

## Newspaper clipping from "Dawn & The Nation" Dated April 22, 2009

### Women take charge of bills in NA

Continued from Page 1

Bajwa — seeks a minimum of five years' imprisonment or a minimum fine of Rs100,000, or both, for failure to register first information report of an alleged offence and carrying out a dishonest investigation by a competent police or other official.

It also provides for half of the fine to be paid to the aggrieved person, whose right to claim damages in a civil court will not be limited.

**HIV/AIDS SHAME:** Minister of State for Health Mohammad Afzal Sindhu, responding to a "matter of sufficient public importance" raised by 11 members from the ruling coalition and opposition members, said the government intended to bring a law to parliament to protect HIV/Aids patients from the shame of the incurable disease.

But he did not indicate the time to bring the new law, which he said would take cognizance of anybody reproaching a patient of HIV (human immunodeficiency virus) and Aids (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome), caused by blood transfusion from or sexual activity with affected people.

Most of only women speakers on a subject usually shunned in the Pakistani society called for public awareness campaigns by the government about the dangers of the disease about which very few people talk and more effective arrangements to prevent its spread.

Mr Sindhu said publicity and preventive measures like blood-screening were already being carried out but assured the house that they would be fortified further in light of house members' suggestions.

He said the government would attend a May 16-17 international conference on HIV/Aids in

Geneva and would use the forum to ask European countries to provide it information about Pakistani nationals deported for carrying the dangerous virus.

"How problems will be solved if we don't talk about them?" asked PPP member Mrs Yasmeen Rehman who called for the collection of credible data about the extent of the disease in the country and preventive work on a "war-footing" before the situation could get out of hand as in neighbouring India.

PML-N's Tahira Aurangzeb called for making HIV/Aids awareness a part of educational syllabuses while her party colleague Shireen Arshad Khan suggested counselling at different levels of the society and health insurance as she said was the practice in Schengen Agreement countries of Europe.

Nighat Paveen Mir of the same party wanted an awareness campaign in light of Islamic teachings of piety while her colleagues Mrs Nisar Tanveer and Begum Nuzhat Sadiq called for a more effective use of the media.

PML-N's Haji Pervaiz Khan got a lesson about what it could mean when one talked ill of MQM chief Altaf Hussain before his followers when the member from Rawalpindi was shouted down by Karachi-based party's members after he, while speaking on a point of order, said their leader should now return home from his long self-exile in Britain and "stop speaking against people and Pakistan from there".

Members from both the opposition and government benches called for making price control authorities more effective while speaking on a resolution while a debate on the shortage of urea fertilizer was still in progress when the house was adjourned until 4pm on Wednesday.

### Legislation on HIV/ AIDS soon, NA told

NAVEED BUTT

ISLAMABAD - State Minister for Health Mohammad Afzal Sindhu Tuesday told the National Assembly that the ministry would soon introduce a new legislation for the social protection of HIV/Aids Patient.

While discussing a matter of sufficient public importance regarding "rapidly increasing disease of HIV/Aids in the country" moved by Yasmeen Rehman in the House, the Minister said that the protection of HIV/AIDS patient is very essential because he did not expose his disease due to stigma. In this regard, he said that Health Ministry would table a bill in National Assembly for social protection of HIV/AIDS patient.

He said that the job for HIV/AIDS patients should not be closed and it should be remained open.

The Minister said that the government has arranged of HIV/Aids test in the hospital for patients at every district level of the country.

He said that these arrangements would be fortified.

He said that the Ministry would consider the proposals presented by the members in the House. He said that national and international agencies have launched programmes for HIV/AIDS and advertisements at channels for creating awareness among the people.

The Minister said that International Health Conference on HIV/AIDS would be held at Geneva on May 16 and 17.

He said that the ministry is working to control HIV/Aids in the country.