

Headline	Disease under control		
MediaTitle	The Star (Metro South and East)		
Date	01 May 2012	Color	Full Color
Section	News	Circulation	293,375
Page No	1,3	Readership	1,026,812
Language	English	ArticleSize	403 cm <sup>2</sup>
Journalist	SIMON KHOO	AdValue	RM 5,634
Frequency	Daily	PR Value	RM 16,902



# Disease under control

Latest statistics show the number of patients infected with HIV and AIDS have reduced by more than half, says Health Minister Datuk Seri Liow Tiong Lai. >3

## Stepping up efforts

### Govt to carry out more programmes to educate public on HIV and AIDS

**SIMON KHOO**

**BENTONG:** The efforts by the Government to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS among the people have produced significant results.

Health Minister Datuk Seri Liow Tiong Lai said latest statistics showed the number of patients infected with the disease had been reduced by more than half.

Liow said last year, the ratio stood at 12.2 per 100,000 population, compared to 28.4:100,000 in 2002.

"This shows that various public awareness and educational programmes which also include for the orang asli community have started to produce positive results.

"Our target is to reduce the number of new cases to 11 per 100,000 population by 2015," he said while opening a workshop organised by Women's Institute of Management (WIM) for orang asli women against the disease and domestic violence near here recently.

Also present were WIM chairman Tan Sri Napsiah Omar and chief executive officer Datuk Dr Nellie Tan Wong.

Liow, who is also the Bentong MP, said more efforts would be carried out to educate target groups comprising those who were involved in high-risk activities such as drug abuse and sex.

He said orang asli too was being targeted as the disease had

also infected the community, in addition to an increase in cases involving women particularly housewives.

"Up to March this year, a total of 40 orang asli have been infected with the disease, of which 65% or 26 of them were women.

"Nine of them had since died while the remaining are still on medication," he said.

Liow said the ratio of infection between men and women is 4:1 in 2011, compared to 99:1 in 1990.

He said latest data available also revealed that new infection through sexual activities recorded a higher rate with five cases per one case through needle injection.

In Pahang, Liow said accumulated cases of HIV cases were 9,768 patients with 1,404 deaths up to last year while in Bentong, there were 454 cases with 96 deaths between 1998 and 2011.

He said the first case of HIV involving orang asli was detected in 1994 in Rompin, adding that Bentong had two cases involving the community so far.

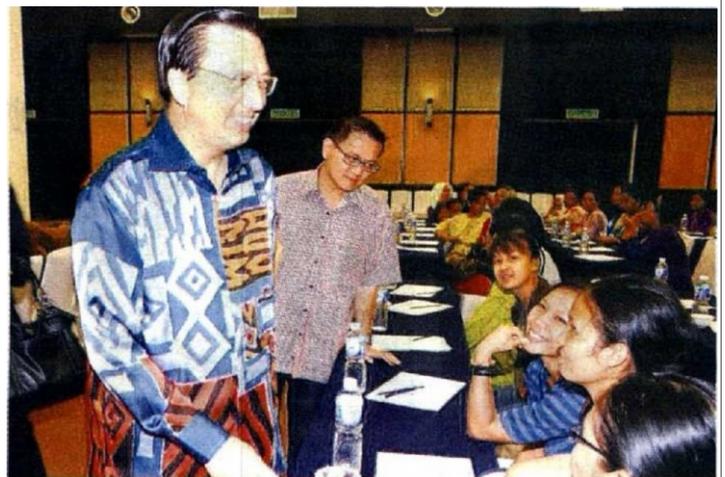
Later, when met by *StarMetro*, Liow said the level of awareness among the public on the disease had increased. There is also less discrimination now against such patients as the people knew it was not transmittable via physical contact.

"Our concern is the transmis-

sion of the disease through sexual activities and more must be done to educate the public especially housewives and those active in high-risk activities.

"Statistics showed the rate of infection by drug users have recorded a drop due to the various efforts carried out by the Government and non-governmental organisations," he said.

Liow said the Government spent about RM1.7bil yearly in medications to treat the patients and the percentage was going up between 10% and 15% every year due to the rising cost of drugs.



**Meeting the community:** Liow meeting the participants after opening the workshop for orang asli women against HIV/AIDS and domestic violence near Bentong.