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## World Bank team expresses concern over surge in AIDS cases

A World Bank delegation called on Sindh Health Minister Syed Sardar Ahmed recently expressed concern over surge in the number of Aids cases in the province. There is a need to improve the Aids control programme, the minister was told. Sources privy to the meeting between the delegation, headed by Anabella Abreu, the Chief of Health, Nutrition and Population Sector, and the minister said that apprehensions were also expressed towards the pace of payments to the NGOs working for HIV/Aids control in the province.

Ms Abreu said that activities of sex workers and the jail inmates indulging in unnatural acts appeared to be

big reason behind the spread of AIDS.

Observing that delay in payments to NGOs was also one of the cause of their affected efficiency in checking the disease, he urged the minister to ensure a system of timely and convenient release of funds to the NGOs, besides better facilitation.

Syed Sardar Ahmed told the delegation that government was taking measures to prevent and control AIDS in the province. He was of the view that unsafe administration of injections was the major factor contributing to the spread of the disease in Sindh.

He said that there was no shortage of funds for taking

preventive measures against the diseases, including the HIV/AIDS, but the government would not allow misuse of funds at any stage. He said that the newly appointed Special Secretary (Public Health), Dr Abdul Majid, had already been directed to ensure more steps for prevention of the killer disease in the province and also coordinate with NGOs in an effective manner to achieve the goal.

Meanwhile, the Health Minister has directed the officials concerned to simplify the payment system and ensure release of outstanding amounts to the NGOs within 15 days. He also directed them to link financial assistance with the NGOs' performance. ■