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HIV/AIDS, Sexually Transmitted Diseases,  
and Tuberculosis Prevention News Update



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## International News

Spread of AIDS in Asia's Militaries a Threat to Security  
*Associated Press*  
05.16.03; Daniel Lovering

HIV is increasing among Asian military personnel, and could threaten regional security if infections rise to levels seen in Africa, a Honolulu-based U.S. consultant said Friday. Asian soldiers spreading the disease while serving abroad as international peacekeepers also put wider security at risk, said Gerard Bradford, director of the Center of Excellence in Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance, headquartered at Tripler Army Medical Center.

"Aside from the pandemic and the health problems and all the tragedy and loss of life that HIV/AIDS has created ... it presents a real threat to the stability of the region," Bradford said.

The 13th Asia-Pacific Military Medicine Conference in Bangkok May 11-16 brought together hundreds of delegates from about two dozen countries to discuss medical issues facing armed forces in countries across the region.

The Thai Royal Army has been particularly successful in combating the spread of HIV/AIDS in its ranks through prevention efforts, he said, but "it's clear there are other parts of Asia that are significantly affected." "Other countries are seeing it rise dramatically. It's intravenous drug use as well as sexual activity," he said. Bradford declined to say which countries or peacekeeping forces were most affected by the fatal illness. But he said Cambodia, India and Vietnam are "working the problem."

Bradford said his organization, which works with several international aid agencies, attended the conference to start a regional discussion to determine the extent of the problem and urge aggressive action to stop it. "I think all the trends are for increased incidence, and the idea is to try to mitigate that increase as quickly and aggressively as we can," Bradford added.

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