 3,749 new HIV cases were detected with a ratio of 12.2 for every 100,000 residents.

"For the first nine months of this year, a total of 2,544 cases of new HIV infection were reported.

"If there is not much



Liow

change in the number of monthly cases, the number of HIV cases for this year is estimated at 3,392 or a ratio of 11.8 cases for every 100,000 residents.

"Therefore, there is a higher chance of us achieving the 2015 target earlier," he added.

For this year's celebra-

tion, Malaysia had chosen the slogan "Heading to a Zero AIDS Related Death".

Liow said the Government had expanded screening activities for various categories for early detection of HIV and providing early treatment to those concerned to achieve zero death related to AIDS.

He said among activities that had given huge impact was on efforts to address vertical transmission.

"This programme covers HIV screening for pregnant mothers, providing anti-retroviral (ARV) treatment to the infected mothers, as well as provide prophylactic treatment with ARV to their newborn.

"The treatment is provided free," he added. Bernama