

Tk 20.15 cr Sida grant for safe motherhood

Bss, Dhaka

Bangladesh will receive 29 million Swedish kroners worth Tk 20.15 crore as a grant for implementation of a project named "UN Joint Initiative on Safe Motherhood".

An agreement to this effect was signed between the government and the United Nations Population

Fund at the NEC auditorium here yesterday.

ERD Secretary Mirza Tasadduk Hossain Beg and Resident Representative of Unfpa Suneeta Mukherjee signed the agreement on behalf of their respective sides.

The Swedish International Development Agency (Sida) will provide the fund for a three-year

period for the project to be implemented by the ministry of health and family welfare.

Seven UN agencies---Undp, Unicef, Who, Wfp, Unesco, Fao and Unfpa---will jointly participate in the programme.

The project will initially start as a test case in Tangail and later it will spread to other districts.



PHOTO: STAR

Samsuddin Munna, a student of Tejgaon Government Primary School, was injured in a bomb blast near Tejgaon level crossing yesterday. He is now undergoing treatment at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

Preventive steps a must to combat Aids

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

UNAIDS put the figure at 13,000 plus.

Female condoms should be widely marketed in the country so that women, particularly the sex workers, could protect themselves from the risk of HIV/Aids infection, speakers at a discussion observed yesterday.

They said the sex workers should be encouraged to use female condoms to curb the spread of sexually transmitted diseases (STD).

There is no alternative to preventive measures to stem the onslaught of Aids in the country, the discussants said.

The Bangladesh Manobadhikar Sangbadik Forum (BMSF) and the Bandhu Social Welfare Society jointly organised the discussion at the Jatiya Press Club to mark the World Aids Day.

Human rights workers, lawyers, journalists, NGO activists, sex workers and hijras (hermaphrodites) took part in the discussion.

According to government statistics, the number of HIV-positives in the country stands at 363.

The actual number, however, would be much higher. The

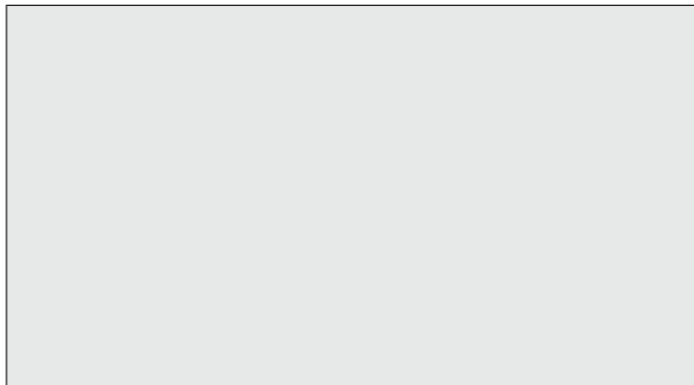
Suneeta Mukherjee, representative of the United Nations Populations Fund (UNFPA) attended the discussion as chief guest and Pam Baatsen, country director of the Family Health International (FHI), was present as special guest.

BMSF chairperson Ainey Elias presided over the discussion while journalist Salim Samad moderated it.

Nargis, a sex worker, said, "Female condom is very much useful to us as most of the clients are reluctant to use condoms. But its supply is not adequate."

Sabera Yasmin of Ashar Alo, an NGO, Advocate Dilruba Akhter of Human Rights Cell of the Bangladesh Bar Council, Khairuzzamann Kamal of BMSF, Saleh Ahmed of Bandhu and Dr Shahnewaz of National STD/Aids Network also spoke.

Apart from the discussion, a gathering of sex workers and display of Aids-related information were also arranged at the Jatiya Press Club. The sex workers also staged a drama marking the World Aids Day.



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