**HLL Lifecare celebrates Global Female Condom Day with week-long functions**

HLL Lifecare Ltd, one of the leading providers of female condoms in India, celebrated Global Female Day with a week-long celebration packed with seminar, road-shows and special stalls from 12 September 2012, the Global Female Condom Day. Velvet is the female condom brand of HLL.

The Global Female Condom Day is being celebrated to raise the awareness about the female condoms as most people are still unaware of the product or do not have access.

A seminar on `Emerging trends in contraception’, in association with District Medical Office and the National Rural Health Mission, was held at Kochi.

Female Condom has caught the attention of the people very fast around the globe.

HLL has its female condom assembling facility at the CSEZ, Kakkanad.

“Currently the annual capacity of Kochi Factory is 7.5 million pieces and we will be adding another 25 million by 2013. Apart from supplying to the national programmes under the Ministry of Health, we also export female condoms to the SAARC markets,’’ said HLL Chairman and the Managing Director Dr M Ayyappan.

HLL has recently developed a new female condom based on natural latex formulation on which studies are being conducted and is expected to be launched in early 2013.

Dr. Lasse Hessel, a Danish physician invented the female condom during 1980s. The advent of female condoms to India happened through HLL Lifecare, the mini-ratna public sector undertaking under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

 ``Female condoms have the potential to revolutionize safer sex for diverse populations. Despite the name, female condoms offer receptive partners of any gender the ability to reduce HIV and STI transmission. They are also the only woman-initiated method available today that offers dual protection from unintended pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections, including HIV,’’ Dr Ayyappan explained.

Female condoms were displayed at HLL FC stalls at the General Hospital in Ernakulam on September 12, at Cochin Special Economic Zone (CSEZ) on September 13 and September 14.

A seminar on `Women empowering through barrier contraceptives’ was held for the women employees of CSEZ on September 15. On September 17, a road show with mobile hoarding and talking monkey was flagged off by Mr. Hibi Eden MLA and it concluded next day, after covering 10 centres to wind up at Cooperative Medical College Kalamassery the week-long celebrations.