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AIDS Orphans Day today

Special Correspondent

For every 15 seconds a child loses parent

VISAKHAPATNAM: For every 15 seconds, a child loses a parent to AIDS, it has been estimated. World over AIDS has caused the death of one or both parents of more than 25 million children.

In some African countries like Rwanda and Uganda some time ago there were no youth left in some villages as AIDS killed them.

With this backdrop, the Association Francois-Xavier Bagnoud India (FXB) Suraksha is observing World AIDS Orphans Day (WAOD) every year on May 7 since 2002 to bring world's attention to the millions of children left in the wake of AIDS pandemic.

AIDS orphans were facing a lot of stigma, found themselves without a shelter, exposed to diseases and all forms of violence and exploitation and most of them being poor need support in several areas, said medical director of FXB India Suraksha's State branch and regional headquarters (South India) P.S.K.P. Raju at a press conference held here on Wednesday on the eve of WAOD.

FXB India Suraksha would provide support in the areas of psycho-social aspect, nutrition, education, medicines and treatment and income generation.

In Visakhapatnam it was supporting 600 beneficiaries belonging to 141 families. Sixty of the families were being helped with the support extended by a UK foundation. "We fight more for children's rights", Dr. Raju said.

The local chapter is organising a programme at Shivaji Park on Thursday afternoon to mark the WAOD in which an exhibition of products prepared by beneficiaries, cultural programme by children and other events would be held.