

# You and AIDS

The HIV and Development Magazine for Asia Pacific



Unsafe and uninformed mobility often lead women into the net of ruthless exploiters, including traffickers

## Trek Through Travails

The increasing incidence of trafficking in women and children and their vulnerability to HIV/AIDS have reached disturbingly visible levels in several parts of Asia. A comprehensive feature with inputs from various countries of the region.

PLUS

### SPOTLIGHT

Millennium Development Goals

### PHOTO FEATURE

Women living with HIV/AIDS

### SPECIAL REPORTS

Despatches and updates from the region

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REACH Beyond Borders is UNDP's Regional HIV and  
 Development Programme covering 13 countries in the  
 South and North East Asia region. The programme  
 addresses the development and trans-border chal-  
 lenges of HIV/AIDS in the region and supports inte-  
 grated and rights based responses that promote gen-  
 der equality, sustainable livelihoods and community  
 participation. Focus areas of work include: Policy  
 Advocacy and Outreach, Mobility and HIV/AIDS,  
 Capacity Development and Greater Involvement of  
 People Living with HIV/AIDS and Human Rights.



# Reversing HIV is a Millenium Development Goal



**A**SIA and the Pacific is on the throes of a rapidly rising HIV/AIDS epidemic, that is threatening to escalate into one of the most serious development challenges facing the region. With more than one third of humanity, the largest pool of poverty and the presence of all the other underlying factors that fuel the epidemic, the vulnerability of the region to HIV is too obvious to overlook. The region has the second largest number of people living with HIV/AIDS in the world.

The concern over the potential impact of the HIV/AIDS epidemic on human development is articulated well by the Millennium Development Goals (MDG), which seek to set a global development agenda. Reversing and halting the HIV/AIDS epidemic is essential to achieve the MDG and to ensure that the development targets set by global leaders are met as planned.

The region's vulnerability to HIV stems from a variety of factors that are mainly rooted in extreme forms of inequality. One of them is the increasing population mobility experienced by most of the countries in the region. Evidence clearly suggests that unsafe mobility often leads people to situations that make them vulnerable to HIV/AIDS. Unsafe mobility also leads to trafficking in humans, particularly women and children. This phenomenon has a direct correlation with HIV as the conditions under which women and children are trafficked are conducive to the transmission of HIV. The cover story of this edition of *YouandAIDS* seeks to explore the link between trafficking and HIV in detail and argues for responses that respect the rights of people to move in search of livelihoods and protect them from the traps that lie ahead.

This is the second edition of *YouandAIDS*, which is published by the UNDP Regional HIV and Development Programme. Originally started by UNAIDS, it seeks communicate in the form of a mainstream magazine and is an innovative model for outreach, communication, advocacy and partnerships.

Together with UNAIDS, which represents nine cosponsors, UNDP has taken forward the work on the YouandAIDS portal, which is an important regional platform on HIV and Development issues.

**Dr. Hafiz Pasha,**  
 Assistant Administrator and Director,  
 Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific  
 (RBAP), UNDP, New York

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YouandAIDS ■ August 2003 ■ Volume 2 ■ Issue 1

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### TWILIGHT ZONE

The increasing incidence of trafficking in women and children and their vulnerability to HIV/AIDS have reached disturbingly visible levels in several parts of Asia. Needed are responses that respect the rights of people to move in search of livelihoods and protect them from the traps lying ahead. A comprehensive feature.

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## PHOTO-ESSAY

### HERE COMES THE SUN

At the centre of the epidemic in Asia are thousands of women who have no control over their sexuality, who are powerless and violated and have no access to livelihoods. Yet, when it comes to living with HIV/AIDS, they are outstanding examples of reconciliation, compassion and resilience. A photo-essay on the lives of women living with HIV/AIDS in Asia Pacific.

## ROUND-TABLE

### Extraordinary Epidemic, Extraordinary Responses

A report of the first ever regional editors' meeting on HIV and Development. Eight senior editors of the Asia Pacific region met for a round-table exploring ways to strengthen media-support to the campaign against HIV/AIDS.

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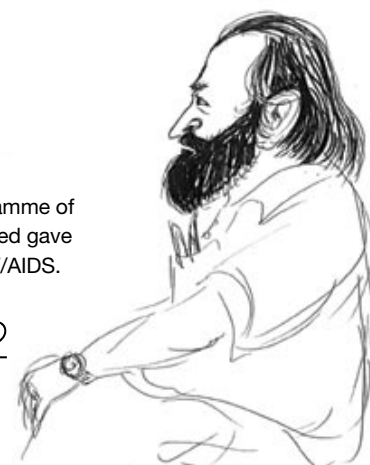


## ARTS AND MEDIA

### New Icons, Metaphors

More than 120 arts and media leaders from India and Nepal converged in Goa, western India, for a transformative leadership programme of UNDP. The icons and metaphors they created gave a new meaning to the response against HIV/AIDS.

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**T**onight

*A candle is lit for you,  
For friends with shared feelings  
And for them who have already preceded us.  
They have already passed away in order not to surrender.  
And for friends that have taught us that pain and despair  
Obviously can resurrect strength  
That which during this time we've been unaware of.*

*If, of course, this problem is the virus,  
That destroys the human immune system,  
Tell me,  
Why do I feel pain more mentally than physically?  
And why must I be prevented  
From giving you a parting kiss  
At the final moment of your life?*

*At this moment I see  
How you are inhumanely isolated by people in your community.  
I witness in my mind's eye  
As your body is wrapped in plastic  
While your soft blanket that I recognize  
Is thrown into a hot flame  
That glows of strong rejection of yourself  
After much suffering  
Because of the virus.*

*And I,  
Through all of this am close with you  
Accompanied with sadness and emptiness.*

*All will soon become like this  
Without time to hope that help will arrive,  
Without hope for a future.  
And I, myself, still don't know  
That which I am hoping for will arrive tomorrow or not?*

*Tonight  
I light this candle for you  
For all meaning that I have already gotten  
About life and love.*

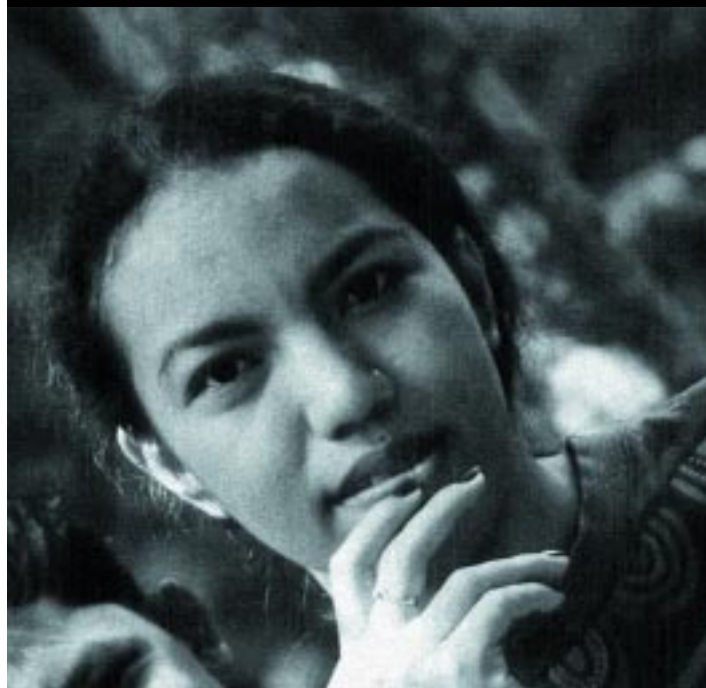
*For the soft touch and sincerity  
That isn't limited by nationality and language.*

*For friends that have already fought  
And those that still firmly resist.*

*This candle radiates, my friend.  
Our hope knitted together will illumine tomorrow's  
Morning sun  
And send forth melodious song  
That still wishes us to hear.*

*Warmth steadily returns  
Because love never ends  
Radiating it's rays to the earth.*

*Embrace love which makes us feel strong  
And willing to face all challenges  
Love's miracle that lives on  
Because life is indeed precious.*



## Tonight I'll Light a Candle for You

**Suzana Murni**

**Suzana Murni:** The founder of "Spiritia Foundation", a voluntary organisation espousing the cause of PLWHA in Indonesia, and a designer of repute, the late Suzana Murni was a sprightly PLWHA activist in her country and the Asia Pacific region. She was also a founding member of the National Coordinating Group of the International AIDS Candlelight Memorial, formed in 1996 and chairperson of the Indonesian Communication Forum of NGOs working in HIV/AIDS. She had represented Indonesia for the Asia Pacific Network of People Living with HIV/AIDS (APN+), helping document human rights violations and violence against people living with HIV/AIDS.

# THE MILLENNIUM

## goal 1 eradicate extreme poverty and hunger



**TARGET 1:** Reduce by half the proportion of people living on less than a dollar a day

**TARGET 2:** Reduce by half the proportion of people who suffer from hunger

## goal 2 achieve universal primary education



**TARGET 3:** Ensure that all boys and girls complete a full course of primary schooling

## goal 3 promote gender equality and empower women



**TARGET 4:** Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education preferably by 2005, and at all levels by 2015

## goal 4 reduce child mortality



**TARGET 5:** Reduce by two-thirds the mortality rate among children under five

# DEVELOPMENT GOALS

## goal 5 improve maternal health



**TARGET 6:** Reduce by three-quarters the maternal mortality ratio before 2015

## goal 6 combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases



**TARGET 7:** Halt and begin to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS

**TARGET 8:** Halt and begin to reverse the incidence of malaria and other major diseases

## goal 7 ensure environmental sustainability



**TARGET 9:** Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes; reverse loss of environmental resources

**TARGET 10:** Reduce by half the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water

**TARGET 11:** Achieve significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers, by 2020

## goal 8 develop a global partnership for development



**TARGET 12:** Develop further an open trading and financial system that is rule-based, predictable and non-discriminatory. Includes a commitment to good governance, development and poverty reduction — nationally and internationally

**TARGET 13:** Address the least developed countries' special needs. This includes tariff- and quota-free access for their exports; enhanced debt relief for heavily indebted poor countries; cancellation of official bilateral debt; and more generous official development assistance for countries committed to poverty reduction

**TARGET 14:** Address the special needs of landlocked and small island developing States

**TARGET 15:** Deal comprehensively with developing countries' debt problems through national and international measures to make debt sustainable in the long term

**TARGET 16:** In cooperation with the developing countries, develop decent and productive work for youth

**TARGET 17:** In cooperation with pharmaceutical companies, provide access to affordable essential drugs in developing countries

**TARGET 18:** In cooperation with the private sector, make available the benefits of new technologies — especially information and communications technologies

## Indian PM calls for quick response

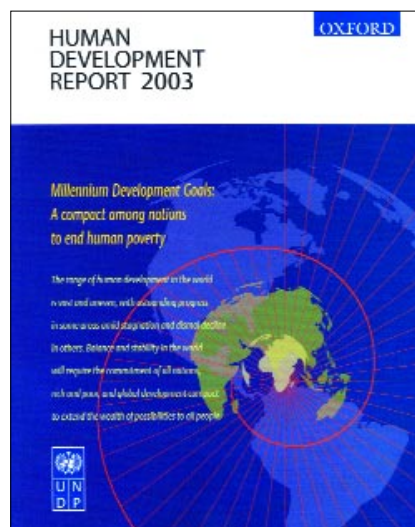
■ **New Delhi (India), July 28, 2003:** Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee has called for an immediate response to HIV/AIDS, which has affected more than four million people in the country, the second largest number in the world after South Africa.

"HIV/AIDS is not only a grave global challenge. It is equally a national concern, one that demands an effective and undelayed response," Vajpayee said, addressing the first National Convention of India's Parliamentarians' forum on HIV/AIDS here on Saturday.

Vajpayee was speaking a day after the government announced that the number of people in India with HIV/AIDS has risen to 4.58 million from 3.97 million in 2001, narrowing the gap with South Africa which at around five million has the largest number of people living with HIV/AIDS in the world.

Vajpayee also urged greater political involvement in the battle against HIV/AIDS. "It requires leadership that is ready to go to the heart of the problem and is ready even to go against the stream of public opinion," he said. The Convention brought together about 600 people including lawmakers, state leaders and AIDS activists.

## HDR warns escalation of HIV/AIDS epidemics in India, China



■ **New Delhi (India), July 09, 2003:** India is likely to have 110 million cases of HIV/AIDS by the year 2025, predicts the United Nations' Human Development Report released on Tuesday. The report for 2003 says India, China and Russia are the three big, populated countries that face the highest threat from HIV/AIDS. The report also predicts a reduction in life expectancy of 13 years by 2025. Life expectancy in India at present is 61 years and the country currently has 3.97 people living with HIV/AIDS.

China is projected to have 70 million people living with HIV/AIDS by 2025, with an expected reduction in life expectancy by eight years. Some 13 million people will be affected by HIV/AIDS in Russia. The report says HIV/AIDS has been the greatest shock to development in recent decades. The number of people living with HIV/AIDS worldwide has more than quadrupled, to about 42 million and the epidemic has already killed 22 million people and orphaned 13 million.

## Pakistan approves funds for HIV/AIDS programme

■ **Islamabad (Pakistan), June 09, 2003:** The World Bank has approved a \$37.1 million credit to fight the spread of HIV/AIDS in Pakistan. The assistance includes a \$9.28 million grant to the government, which has initiated a new five-year plan to fight HIV/AIDS. "The project's objective is to prevent an HIV/AIDS epidemic from raging out of control in Pakistan and avoiding the suffering, premature death, family devastation and economic losses that stem from this epidemic," said the World Bank's project manager Benjamin Loevinsohn.

Pakistan has 1,998 known cases of HIV and AIDS, officials here said last month following a data compiled after some 3.65 million tests were performed in 47 surveillance centres across the country over the past several years. Currently, the HIV prevalence rate in 145-million strong Pakistan is "relatively low" at less than 0.1 percent, the World Bank statement said. But it warned "a failure to actively prevent HIV/AIDS in Pakistan could lead to a widespread epidemic." The government recently appro-

ved a Rs 2.8 billion (\$50 million) National AIDS Control Programme which includes assistance from the World Bank. The budget for HIV/AIDS programmes this year has been raised to Rs 250 million from Rs 150 million in 2002, health officials said. The government has also launched an extensive AIDS awareness programme on radio and television throughout the country.

## G-8 nations pledge cheaper drugs to combat HIV and other diseases

■ **Evian (France), June 06, 2003:** The Group of Eight leaders have pledged to make cheaper drugs to combat diseases like HIV/AIDS more easily available in developing nations. In a "health action plan" released during their summit in the French spa town of Evian, the industrialised nations' club pledged to boost the distribution of cheap medicines in a "fair, efficient and sustainable" way.

Welcoming drugs companies' efforts to make discounted drugs more available, the G-8 leaders said they would "strongly support" further efforts, although the paper contained little in the way of specific policies. Additionally, the statement backed a moratorium on challenging countries under World Trade Organisation rules over the production of generic versions of patented drugs. Pharmaceutical multi-nationals have long been criticised by health activists for the prices they charge for HIV/AIDS drugs and for their efforts to prevent generic copies of the medicines being made.

## Cambodia launches soap opera on HIV/AIDS

■ **Cambodia, May 28, 2003:** Cambodia has launched a soap opera about star-crossed lovers, sex workers and HIV on Monday—the latest weapon in its fight to contain the epidemic. An estimated 158,000 people, or 2.6 percent of adults, are HIV-positive in the South-east Asian nation. Although not on the scale of sub-Saharan Africa, many fear that if left unchecked, AIDS could cause seri-



ous damage to Cambodia society.

After a condom campaign targeting Cambodia's sex industry, AIDS campaigners are now shifting their focus to families. "Every day, an estimated 20 Cambodian people acquire HIV/ AIDS. Many of them are housewives," said Secretary of State for Health, Mam Bun Heng, at the launch of the Cambodian-made drama *Punishment of Love*. Each episode, aired on several national television channels, will be followed by a talkshow about HIV/AIDS and sex—a rare chance to get the message across in a deeply impoverished country still lacking basic infrastructure.

## India to try home-based care for PLWHA

■ **Mumbai (India), April 29, 2003:** To discourage the trend of people living with HIV/AIDS being rushed to hospitals at the slightest discomfort, the Maharashtra government is developing guidelines for home-based care for them. The guidelines would lay down standards to be followed by families to treat a person living with HIV/AIDS in the house. Doctors would offer tips to family members on drugs, diet and training to deal with possible ailments and also on follow-up treatment.

The guidelines, the first of its kind in the country, are being drafted by the Mumbai District AIDS Control Society (MDACS) and Wockhardt-Harvard Medical International HIV/AIDS Education and Research Foundation (WHARF). The guidelines, obtained from Harvard Medical International by WHARF, would be tailored for India by MDACS, with pictorial descr-

North-east China's Heilongjiang Province. A medical worker, who pays 400 Yuan for the insurance service, will receive 10,000 Yuan from the company if he/she is infected with HIV/AIDS at work, the company said. The insurance service claims to be the first covering HIV/AIDS in China. China was estimated to have more than one million people living with HIV/AIDS by the end of 2002, a figure which increases by more than 30 percent annually, according to the Ministry of Health.

Source: *People's Daily*

## UN, EU to boost reproductive health services for Asian youth

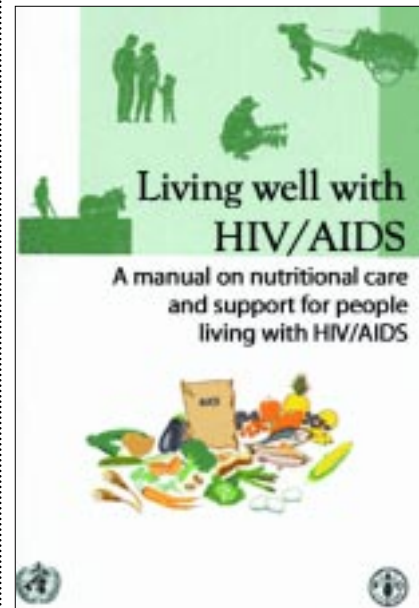
■ **New York (US), March 31, 2003:** The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the European Union have teamed up to support peer counselling and promote HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention in seven Asian countries. The euro 22 million programme will run the three-year Reproductive Health Initiative for Youth in Asia, which will be implemented in Bangladesh, Cambodia, Laos, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Vietnam and will educate vulnerable students, street children and factory workers about HIV/AIDS. In addition to peer counselling and promotion of HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention, the initiative also aims to improve access to healthcare for these groups and build the capacity of the seven countries' NGOs to meet young people's health needs.

Last year, UNFPA signed a similar agreement with the EU for euro 20 million to help 10 African and Caribb-

members. Their generosity will provide hope to millions of young persons as they navigate the difficult transition from adolescence to adulthood," Ahmed added.

Source: *UN News Centre*

## UN, WHO publish HIV/AIDS manual



■ **Geneva, March 14, 2003:** The United Nations' (UN) Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and the World Health Organisation (WHO) have jointly published a new manual that recognises the relationship between HIV/AIDS and nutrition. The document, called the Manual on Nutritional Care and Support for People Living with HIV/AIDS, is entitled *Living Well with HIV/AIDS*.

By bolstering the immune system and boosting energy levels, balanced

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