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Africa tops in Aids cases — Mwanzia

By JACINTA SEKOH

Sub-Sahara Africa accounts for

10 million of the 15 million HIV

infections worldwide, the Director of Medical Services Dr James

Mwanzia, said yesterday.

Dr Mwanzia predicted that by

the year 2011), nearly half of the

deaths in Africa would be caused

by HIV related infections.

He was speaking at Safari Park

Hotel, Nairobi, when he closed a

two-week inter-country work

shop on the management of Aids

control programmes.

“The strengthening of national

capacities in the planning and

management of Aids control programmes has become very crucial

in tackling the pandemic in

Africa,” he said.

The director challenged the

participants to take into account

the local situation when applying

specific prevention and control.

The workshop attended by 40

participants from 15 African

countries, was sponsored by the

World Health Organisation.

Dr Mwanzia asked the participants to facilitate the involvement of all sectors in African

countries to fight Aids effectively.

He said there was an urgent

need to promote safe sexual

behaviour because HIV was

mainly transmitted through sex

in Africa.

“The emerging Aids scenario

in Africa is distressing and it

complicates the already burdened

health infrastructure in many

African countries which have numerous public health problems to

contend with”, he said.

He said the health sector in

many African countries faced

“the exceptional challenge of justifying increased resource allocation even in situations where

economies have registered a negative growth.”

He said the decision by some

donors to implement budgetary

cuts on health expenditure would adversely affect Africa’s health

programmes and accelerate the

spread of Aids.

Dr Mwanzia called for

strengthening of National Aids

Control Programmes to facilitate

the tight against the scourge.