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## Alert on for H1N1 second wave

**PENANG:** The huge jump in the number of Influenza A(H1N1) cases reported in the northern hemisphere lately is a reminder for all countries to be on the alert for a possible second wave of the killer flu, said Health Minister Datuk Seri Liow Tiong Lai.

"Although the situation in Southeast Asia is still stable, we cannot take things lightly," he said yesterday after opening a conference on HIV/AIDS in conjunction with World AIDS Day.

He said the public must continue to be cautious as H1N1 was still active in Malaysia with about 589 cases reported from Nov 22 to 28.

He said of the number, 372 patients remained hospitalised and the rest had been discharged. "Of the 372 in hospital, 10 tested positive for H1N1 and were placed in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU)."

However, Liow said only four of them, who were deemed to be in the high risk group, remained at ICU and the rest were moved to isolation wards.

"We are still in a stable situation as there have been no cluster cases reported and no new deaths have been recorded since early September."

He said the H1N1 death toll in the country remained at 77 from the 12,210 cases reported. As to developments on the H1N1 vaccine, some 6,617 frontliners had been vaccinated.

In **Kuala Lumpur**, Health director-general Tan Sri Dr Mohd Ismail Merican advised Malaysians planning to travel to destinations in the northern hemisphere during the year-end holidays to take precautions in view of a surge in the number of H1N1 cases.

He said there had been almost a doubling in the number of H1N1 cases last week in northern United States, western Canada, Europe, eastern Mediterranean region and Mongolia compared to the previous week. The combined number of cases in these areas last week totalled 75,000.

On dengue, he said overall last week showed a downward trend with no deaths reported. A total of 764 cases were reported last week compared to 819 cases the week before which involved three deaths. – Bernama

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