

Press Note
World TB Day March 24, 2008
Bhubaneswar, Orissa.

March 24, 2008, Bhubaneswar: On the occasion of the World TB Day, a meeting followed by a workshop was organized jointly by the Directorate of health services, Orissa and the International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease (IUATLD). The objective of the event was to empower the community and individuals to stop TB in a collective manner. The theme of the World TB Day is "I am stopping TB".

Honorable Minister for Health and Family welfare, Shri Sanatan Bisi, was the Chief Guest of the function. The other participants were Commissioner cum secretary Health & Family Welfare, Shri. TK Pandey, Director Health services, Dr. Usha rani Tripathy, Director Family Welfare, Dr. BS Tripathy, State TB Officer, Dr Gangadhar Rath and Advisor, IUATLD, Mr TK Ray. Patients, DOT Providers, NGO representatives, other Govt officials, community volunteers, students from nursing colleges and other institutions attended the function and shared their valuable views and experiences.

The Patient's charter was released by Hon Minister which outlines the rights and responsibilities of TB patients. The Advocacy, Communication and Social Mobilisation (ACSM) strategy document for Orissa TB Control Programme was also released. Bhubaneswar patient's chapter was inaugurated by Hon Minister of H&FW Dept. of Orissa. The Minister reiterated that diagnosis and treatment with good quality drugs is free under RNTCP and treatment is provided in the patient's village. He further added that there is no need for TB patients to go to TB hospitals for diagnosis and treatment of TB and premier TB hospitals should be optimally utilized as multi specialty hospitals for treating complicated cases.

Exhorting the Private practitioners, the Commissioner cum Secretary said that there should be greater involvement in motivating the patients to take TB drugs under DOTS strategy, by all private practitioners and druggists / chemists. He also mentioned that role of NGOs / Private Practitioners / MOs of all health centers was very important in stopping TB. He was in his view, all health care providers should participate in TB Control as per the International Standards of TB Care. It was also emphasized that all the Doctors of the Govt. institutions, including Medical Colleges, should strictly adhere to the RNTCP prescribed diagnosis and treatment protocol.

The State TB Officer, Dr. Gangadhar Rath, emphasized, that all efforts should be made to make TB a notifiable disease in the State of Orissa. According to him, Political & Administrative commitment was required to help in adhering to the guidelines of Revised National TB Control Programme (RNTCP) in the State.

Patients / DOT Providers / NGOs and Medical College representatives made valid contributions by sharing their experiences in the forum. This was commendable.