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Walkathon held to spread AIDS awareness

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THE display of unique and colourful recycling cardboards which carried messages about HIV/AIDS marked the 29th International AIDS Memorial Day (IAMD) walkathon in Penang.

The display was to draw the attention of the public towards HIV and AIDS prevention.

More than 800 people actively participated in the event to help spread key messages that prevention is better than cure and that the HIV community needs encouragement to carry on.

Organised by the Community AIDS Service Penang (CASP), the event kicked off with aerobics before

the walkathon around Polo Ground in Jalan Sepoy Lines on Saturday.

Participants were then given an light-emitting diode torchlight each to form a human ribbon, as it symbolised their support for HIV/AIDS awareness.

CASP administrator Elizabeth Thomas said the annual event was into its fifth year.

It was held to educate the public that HIV/AIDS is a manageable disease.

"We are working hard towards achieving zero new HIV infection rate through public education.

"Our association also managed to raise some RM35,000 for HIV/AIDS

community through this event," Thomas said.

Present were Datuk Keramat assemblyman Jagdeep Singh Deo and CASP chairman P. R. Selvarajan.

In his speech, Jagdeep Singh urged the public not to ostracise those who suffer from the disease.

Spotted among the enthusiastic crowd was Khatijah Hanafiah.

The 45-year-old housewife expressed her happiness to play a part in creating awareness and educating the masses on importance of providing support for the HIV/AIDS community.



Meaningful day: (Top pic) Participants taking part in the aerobic exercise before the IAMD walkathon. (Left pic) Several people carrying placards with messages.