

Heart-warming stories for Kaunda

EXPRES NEWS SERVICE

VISITS YRG CARE CENTRE: Earlier in the morning, Kaunda had visited the in-patients of the YRG Care centre on the Voluntary Health Services (VHS) campus.

The huge eyes of 10-year-old Arvind shone with pleasure, and the HIV patient smiled bashfully as Kenneth Kaunda shook hands with him. He did not know he was in the presence of the first President of Zambia, but only that some important visitor had come to visit him. Marimuthu knew a smattering of English and the 30-year-old was happy to hold a short conversation with Kaunda, while 45-year-old Arjunan looked on woodenly, his thin, bony hands reaching out to grasp the hands of Kaunda.

"It must have been a huge struggle for YRG

Care to establish itself, but it has been worthwhile in terms of outcome," said Kaunda, clearly impressed by the clinical and ethical help rendered by YRG Care to both HIV patients and their families. "The graduated cost recovery model where treatment charges are levied according to the patient's affordability is a special method that can be adopted by all. In fact, we must all learn from this organisation," said Kaunda.

"For every HIV/AIDS patient initiated into treatment, four new cases come up each day, and it is important that we address the issue of empowering women and changing established practices which may take generations," said Dr Suniti Solomon.

Also present on the occasion was Dr Kenneth Mayer from the Brown University, USA.

(Names of the HIV/AIDS patients have been changed to protect their identity).



The first President of Zambia Kenneth Kaunda signing an autograph during his visit to Shakti Foundation in Chennai on Saturday - Express