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More companies educating staff about AIDS

KUALA LUMPUR, Thurs. - Many companies are taking the initiative to organise AIDS awareness programmes for their staff as they know productivity will be affected if workers contracted the disease.

Malaysian AIDS Council and Malaysian AIDS Foundation chairman Datuk Paduka Marina Mahathir said corporations realised there was a pressing need to educate their workers to minimise the risk of contracting the disease.

"Those between the ages of 20 and 29 are the most vulnerable and they form the bulk of most companies' workers. It is, therefore, heartening to note that companies are now making efforts to educate them on AIDS and its related issues."

AIDS would not only affect a company's productivity but eventually a nation's economic output if left unchecked, Marina said after receiving a RM150,000 contribution from Sapura Group. The cheque was presented by Sapura Telecommunications chief operating officer Rodzlan Akib Abu Bakar at his office today.

The money is for the Red Ribbon Futsal Challenge 2003 organised by the foundation under its "In The Name Of Love" AIDS awareness campaign, to be held on Oct 4 and 5.

Sponsored by Sapura Holdings and co-organised by venue sponsor Sports Unlimited, the five-a-team indoor football competition aims to raise RM200,000 for HIV/AIDS programmes.

"It is the first time Sapura is working together with the foundation and we are happy to be part of their battle against the spread of HIV/AIDS," said Rodzlan.

The matches will be divided into three categories - Premier (aged 25 years and above), Star (17 to 24), and Junior (16 and below).

Premier champions will receive a trophy, medals and RM5,000 for both the men's and women's categories. The Star and Junior category champions will also get trophies and medals, besides RM3,000 and RM2,000 respectively.

To participate in the futsal challenge, call 03-40451033 before Sept 25.