

A spokesperson for the main Dutch gay rights group, COC, agreed.

"The feeling of insecurity in Amsterdam is rising," Rene Soeren told *The Times of London*.

"Gays and lesbians are less willing to walk hand in hand because they might be beaten up."

"The group that causes the problem is more dominant in the center of town than 20 years ago—there is a struggle for public space," Soeren said. "The gay middle class is leaving Amsterdam and living in smaller towns."



Swiss Justice Minister Christoph Blocher says registered partnerships are not marriages.

Region and the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, according to *China Daily*.

HONG KONG GAYS MARCH

About 350 people from 16 gay and gay-friendly groups paraded May 16 through Hong Kong to mark International Day Against Homophobia.

Some marchers wore masks to symbolize the fear that leads many gay, lesbian and bisexual people to keep their sexuality a secret. Activist groups called for passage of a proposed law to ban anti-gay discrimination.

The Equal Opportunities Commission has received more than 10,000 letters opposing the proposal and only one supporting it, according to *The South China Morning Post*.

MAYOR VOWS TO BAN WARSAW PRIDE PARADE

Warsaw Mayor Lech Kaczynski says he'll prevent the Polish capital's June 11 Gay Pride parade from taking place because he is "against propagating gay orientation."

He also objects to the date of the event, on which the city plans to unveil a monument to anti-Nazi hero Gen. Stefan Rowecki. "Organizing a gay parade on that day is a joke," Kaczynski told the Polish Press Agency.

Parade organizers plan to go over the mayor's head and get support from regional officials.

Kaczynski is expected to run for the Polish presidency in October's election.



Washington Blade editor Chris Crain's beating was a warning to gay tourists in Amsterdam.

CHINA BLOCKS GAY WEB SITE

China's Ministry of Public Security has been blocking GayChinese.net since April 11, says site manager Damien Lu.

The site, which is run from Los Angeles, was attracting an average of 58,000 visitors a day, mostly from mainland China, Lu said. It does not contain political or sexually explicit content, and several similar sites based in China remain accessible.

"We have no content that violates the Chinese government's rules," Lu told the French Press Agency wire service.

Public security officials were not available for comment.

MIDEAST/AFRICA

WORLDPRIDE POSTPONED

After an allegedly "premature" report in *The Jerusalem Post* and a subsequent denial from organizers, Jerusalem WorldPride 2005 is, in fact, being postponed—until 2006.

The events, planned for Aug. 18 through 28, are being rescheduled because of concerns that police could not simultaneously protect the Pride celebrations and the planned Aug. 16 evacuation of Jews from Gaza.

"Tolerance, pluralism and equality are WorldPride's guiding principles," said organizer Noa Sattath, chairwoman of the Jerusalem Open House gay center. "Holding WorldPride during



Roddy Shaw Kwokwah is organizing the gay march in Hong Kong.

the Gaza pullout would do injustice to those values. We have taken this decision out of consideration to the most difficult political climate expected in Israel this August. As a community we are deeply engaged in the complex reality surrounding us."

Local Muslim, Jewish and Christian leaders have strongly denounced WorldPride and called on authorities to ban it.

The celebration—which was last held five years ago in Rome—is licensed by InterPride, the International Association of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Pride Coordinators. **JM**



Warsaw Mayor Lech Kaczynski objects to Polish Pride.

ASIA/PACIFIC

CHINESE PROVINCE OFFERS GAYS FREE HIV TESTS

China's Guangdong province is offering gay men free, confidential HIV tests from May 10 to June 10, *China Daily* reported May 18. Officials plan to repeat the program annually.

Gays can mail a blood sample to the AIDS Prevention and Treatment Institute of the Guangdong Provincial Center for Disease Control and receive the test result by mail or Internet. They also can get tested in person. Free testing also is being offered for hepatitis, syphilis and other sexually transmitted diseases.

Guangdong province has the fourth-highest number of HIV-positive residents in China. Yunnan province has the highest number, followed by the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous

Region and the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, according to *China Daily*.
Compiled by REX WOCKNER, who has reported for the gay press since 1985. He has a bachelor's degree in journalism from Drake University and started his career as a radio reporter.

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