

## Caritas Center Helps Vulnerable Workers

Facilities provide shelter, refreshments and vocational training



Caritas Bangladesh Executive Director Dr. Benedict Alo D'Rozario at the opening ceremony

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Catholic Church's social arm Caritas Bangladesh has formally opened its third drop-in center (DIC) for sex workers and drug addicts.

Caritas Executive Director Dr. Benedict Alo D'Rozario inaugurated the latest Rehabilitation and Assistance Center for Addicts at Tongi, near Dhaka, on May 14.

"If you have conviction you kick out drugs and live a life with dignity. As the Bible teaches us, you're also our neighbors and we can't keep well while you live in danger. I hope DIC helps you move towards a beautiful life," D'Rozario told the gathering of 50 people.

The three DICs look after 85 male and female drug addicts and sex workers.

The centers provide shelter, refreshments, entertainment facilities and vocational training.

The one in Tongi will benefit around 25 'street women' in the area. It opened in March.

"We used to live in slums and on streets. Often bad people attacked and police humiliated us. We can live here peacefully," said a 15-year-old Muslim sex worker.

Another Muslim girl, 17, said that the Caritas DIC has put her life in system.

"I come here in the morning, take a shower, and watch TV or sleep. In the afternoon I play indoor games and take tea. Life has become disciplined like never before," she added.

The center's Director, Holy Cross Brother Robi Purification, said: "We've been working to help them kick out addiction, choose an alternative vocational trade and live with dignity. They can learn sewing and packet-making here."

Local leader Nurul Islam, 40, a Muslim, thanked Caritas for taking this initiative to reduce drug addiction and assist sex workers.

"We've been working for a long time to eradicate drug addiction. This center will strengthen our movement. Thanks to Caritas for choosing the area," he added.

***This Report collected from Union of Catholic Asian News <http://www.ucanews.com>.***