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Millennium goals meet - UN campaign head stresses on monitoring

OUR CORRESPONDENT



Disparity discussion: A beggar seeks alms in Puri with his head buried. (PTI)

Bhubaneswar, Aug. 4: The key to faster progress on the achievement of Millennium Development Goals (MDG) is to tap the energy of youths and monitor the implementation of welfare programmes and schemes at the ground level, said the director of UN Millennium Campaign, Salil Shetty.

In 2000, 189 countries fixed a set of eight goals and set a target of 15 years to achieve them (2015). The goals were to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger, achieve universal primary education, promote gender equality and empower women, reduce child mortality, improve maternal health, combat HIV/AIDS and malaria, ensure environmental sustainability and develop a global partnership toward development.

In an interaction on the MDG held with a group of organisations today, Shetty said the goals could be achieved by proper use of technology and the Right to Information Act.

Shetty, who was here to encourage the state and its people to work in tandem to achieve MDG goals by 2015, discussed the status of the goals and bottlenecks on path to improvement, with members of international and national NGOs, youth organisations, educational and research institutes.

Correlating poverty with inequality, Shetty expressed concern over the growing disparity between nations and sections of people, which he called a recipe for conflict.

Common people's access to justice is a core issue, he said, and cautioned that the euphoria over India's growth in the economic, information and technology sectors was understandable but people needed to remember that 400-500 million people go hungry in the country.

He spoke of three basic requirements of any issue — policy, resources and implementation — and emphasised on the need for "good politics" that endorses accountability of political parties.

Other participants drew the director's attention to the potential of legislation such as NREGA, Forest Rights Act and Right to Information Act.

The state information commissioner, Jagadananda, urged community service organisations to sustain efforts of civil society organisations to achieve MDG goals. The congregation expressed its disappointment toward the lack of political commitment on the part of the government toward the implementation of NREGA that has potential to alleviate poverty and check distressed migration.

On the other hand, it applauded the government on its achievement on Forest Rights Act.

