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Drive against HIV/AIDS launched

OUR STAFF REPORTER

ISLAMABAD - Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS) has launched HIV/AIDS awareness campaign among youth to sensitise them about the menace.

The campaign was launched by the AIDS patients who are struggling to become useful citizens while lighting candles at the PRCS National Headquarters on Tuesday.

Senator Nilofar Bakhtiar, who is also the Vice Chairperson of PRCS was the chief guest on the occasion.

Speaking on the occasion, she said that estimated 33.2 million people live as victim of AIDS worldwide. AIDS has killed an estimated 2.1 million people, including 330,000 children in last seven years. Over three-quarters of these deaths occurred in sub-Saharan Africa re-

tarding economic growth and destroying human capital.

Nilofar said although treatments for AIDS and HIV can slow the course of the disease as there is currently no vaccine or cure.

"Antiretroviral treatment reduces both mortality and morbidity of HIV infection, but these drugs are expensive and routine access to antiretroviral medication is not available in all countries," she added.

She maintained that due to difficulty in treating HIV infection, preventing infection is a key aim in controlling the AIDS pandemic and awareness is the pivotal step towards it. She said the PRCS has done prodigious work to meet its mandated task in its efforts combating AIDS and has set target to create awareness among 0.5 million individuals vulnerable to the menace.