

22/07/2002

Help to set up AIDS centres in rural areas

TELUK INTAN, Sun. - The Malaysian AIDS Council will provide financial help and advice for community centres to be set up in rural areas to disseminate information on AIDS and HIV.

Malaysian AIDS Council president Datuk Paduka Marina Mahathir said here last night the centres were needed to create awareness of the disease, especially among the young.

"The number of cases is increasing and this is worrying," she said at the dinner organised by Pertubuhan Komuniti Intan (Intan Drop-In Society) to raise funds for a resource centre on AIDS/HIV for the Hilir Perak public.

"Up to December last year, 44,000 people were infected with AIDS and most of them are youths, our future generation."

She said the figures were only that of reported cases and that there could be more cases as many people still refuse to come forward because they believe the disease was drug-related or related to immoral activities.

"If you look at the number of AIDS cases in hospitals, you will be surprised how many of them are not sex or drugs related.

"This is what happens when there is lack of knowledge and information."

Pertubuhan Komuniti Intan chairman Tengku Suroya Tengku Shaharome said the centre would help creating awareness of the disease and also help HIV/AIDS patients and their families cope with the disease apart.