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Johor records high number of HIV cases

MOHD FARHAAN SHAH

JOHOR BARU: Johor has the highest number of recorded HIV infected with 14,357 cases recorded between 1986 and last year.

From that figure, 1,322 patients had died, said the royal consort of Tengku Mahkota Johor Raja Zarith Sofia Sultan Idris Shah.

"The threat of HIV/AIDS is still worrying. Women and children are the easiest infected," she said, adding Malaysians must be more sympathetic and help those infected by the disease.

According to the UNAIDS report, which is a joint United Nation programme on HIV/AIDS worldwide, more than 90% of children with HIV were infected through pregnancy, birth and during the breast-feeding period.

"Even though the spread of the disease can be curbed, there is disappointingly a lack of initiative and cooperation to prevent

women and children from being infected," she said in her speech before launching the World AIDS Awareness Day at Pusat Islam Iskandar here.

She added in December last year, Malaysia recorded 84,630 cases of HIV positive.

Raja Zarith Sofia said the main objective of the campaign was to give respect and support to those infected by HIV/AIDS; and to encourage community to help curb the disease spread.

She hoped to be given a chance to work with the government and private agencies to educate the public about HIV/AIDS.

Raja Zarith Sofia said education and public awareness on HIV/AIDS could end the stigma and discrimination towards HIV positive.

"Private companies, government agencies, including volunteers associations and non-governmental organisations should work together with Malaysian AIDS Council and its affiliated agencies like Intan Lifezone and Estate Assistance Association.

"HIV/AIDS is not an individual responsibility, all of us are accountable as citizens of this country," she said.



Viewing: Raja Zarith Sofia Sultan Idris Shah (left) looking at the exhibits set up by the National Anti-Drug Agency.