

AJK observes World HIV/AIDS Day with firm resolve to discourage the fatal disease from its roots



Published on December 1, 2024

Document Date: Fri, Feb 13 2026 09:37:58 am

Category: ,English,Kashmir - ~ ,Snippets

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MIRPUR (AJK): December 1st. Like rest of the world, the World HIV/AIDS Day was observed across Azad Jammu Kashmir on Sunday with renewal of the formal pledge to discourage the appearance of the fatal disease from its roots through individual and collective vibrant role of the stake holders.

In the largest Mirpur district of AJK, an awareness seminar, to mark the day, was held at District Health Office Mirpur on the occasion of World HIV/AIDS Day here on Sunday with District Health

Officer Mirpur Dr. Fida Hussain Raja, in the chair.

Exptrs including the DHO Dr. Fida, Muhammad Riaz Assistant Director Surveillance Muhammad Riaz, Assistant Director Training, Waqas Ahmad Khan, Muhammad Aqeel Health Educator, Abdul Waheed District Superintendent and others warned of strictly taking precautionary and preventive measures to avert threats of HIV AIDS to the human life since it was considered to be one of the most serious diseases in the world.

World AIDS Day is celebrated every year on December 1st to raise awareness among masses about the life-threatening repercussions of AIDS and the quick treatment to save the life. This year World AIDS Day' theme is "Take the Rights Path: My Health, My Rights".

Addressing the seminar key speakers including the District Health Officer Dr. Fida Hussain Raja said that HIV-AIDS was an infection that has been classified as one of the most complicated diseases in the world. "Although this disease can be controlled by adopting treatment and preventive measures, but it cannot be denied that the death rate from this disease was getting very high with the passage of time.

The DHO continued that seriousness of this disease could be estimated by looking at the number of victims and the death toll. According to the statistics of UNAIDS (a branch of UNICEF) only in the

year 2023, about 1.5 crore people were confirmed to be infected with HIV, of which 6.50 lakh people died from the infection and related diseases, he underlined.

“According to a World AIDS Day report, around 9.39 million people worldwide have been infected with HIV so far. Out of which about 41 million people have died. Based on this data, it will not be wrong to say that HIV AIDS is one of the few deadly diseases in the world at the moment. Not only to raise awareness among masses but also to show solidarity with and help those who are suffering from AIDS. It is note worthy that the World AIDS Day, initiated by the World Health Organization, was commemorated every year on a specific theme”, the DHO said.

Unveiling the global history of the Day, Dr. Fida revealed that the idea of holding an AIDS event was first mooted in 1987, authored by James W. Bunn and Thomas Netter, two information officers of the World Health Organization’s ‘Global on AIDS’ program, and that emerged for the first time with the idea of observing this event in 1st of December every year, he added.

The DHO continued that the director of ‘Global on AIDS’, Jonathan Mann, decided to observe December 1, 1988 as first World AIDS Day. After that, since 1996, AIDS through a program of the United Nations, “UN AIDS” is observed as the International Day this day every year.

Narrating the history, the seasoned medico recalled that at the beginning of this annual campaign, children and youth were placed at the center. “But later efforts were started to protect and educate people of all ages and sexes against this disease”, he added.

Given the sensitivity of the issue, the White House recognized the red ribbon as a symbol for World AIDS Day in 2007. That is why this day is also called “Red Ribbon Day”.

“‘HIV AIDS Causes and Symptoms’ AIDS is actually known as “Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome”. Unprotected and promiscuous sex is particularly believed to be responsible for this infection”, Dr. Fida said.

The DHO further revealed that the infection is spread by having sex with an infected man or woman, transferring the blood of an infected person to someone else, reusing a needle used by an infected person, or receiving an organ transplant from another person.

“Common symptoms seen in the body of a person suffering from AIDS include joint and muscle pain, severe chills and fever, weakness and fatigue in the body, sudden weight loss, constant headache and sore throat, loss of appetite, body, appearance of red spots on the tongue and appearance of white spots in the mouth, dry cough and diarrhea include difficulty breathing and night sweats”, Dr. Fida Concluded.

