

**Issue Date:** Thursday, November 30, 2006

## Counsellors counselled in special session

OUR CORRESPONDENT

**Jamshedpur, Nov. 29:** Counsellors were the focal point of the five-day workshop on “Sexuality and AIDS counselling”, which began at the Tata Steel Family Initiatives Foundation (TSFIF) at Dhatkidih today.

In a first-of-its-kind attempt, the institute invited experts from **Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS), Mumbai**, to sensitise the counsellors, who are in direct contact with HIV positive patients.

“I underwent a three-month training under experts at **TISS** which helped me to deal with people,” said Dilith Castleton, joint administrator at TSFIF.

Well-attended by a team of 30 counsellors from Dhanbad, Deogarh, Daltongunj, Palamau, Patna, Bokaro and Ranchi, today’s session focussed on the social construction of gender in the wake of patients affected by the virus.

**Brinelle D’Souza, director of Cell for AIDS Research Action (CARAT) of the TISS** said: “Women are expected to be self-sufficient, any questions from them on this subject is sure to raise eyebrows.”

“Confidence-building has to be done by us to ensure that they discuss their problems with us,” pointed out **Yasmin Sayyed, a resource person from the CARAT wing of TISS.**

To drive home the social message, a relevant movie — *My Brother Nikhil* — was also screened.

On the following days, information on social construction of sexuality, the myths and misconceptions and the psycho-social model of the disease, counselling, child care and support issues at the individual and community level and the legal and ethical issues involved in HIV counselling would be discussed.