

» **Today's Paper** » **TAMIL NADU**

Role of vaccines in fighting AIDS stressed

To create awareness about HIV/AIDS vaccines amongst the youth, the YR Gaithonde Medical, Educational and Research Foundation, together with International AIDS Vaccine Initiative (IAVI), held the finals of an intercollegiate elocution-and-slogan contest, at Stella Maris College on Friday.

The theme of the competition was 'Role of a vaccine in altering the course of HIV.'

"Our students have, over the years, regularly been involved in spearheading social change and alleviating community problems. The disease still carries a stigma and awareness levels continue to be low. We aim to do our bit in helping people deal with the disease," said Jesintha Quadras, Principal of the college.

Students of **Stella Maris College** have also initiated a signature campaign to support the cause.

Innovative drive

"By creating such platforms, or initiating innovative campaigns, we will be able to create a step-by-step approach to fight HIV/AIDS and the taboo that comes with it," said Peter ter Weeme from the International AIDS Vaccine Initiative (IAVI) while speaking on the theme.

The YR foundation with support from MAC AIDS fund, United States, has also initiated a community outreach project, the 'YRG121,' where 2,000 students from 20 city-based colleges assist and educate people about HIV/AIDS.

David Jebasingh from the Madras Christian College secured the first position.

Sanjay Mehendale, Director of National Institute of Epidemiology, ICMR, was present at the event.