



## **WHO & Ministry of Health and Family Welfare called for action on universal coverage for Noncommunicable diseases**

2- Day National Summit on Noncommunicable Diseases organised in New Delhi on 23-24 August

**New Delhi, 23 August, 2011** – Noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) are a global health and developmental emergency worldwide. NCDs like cancer, diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, stroke, chronic respiratory diseases, etc. have achieved the status of dominant cause of death in (about 8 out of 10 adult deaths in urban areas and 6 out of 10 deaths in rural areas, for example, are now due to NCDs).

In order to address this growing concern, the Hon'ble Minister of Health & Family Welfare, WHO Representative to India, policymakers, health experts and leaders met in New Delhi today to take forward the agenda of universal coverage, prevention and control of NCDs, at the 2-day National Summit on Universal Coverage for Noncommunicable Diseases.

A comprehensive national programme to prevent and control non-communicable diseases such as diabetes, cancer, cardiovascular diseases and stroke is proposed to be rolled out during the 12<sup>th</sup> Plan period covering all 640 districts of the country, Hon'ble Minister of Health & Family Welfare Shri Ghulam Nabi Azad said during the inaugural speech.

During the inaugural session, Dr. Nata Menabde, WHO Representative to India emphasised that a strengthened health system would ensure health services for those in need and called for prevention and control of NCDs.

“With the UN High Level Meeting on NCDs scheduled in September, 2011, the time is right to take a giant step in this field. Policy framework for prevention, control and universal coverage of NCDs in India is a clear need along with a multisectoral response to the problem of NCDs”, said Dr. Nata Menabde. “WHO strongly supports the efforts of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare”, she added.

Mental health problems are also increasing in the country. Demographic transition, globalization, rapid urbanization and prevailing socio-economic determinants have further aggravated the situation.

At the summit, eminent panelists and key speakers discussed the issue of NCDs in the Country and deliberated on the current scenario vis – a – vis growing burden of NCDs to arrive at strategic conclusions and actions towards the end of the summit.

Focused discussions were held on the Universal coverage for NCDs, Growing burden of NCDs in India; its primary causes and clinical and socio-economic implications, Possible strategic choices for strengthening health systems in India and Financing and payment methods for NCDs, amongst other important issues and challenges.

WHO aims to support a process of developing action plans for prevention and control of NCDs set in motion by the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare.

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