

## **'Orissa lagging behind UN development goals'**

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BHUBANESWAR: Has the State made any headway in achieving millennium development goals which India along with 189 nations of the world committed to achieve by 2015 at the UN Millennium Summit in 2000? Practically, little.

Speakers attending a symposium here to mark the halfway on the road to realisation of goals said, Orissa still has a long way to go to catch up with other States of the country as far as achieving these goals are concerned.

Most of the speakers said, the State's record in respect to most of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) like reduction of poverty, reining in child and maternal mortality rates, universal primary education and fight against several diseases has been poor. They emphasised on rebuilding efforts to make up for the lost time.

The speakers recommended re-definition of BPL criteria in the State, strengthening of gram panchayats, prioritisation of agriculture and animal husbandry sector and strict implementation of minimum support price. They also called for increasing HIV/AIDS surveillance sites and setting up of a dynamic information system for monitoring drinking water coverage etc.

The meet was attended by eminent economist Prof. Baidyanath Mishra, educationist Karunakar Patnaik, State Information Commissioner Prof. Radhamohan, Unicef State representative Shadrack Omol, D. Narendra Kumar of UNFPA among others.

It was organised by Katha Rakhibaa Sarakar (KRS) campaign, a State-level initiative on MDGs launched by a group of NGOs and INGOs.

A commemorative volume 'The halfway mark and the State of realisation of MDGs in Orissa' was released on the occasion. Campaign coordinator of KRS Tapan K Padhi and others spoke.