Stricter Punishments for Illegal Blood Suppliers in China

September 25, 2008

In an attempt to crack down on illegal blood-buying rings, Chinese authorities passed on September 23 an amendment that clarifies the range of punishments for those who collect and supply illegal blood, The Associated Press reports.

A statement released by the Supreme People's Court and the Supreme People's Procuratorate declared that those who supply blood that infects at least five people with hepatitis B or C, AIDS or syphilis—or leads to severe anemia or organ malfunction—can face 10 years to life in prison.

Untested blood products have infected thousands of Chinese with HIV/AIDS, mostly during the mid-1990s and within the country's rural areas, particularly in the Henan province. On September 18, Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS director Peter Piot called on the Chinese government to reimburse those who have contracted the virus through these products and urged said that they should be given access to the best antiretroviral treatments available.

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