

NEWS ITEM ON WORLD AIDS DAY

1ST DECEMBER 2009

WORLD AIDS DAY, observed December 1 each year, is dedicated to raising awareness of the AIDS pandemic caused by the spread of HIV infection. World AIDS Day has become a time to reflect on the obstacles we face in the fight against HIV/AIDS.

Ahead of this year's World AIDS Day, **Andaman & Nicobar AIDS Control Society (ANACS)** have come together with the theme of '**Universal Access and Human Rights**' and campaign slogan "Stop AIDS- Keep the Promise."

The theme has been chosen to address the critical need to protect human rights and attain access for all to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support.

In this connection, Andaman & Nicobar AIDS control society (ANACS) conducted a rally by school students and Sports Authority of India trainee which were commenced from Netaji Stadium to G. B. Pant Hospital (old OPD) at 8:00am. The students and trainees with placards and banners in their hands with slogan creating awareness on HIV/AIDS-STDs passing through rally route.

Our Chief Guest **Shri. VIVEK RAE, IAS** Chief Secretary, Andaman & Nicobar Administration flagged off the rally. More than Four Hundred (400) Students and SAI trainee were participated with there teachers, faculties and officers. The *Principal Secretary (Health)*, **Ms ARCHANA ARORA, IAS** and the *Project Director ANACS*, **Shri. S N JHA, IAS** was also present with all staff members of ANACS during the Flag off ceremony. Similarly, Two (2) omni van also flagged off by our Chief Guest at 2 different route.

A function was organized at GB Pant Auditorium. **Ms ARCHANA ARORA, IAS, Principal Secretary (Health), A & N Administration** was the Chief Guest. The Guest of Honour **Dr. N SADASIVAN, Director of Health Service** and our **Hon'ble Project Director Shri S. N. JHA, IAS** were also present.

The welcome address was given by **Shri. S. N. JHA, IAS**, addressing the occasion he said "achieving universal access to prevention, treatment, care and support is human rights imperative. It is essential that the global response to the AIDS epidemic is grounded in human rights and that discrimination and punitive laws against those most affected by HIV are removed."

Ms. ARCHANA ARORA, IAS, Principal Secretary (Health), A & N Administration said on the occasion "the Human Rights theme is about us, about communities, about people like you and me and our governments making a commitment to honour and respect the dignity of the vulnerable and to those already living with HIV".

The chief guest also underline the need for formulating programme for creating awareness amongst the people about HIV/AIDS, covering the whole areas in the Islands through out the year. Programmes such as Seminar, Workshops etc.. to be organize more to both young and older people to make them participate in spreading the message of HIV/AIDS preventing further. There should be no complacency in the number of cases detected being little less as these numbers indicate the magnitude of the problem and informed that the Islands have become tourist's hubs both from domestic and international besides poachers and our vulnerable to the diseases. The disease brings adverse socio-economic consequences and everyone must be made aware of its impacts. The chief guest also emphasis "The spread of the disease is a threat to every one and therefore we all must really seriously think about its prevention."

Chief Guest Ms. ARCHANA ARORA, IAS, distributed prizes to the winners of the Inter-College and Inter-school competition which was held as part of the observance of World AIDS Day.

The guest of honour **Dr. N SADASIVAN, Director of Health Service** said on the occasion "when the first HIV/AIDS case detected, the whole World was shocked and led to the initiatives to creating awareness among mass about the disease, its modes of transmission and the measures for its prevention. A & N AIDS Control Society has established as many as 13 centers in different parts of the Islands for blood testing and providing aids and kits."

"People can undergo Voluntary HIV testing at his/her own consent and utilize the services rendered by A & N AIDS Control Society free of cost. Through,
(G.B. Pant Hospital, Port Blair (Room No. 24); PHC Garacharma; CHC Bambooflat; PHC Baratang; PHC Neil Island; PHC Havelock; CHC Rangat; Dr. R.P. Hospital Mayabunder; CHC Diglipur; PHC Hutbay; BJR Hospital Car Nicobar; CHC Nancowry; PHC Campbell Bay)

Up coming ICTCs : PHC Tushnabad, PHC Kadamtala, PHC Billyground, PHC kalighat, PHC RK Pur (Hut Bay).

The school of Nursing and JawaharLall Nehru Rajkeeya Mahavidhalaya presented their prize winning Drama & Dance while M. Shanta of Govt. Modal Sr. Sec. School presented their prize winning speech on the occasion. The function concluded with the vote of thanks, proposed by Dr. Jahanara Yasmeen, Deputy Director(IEC).

The Andaman & Nicobar AIDS Control Society thanks to the, Directorate of Health Services, Department of Police, Department of Electricity, Directorate of Education, Directorate of Shipping Services, Department of Marine, Directorate of Youth Affairs & Sports Culture, All Electronic & Print Media persons, Thank you to all islanders.