

18 OCT 1996
HIVs-Marina
NON-ADDICT HIV CARRIERS ON THE RISE

KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 18 (Bernama) -- A growing number of Malaysians who are not drugs addicts are believed to be infected with the human-immuno-deficiency virus (HIV) that causes AIDS, Malaysian Aids Foundation chairman Marina Mahathir said today.

She said the stigma that confined AIDS patients to drug addicts who share the same needle had now spread to the general population.

An increasing number of women who were not sex workers or drug addicts were found to have AIDS, she said after a news conference on the Red Ribbon Media Awards to be held tomorrow.

She said although the official data showed that only a small percentage of HIV carriers were not on drugs, in the AIDS section non-addicts represented about 25 per cent of AIDS patients.

Marina said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad would be presenting the Red Ribbon Media Awards to journalists, advertisers and members of the performing arts community who have contributed towards educating the public about HIV and AIDS.

Six Red Ribbon Media Awards will be presented to the winners in print journalism in Bahasa Malaysia, English and Chinese.

The prime minister wife, Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamed Ali will also present a special-mention "Dr Siti Hasmah Award" to an individual or organisation for outstanding effort.

More than 500 guests are expected to attend the fund-raising gala, organised biennially by the Malaysia AIDS Foundation.

Marina said the foundation hoped to raise more than RM30,000 from the auction of several items including two paintings by well-known local artists Latif Muhyiddin and Sharifah Fatimah Syed Zubir. -- BERNAMA

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