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34 new Taiwanese AIDS victims identified

July 23, 2014 | News | By BioSpectrum Bureau

Singapore: A rapid screening test for HIV conducted by the Taiwan center for Disease Control (CDC) and Taiwan Lourdes Association indicated that 34 people had tested positive for the virus.

CDC conducted the saliva screening test for people who were unable or unwilling to go to hospitals for testing.

CDC deputy director general Mr Chuang Jen-hsiang said that out of the 1,577 kits distributed, they got results from1,533. Of these, 34 had tested positive and 29 of them were transferred to hospitals.

Mr Jen-hsiang said that the saliva test was very simple, with an accuracy rate of 90 percent. He added that a scratch board is used to lightly scratch the gum to obtain oral mucosa, then the test results are available in around 20-30 minutes, similar to a home pregnancy test.

He further said that the saliva detection method had its disadvantages too, as it could detect HIV antibodies only if they were circulating in the blood three months prior to testing.