

# A clean whitewash

## Targets set for achievement of Millennium Development Goals erased

Is India attempting a whitewash of its commitments to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)?

Normally, one would not expect any government to be guilty of trying to fudge figures before a United Nations body. But a closer look suggests that a whitewash may well be underway.

Till November 2006, the UNDP website listed out the targets set for India to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Today the webpage no longer exists. That could be because most of the goals declared on that page have not been met.

Significantly, the website declared that all these targets, based on the 'India Human Development Goals' outlined in the Tenth Five Year Plan document (on pages 6, 108 and 117) brought out by the Planning Commission, were actually "monitorable."

Now, instead of the above webpage, possibly to conceal the fact that its targets for 2007 had not been met, that web page has been replaced by a blander page without

targets, and without any 'monitorable' promise.

So much for the MDGs!

The table given below lays out the evidence. Take a look at the points mentioned under 3 (schoolchildren), 4 (gender gap), 6 (literacy rate), 7 (infant mortality), 8 (maternal mortality), 9 (forest and tree cover), 10 (potable drinking water), 11 (cleaning polluted rivers), 12 (HIV reduction) and 13 (reduction of malaria related deaths). All of them have targets specified, for which funds were allocated.

Either these funds were not properly utilised, or they were not monitored, or both. All of which points to the terribly sorry state of governance in India.

And just a minute, did someone mention 'India Poised'?

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### Deliberate move?

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### ■ Dilution of targets on the UNDP website

MDGs listed out prior to December 2006*	Current listings**
1 Reduction of poverty ratio by 5 percentage points by 2007 and by 15 percentage points by 2012	Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
2 Providing gainful and high-quality employment at least to the addition to the labour force over the Tenth Plan period.	--
3 All children in school by 2003; all children to complete 5 years of schooling by 2007	Achieve universal primary education
4 Reduction in gender gaps in literacy and wage rates by at least 50% by 2007	Promote gender equality and empower women
5 Reduction in the decadal rate of population growth between 2001 and 2011 to 16.2%	--
6 Increase in literacy rates to 75% within the Tenth Plan period (2002-03 to 2006-07)	--
7 Reduction of infant mortality rate (IMR) to 45 per 1000 live births by 2007 and to 28 by 2012	Reduce child mortality
8 Reduction of maternal mortality ratio (MMR) to 2 per 1000 live births by 2007 and to 1 by 2012	Improve maternal health
9 Increase in forest and tree cover to 25% by 2007 and 33% by 2012	Ensure environmental sustainability
10 All villages to have sustained access to potable drinking water within the Plan period	
11 Cleaning of all major polluted rivers by 2007 and other notified stretches by 2012	
12 <b>HIV/AIDS targets within the Tenth Plan period:</b> 80% coverage of high risk groups through targeted interventions; 90% coverage of schools and colleges through education programmes; 80% awareness among the general population in rural areas; reducing transmission through blood to less than 1%; establishing at least one voluntary testing and counselling centre in every district; scaling up prevention of mother-to-child transmission activities up to the district level; achieving zero level increase of HIV/AIDS prevalence by 2007) <b>Malaria targets within the Tenth Plan period:</b> ABER (annual blood examination rate) over 10% API (annual parasite incidence) 1.3 or less	Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
13 25% reduction in morbidity and mortality due to malaria by 2007 and 50% by 2010 (NHP 2002)	--
14 --	Develop a global partnership for development

\* Sourced from the UNDP India website <http://www.undp.org.in/lhdg.htm> in mid-November 2006. The site is non-existent today.

\*\* Sourced from [http://www.undp.org.in/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=11&Itemid=44](http://www.undp.org.in/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=11&Itemid=44) in the 3rd week of Jan, 07