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Marina-AIDS

SOCIETY STILL SHUN AIDS VICTIMS

KUALA LUMPUR, April 23 (Bernama) -- Society's discrimination against AIDS victims and HIV-carriers is forcing sufferers in the country to live in isolation, said Malaysian Aids Council president Datin Paduka Marina Mahathir.

Even medical practitioners had allegedly refused to treat them, she said.

The council had received reports on such negative attitude and on one occasion it itself had to save an AIDS victim and family from the community, she said.

"Discrimination and derision by villagers had forced the Malaysian AIDS Council to relocate the victim and two children from the area," she told a news conference here on the 1997 World AIDS Memorial Week organised by the council.

She said the council would report an allegation to the Ministry of Health that an AIDS patient, who recently died in a hospital, was not given any treatment.

The AIDS Memorial Week, an annual event, starts May 1 and this year's theme is "Value Every Life, Honour Every Death".

It would be launched at the Central Market here.

Among the activities open to the public are, a three-day exhibition of AIDS posters by students of Lim Kok Wing Creative Technology Institute, dissemination of information on AIDS by non-governmental organisations and an AIDS awareness quiz.

On May 2 and 3, the British Council here will screen AIDS-related documentary and feature films for free public viewing.

There will be an "Art AIDS" exhibition at Galeri Wan in Bangsar Baru, here, displaying art therapy works by people living with HIV/AIDS.

The climax of the event will be the World Aids Memorial Night 1997 at Dataran Merdeka on May 4, to be opened by Culture, Arts and Tourism Minister Datuk Sabaruddin Chik.

State-level celebrations in Perak, Sarawak and Pulau Pinang managed by organisations under the council's patronage will be on the same week.

-- BERNAMA

RAZ ARA RN