

# 5,000 new HIV cases recorded each year

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KUALA LUMPUR: An estimated 5,000 new HIV cases are recorded each year, with about 13 cases being reported daily, Malaysian AIDS Council president Datin Paduka Marina Mahathir said.

"Up to last year, the total number of cases reported were 45,000 and in 2000, the figure was about 40,000 cases," she said, adding that 40 million people were currently living with HIV/AIDs worldwide.

Marina said this trend showed that more people were being infected, as there were people still ignorant about the disease and unaware of the ways to prevent it.

She also said in South-East Asia alone, 1.7 million people were now living with HIV/AIDs and the number was increasing swiftly through high-risk behaviour, like using

intravenous drugs and sharing needles.

She said the council and other agencies were working hard to increase public awareness on the issues of HIV/AIDs through educational campaigns to eliminate the stigma and discrimination attached to the disease.

Marina was speaking to reporters after officially launching the National Office for Human Development's Charity Art Exhibition at the organisation's community centre here.

Its director, Anthony Rogers, said they hoped to raise about RM100,000 from the nine-day exhibition organised to raise funds for various programmes run by the office and the Catholic Welfare Services.