



**Sankala
Foundation**
Sankala Centre for Climate and Sustainability



Proceedings of the National Conference
on

Ageing in India

Emerging Realities, Evolving Responses

(1 August 2025, New Delhi)



In Partnership with

NITI Aayog

Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment

Ministry of Health & Family Welfare

and

National Human Rights Commission, India

Sankala Foundation
2025

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sankala

Sankala Foundation

Voice for a sustainable planet

2025

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Acknowledgements

The idea of the National Conference on **Ageing in India: Emerging Realities, Evolving Responses** was inspired by the growing recognition that ageing is one of the most significant social transformations of our time. The conference envisioned creating a platform to deliberate on the realities of ageing in India and to identify responses that are inclusive, sustainable and future-oriented.

We are grateful for the encouragement and collaboration from NITI Aayog, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, and the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), India, for this conference.

Our sincere thanks to Shri Bharat Lal, Secretary General and CEO, NHRC, India, for his vision and guidance in conceptualising the conference. His emphasis on human dignity, community action and evidence-based policymaking inspired the deliberations and shaped the publication of these proceedings.

We deeply appreciate the contributions of the moderators and panellists whose thoughtful participation gave direction and meaning to the discussions. Their insights and perspectives brought depth and diversity to the dialogue and reaffirmed the importance of collective action in addressing the needs of India's ageing population.

Special thanks to Dr Aarti Mahajan, Ms Yamini Rajora, Ms Ravina Yadav, Ms Shruti Chaurasia and Mr Saurabh Dutta of Sankala Foundation for their detailed and meticulous rapporteurship during the sessions. We also thank Ms Arti Dhar and Ms Palak Chakraborty for putting this report together.

Finally, we thank all participants and organisations whose energy and commitment made this initiative possible. This report stands as a shared commitment to a future where older persons are not only cared for but also recognised as vital contributors to India's social and economic development.

About Sankala Foundation

Sankala Foundation is a non-profit organisation dedicated to advancing research, training, and advocacy on themes including climate resilience, public health, water and sanitation, energy and education, to improve the lives of marginalised communities. The Foundation collaborates with government bodies, NGOs, and experts to develop innovative, evidence-based solutions that address climate change, resource management, and poverty eradication.

Sankala's Role in Public Health

Transforming public health care remains one of the core priorities of the Sankala Foundation. In pursuing this goal, the Foundation focuses on identifying sustainable, practical, and replicable solutions to bridge critical gaps in India's health system and enhance the overall well-being of communities.

As populations age, countries like India must respond to the diverse and complex needs of older persons, which place increasing financial and social pressures on systems and institutions. Addressing these challenges requires a deeper understanding of the economic, health, and social implications of ageing. In this context, the Sankala Foundation released a status report during the national conference on 'Ageing in India: Emerging Realities, Evolving Responses'. The report presents a comprehensive overview of the situation of the elderly in India, while also situating the discussion within a broader global perspective.

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Ageing is a global phenomenon and the factors that are leading to this demographic shift are better nutrition, falling fertility rates, declining mortality, and an increasing life expectancy. High income countries such as Japan, Italy and Germany have the world's largest proportions of elderly population exceeding 20% of their total population. At present, however, developing countries are experiencing an unprecedented demographic shift. As a result, by 2050, two-thirds of the elderly will be living in low-and-middle income countries. India, too, will join this league of nations with a high population of senior citizens.

India is at the cusp of an unprecedented and irreversible demographic transition. The proportion of elderly citizens is growing steadily. There will be more than 300 million elderly people in India by 2050, making up for 20.8% of the total population as against 104 million in 2011. In 2022, citizens above the age of 60 years made up 10% of the total population, with 140 million older people. This increase calls for urgent and sustained attention and action to ensure that the rights of the senior citizens are protected.

Keeping this scenario in mind, countries including India, will have to address the diverse and complex needs of the ageing population that will put a significant financial impact on them. Hence, it is important to understand the economic, health and social implications of this population segment to adequately cater to their needs.

Ageing cannot be understood just as a biological process. It is a social, economic and human rights issue that requires a comprehensive, rights-based approach. Traditionally in India, older people have stayed in their homes with their children that has given them some degree of support and economic security. However, this is gradually changing with younger people opting for nuclear families for various reasons, leaving the elders vulnerable to financial, physical, mental and emotional challenges.

Indian Scenario

Older people in India face multiple vulnerabilities such as social exclusion, financial insecurity, limited access to quality healthcare, and lack of opportunities for meaningful engagement in society. Income insecurity is stark in rural areas where older people often have to work for sustenance as they have no financial security at that age. Women, in particular, are dependent on their children or other family members. This dependency often results in ill-treatment and discrimination against the elderly.

This demographic transition in India is not uniform. Due to varying demographic trends, population ageing is being experienced at different times across states. The southern states have reported a higher proportion of elderly population. According to Census 2011, Kerala had the largest percentage of older people at 12.6% followed by Goa and Tamil Nadu. In 2021, while Kerala continued to top with 16.5% older people, Tamil Nadu reported 13.6%, Himachal Pradesh (13.1%), Punjab (12.6%) and Andhra Pradesh (12.4%).

Understanding the Multi-dimensional Challenges of India's Elderly

Healthcare concerns

- Chronic conditions are extremely common in the later years of life. In fact, nearly a fifth of the elderly population reported more than one chronic condition, i.e., multi-morbidity.
- Health insurance coverage of the elderly remains critically low, with only 18.6% elderly covered in rural areas and 17.3% in urban areas.
- Access to assistive devices is another observable gap with regards to elderly health. 24% of the elderly with visual impairments and 92% of the elderly with hearing impairments did not use spectacles and hearing aids, respectively.

Economic concerns

- 70% of the elderly are dependent on their families or pensions for basic sustenance.
- Nearly 78% of the elderly population is not covered by any pension support.
- 40% of the elderly in rural areas are still part of the workforce and 26% elderly in urban areas, hinting at a high level of financial insecurity amongst this group.
- One out of four elderly attributed 1 out of 4 elderly attributed healthcare-related expenses as the primary cause of indebtedness in urban areas.

Social concerns

- Disintegration of traditional joint family systems and rise of nuclear families has left many elderly living alone. Approximately 2.5% of the elderly men and 8.6% of the elderly women in India live alone. Tamil Nadu has reported the highest percentage of elderly living alone, followed by Nagaland and Telangana.
- Discrimination and stereotyping against the aged, known as 'ageism', leads to a rise in isolation and increased morbidity. This creates greater concerns regarding their safety and security.
- A large proportion of the elderly are not literate, making them more vulnerable to crimes such as financial or digital frauds. As per a report by Agewell Foundation published in 2018, 93.7% of the elderly did not know how to use any digital tools.

Source: LASI, Wave-1, 2017-18

Burden of Disease among Elderly

Concern	Key Figures
Physical Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none">» A third (35%) of the elderly are diagnosed with cardiovascular diseases.» 32% of the elderly reported hypertension.» Diabetes mellitus was reported by nearly 14% of the elderly.» Eight percent of the elderly reported having some type of chronic lung disease.» One in five elderly reported having chronic bone/joint diseases. Amongst this, arthritis was the most common making up 19% of the burden.
Mental Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none">» Self-reported prevalence of some type of neurological/psychiatric problem was 2.6% and depression was 0.8%.» More than 30% of the elderly population displayed depressive symptoms and nearly 8% were found to have probable major depression.
Disabilities and Functional Limitations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">» About 11% of the elderly have at least one form of impairment.» Major disabilities include locomotor impairment (6%), visual impairment (4%), mental and hearing impairment (3% each).» Mobility restrictions including stooping, kneeling and crouching are most commonly experienced by the elderly.» A quarter of the elderly (24%) reported having at least one Activities of Daily Living (ADL) limitation.
Nutrition	<ul style="list-style-type: none">» 27% of the elderly were reported to be underweight.» In contrast, 17% and 6% of the elderly were overweight and obese.

Policy framework to Support the Elderly in India

Recognising the unique needs and heightened vulnerability of the elderly, India has established a robust governance framework to support their well-being. This includes a combination of constitutional guarantees, legislative frameworks, and targeted policies and programmes.

Legal and Constitutional Guarantees

The Indian Constitution guarantees equality and wellbeing of older people through various provisions. Articles 21, 41, 46, and 47 of the Indian Constitution safeguard the interests and welfare of the elderly by upholding their rights. The Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act, 2007 is an important legislative provision which allows older persons to legally acquire financial support from their children when they are themselves unable to do so. This includes maintenance for the elderly in the family particularly from those who would inherit their property. It also provides for establishing old age homes, ensuring healthcare for the senior citizens and protection of their life and property.

Government support framework

Beyond constitutional and legal safeguards, India implements a range of programmes and schemes for the elderly, delivered through the coordinated efforts of various ministries, with the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment being the nodal organisation. Other Ministries include the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Ministry of Rural Development, Ministry of Finance, and the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs.

Role of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment

The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, being the nodal ministry in this domain has recognised the need to address the challenges posed by its ageing population through various policies and programmes. A significant step in this direction was the enactment of the Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act, 2007, which lays down legal provisions for the maintenance and support of elderly individuals, ensuring their social and financial security. Additionally, the National Policy on Older Persons (NPOP), introduced in 1999, serves as the foundation for state interventions, focusing on providing financial security, healthcare, shelter, and protection against abuse for older adults.

The Atal Vayo Abhyudaya Yojana of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment acts as an umbrella scheme under which various welfare programmes are being implemented for the welfare of the senior citizens. This includes operation and maintenance of senior citizen homes and mobile medical units under its Integrated Programme for Senior Citizens. Assistive devices and aids are being provided to senior citizens from economically weaker sections of society under the Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana.

Role of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare

The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare provides comprehensive and quality healthcare through its flagship initiative, the National Programme for Health Care of the Elderly (NPHCE). Under this programme, multidisciplinary institutions, such as the National Centres for Ageing, have been set up to serve as hubs for geriatric care, training and research. Regional Geriatric Centres have also been established across the country for building capacities of dedicated human resources and specialised care for elderly population. The Ayushman Bharat-Pradhan Mantri Jan Aarogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY) has extended health coverage to all citizens above the age of 70 years irrespective of their financial background.

Role of NITI Aayog

As the premier policy think tank of the government of India, NITI Aayog has been a key contributor in oversight and implementation of SDG 3, aiming to ‘ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all ages’. With a growing elderly population, NITI Aayog has been asserting greater attention to addressing their healthcare needs, arising from a greater burden of chronic diseases such as cancer, diabetes, and heart diseases, amongst others. NITI Aayog also released a position paper titled ‘Senior Care Reforms in India: Reimagining the Senior Care Paradigm’ in February 2024. The paper has been crucial in outlining the existing services available to the elderly and the gaps in elderly care that need to be addressed. This includes four major frontiers: health, social, financial, and digital inclusion of the elderly.

Role of the National Human Rights Commission, India

The National Human Rights Commission, India, has been instrumental in addressing issues related to the marginalised and vulnerable groups. It has constituted a Core Group on Protection and Welfare of Elderly Persons for addressing issues concerning older adults, identifying emerging challenges, and recommending actionable strategies.

In December 2024, Sankala Foundation, in collaboration with NHRC, India organised a seminar titled, ‘Ageing in India: Actionable Solutions’. The deliberation brought together policymakers, thought leaders, civil society members and practitioners to propose solutions on issues faced by the elderly. Several impactful recommendations were put forth addressing the health, nutritional, and socio-economic needs of the elderly.

While several schemes, programmes, entitlements, and laws exist for the elderly, gaps remain in their implementation that must be addressed. Some states, such as Kerala and Tamil Nadu, have undertaken exceptional initiatives for the elderly population, particularly for providing healthcare and palliative care, nutrition and social and physical security, that can guide other states to take up similar schemes or programmes.

Drawing from secondary literature and insights from experts, the Foundation prepare a status report on India’s ageing population. The report explores emerging global trends in ageing, sheds light on the complex, multidimensional challenges faced by older populations, and offers a focused lens on the evolving landscape of ageing in India. It also seeks to serve as a guide for forward-looking policy responses to effectively address the challenges of ageing in the Indian context.

Upon the completion of the report ‘Ageing in India: Challenges and Opportunities’, the Foundation organised a national conference titled ‘Ageing in India: Emerging Realities, Evolving Responses’ in New Delhi on 1 August 2025 to foster dialogue among diverse stakeholders.



About the Conference

A day-long national conference on 'Ageing in India: Emerging Realities, Evolving Responses' was organised in New Delhi on 1 August 2025. The conference was organised by Sankala Foundation, a research-based organisation, in partnership with NITI Aayog, the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, and the National Human Rights Commission, India.

The primary objective of the conference was to identify key opportunities presented by the rapidly growing elderly population of the country.

The specific objectives were:

1. To reframe ageing as an opportunity by highlighting the socio-economic and cultural contributions of older people
2. To explore innovative programmes and policies in practice across countries and states that reimagine elderly roles in society and foster age-inclusivity
3. To facilitate dialogue among diverse stakeholders, including government bodies, private sector, academia, and civil society, to develop age-inclusive initiatives
4. To showcase scalable best practices and research from India and globally that can be leveraged to drive interventions in healthcare economy, digital inclusion and more

The experts and participants deliberated on various themes in the following four sessions at the conference:

Session I: Strengthening Elderly Welfare: Policy and Practice

This session examined the existing policy landscape for elderly welfare and highlighted flagship initiatives of the government. Discussions focussed on bridging implementation gaps to ensure social security, dignity, and care for the ageing population.

Session II: Health and Mental Wellbeing of the Elderly

Speakers addressed the healthcare challenges of older adults, including non-communicable diseases, disabilities, and mental health concerns. The session emphasised the need for accessible, affordable, and holistic healthcare services.

Session III: Leveraging Ageing for Growth and Development

This session explored how the skills, experience, and knowledge of older persons can contribute to economic and social development. It underscored the importance of creating opportunities for active ageing and intergenerational engagement.

Session IV: Shaping Futures: Preparing for an Ageing Society

The final session reflected on demographic shifts and their implications for future policy and planning. It called for long-term strategies to build inclusive systems that can respond effectively to the realities of an ageing society.

With the participation of nearly 200 attendees, the conference yielded a number of important **recommendations**.

1. India needs to provide physical, mental and emotional support to its elderly population
2. Giving senior citizens opportunities to contribute meaningfully to 'silver economy' is equally critically

3. India's approach towards its senior citizens should be based on Indian values and ethos that supports family and community-led initiatives.
4. Citizens must start preparing early for an active, productive, and aspirational ageing. This can be done by early investment for old age and following a healthy lifestyle.
5. Lowering of labour-intensive work and use of technology provide an opportunity for the older people to use their knowledge, skills and wisdom in making a purposeful contribution to economy.
6. The government is committed to enhance ongoing efforts under the National Programme for Health Care of Elderly (NPHCE) to improve the lives of citizen particularly vulnerable sections such as the elderly people.
7. Model programme such as Kerala's Palliative Care may be adopted for elderly care. This programme can be a benchmark and guide the other states to take up similar initiatives.
8. There is a need for more decentralisation of elderly care. The local self- governments must shoulder bigger responsibilities in ensuring the dignity and wellbeing for the senior citizens.
9. Ensuring financial security of elderly is of paramount importance and that includes expanding pensions for unorganised sector.



Participants from diverse sectors gathered at the national conference on 'Ageing in India: Emerging Realities, Evolving Responses'

10. Digital and cybercrimes, and banking frauds are increasing with the elderly being the most vulnerable. There is a need for awareness generation as well as digital and financial literacy among elderly people.
11. Digital healthcare solutions for elderly, safety and security and assistive devices that aid Activities of Daily Living (ADL) need to be provided to the elders.
12. The number of mental health professionals and caregivers for the elderly need to be substantially increased.
13. Drafting a Charter for ease of living for the elders that would list out the services to be provided for the elders to make life easier for them.
14. Making gender-sensitive investments and including gender in the discussions on elderly because elderly women, particularly widows, have peculiar problems that need to be attended to by more investments and including gender issues in the discussions.
15. Amendments to the Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act, 2007 to enhance the monetary support to parents.
16. Creation of a specialised caregivers cadre trained for geriatric and palliative care. This would entail creating a specialised cohort of healthcare workers, trained in geriatric and palliative care. This specialised training could also be imparted to the Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHAs) as well.



Inaugural Session

Lighting of the lamp
Felicitation of dignitaries
Welcome remarks and agenda setting by Mr Devendra Kumar Nim, Director (Programme), Sankala Foundation
Release of report by Sankala Foundation titled 'Ageing in India: Challenges and Opportunities'
Inaugural address by Justice V Ramasubramanian, Chairperson, National Human Rights Commission, India
Special address by Dr Vinod K Paul, Member (Health, Nutrition and Education), NITI Aayog
Keynote address by Mr Bharat Lal, Secretary General and CEO, National Human Rights Commission, India
Presentation of Mementos
Vote of thanks by Dr Malvika Kaul, Director (Research and Communication), Sankala Foundation



(From left to right) Justice V Ramasubramanian, Chairperson, NHRC, India, Mr Devendra Kumar Nim, Director (Programme), Sankala Foundation, Dr Vinod K Paul, Member (Health, Nutrition & Education), Mr Bharat Lal, Secretary General and CEO, NHRC, India and Dr Malvika Kaul, Director (Research and Communications), Sankala Foundation, spoke during the inaugural session

Welcome Address: Mr Devendra Kumar Nim, Director (Programme), Sankala Foundation

In his welcome address, Mr Nim set the tone for the conference, stating that ageing was an important issue related to everyone. He said India was experiencing a silent demographic shift with its elderly population expected to double from the present 10% to 20.8% by 2050. He stated that this issue compelled us to ask tough questions about the dignity, needs, care, intergenerational equity and assess our responsibility towards the elderly as a society.

Mr Nim thanked NHRC, NITI Aayog, and the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment for their partnership in convening the conference. He shared that the conference is not only an occasion to reflect on ageing in India, but a call to develop a multisectoral, forward-looking response that respects the rights, needs, and aspirations of the elderly.

He outlined the purpose and structure of the four focused sessions, each curated to explore a distinct dimension of ageing. He reaffirmed Sankala Foundation's commitment to addressing complex human development challenges through research, advocacy, and collaborative engagement with diverse stakeholders.

Concluding with a verse from the Manusmriti, he reflected that for those who honour and serve the elderly, four virtues flourish: long life, wisdom, strength, and fame. A society, he said, must not honour its elders out of obligation, but in recognition of their intrinsic worth as knowledge keepers, nurturers, and architects of our shared past and present.

The welcome address was followed by the release of a status report, 'Ageing in India: Challenges and Opportunities' by the dignitaries: Justice V Ramasubramanian, Dr Vinod K Paul, and Mr Bharat Lal.



Mr Devendra Kumar Nim delivering the welcome address at the conference

A Status Report on 'Ageing in India: Challenges and Opportunities'

Recognising the rapid demographic shift taking place in India, Sankala Foundation undertook research on the subject of ageing with a focussed analysis of the Indian scenario. The status report underscores both the challenges and opportunities arising from the social, health and economic impacts of the demographic transition. The report is based on secondary research, encompassing an extensive literature review, analysis of existing data, and discussions with key stakeholders.

The research-based report highlights key socio-economic and health indicators associated with India's aged population and the disparities across states. It offers an overview of the existing programmes and schemes for the aged population, implemented by various ministries and departments. It makes recommendations to address existing gaps in policies and services, aiming to enhance support for the elderly in India.

Some of the actionable recommendations made in the report focus on socio-economic empowerment, health and nutrition, ensuring a safe, secure and dignified future through supportive physical and social empowerments, and an aged-friendly environment.



A status report titled 'Ageing in India: Challenges and Opportunities', prepared by Sankala Foundation, was released at the conference

Inaugural Address: Justice V Ramasubramanian, Chairperson of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), India

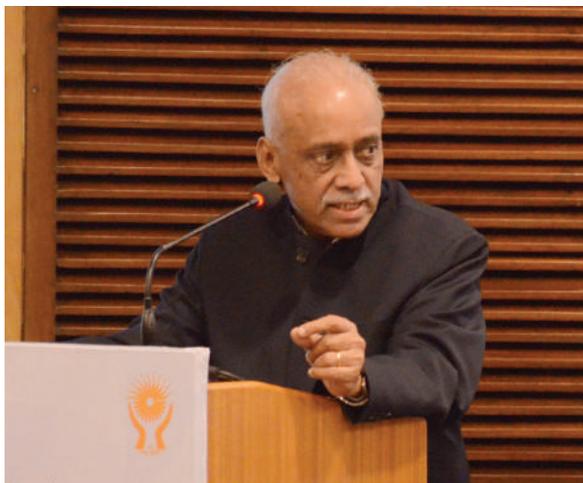
Inaugurating the conference, Justice Ramasubramanian said India's rich cultural tradition advocates care and reverence for the elderly as a fundamental societal value. Drawing references from the Tamil literature and the Yajurveda, he called for the integration of these ancient values and principles into modern policy frameworks to ensure the dignity, protection and well-being of senior citizens. This also aligns with the NHRC's mandate to uphold human rights, he added.

"There is a need for stronger community and family ties to enhance the quality of life for the elderly population. Upholding the dignity of the elderly people is the collective responsibility of society."

Justice V Ramasubramanian
Chairperson, NHRC, India

Underscoring the Commission's commitment to protecting the rights of the elderly, Justice Ramasubramanian highlighted its various initiatives, including advisories, core group meetings, research studies and cases where the Commission had taken Suo-motu cognisance. These efforts focussed on developing actionable models related to health, housing, and social inclusion.

The NHRC had also supported elder helplines for reporting abuse, seeking legal and medical assistance and took Suo-motu cognisance of various cases involving elder neglect. Speaking about the Core Group on Protection and Welfare of Elderly Persons, he said that the group seeks to recommend improvements in the statutory systems



(From left to right) Justice V Ramasubramanian and Dr Vinod K Paul at the conference

and issues directives to the states for the welfare of the senior citizens.

Advocating for stronger community and familial ties to enhance the quality of life for the ageing population, Justice Ramasubramanian, said upholding the dignity of the elderly people was the collective responsibility of society. Justice Ramasubramanian expressed concern over the breakdown of the traditional family system. Historically, families supported the elderly, the infirm, and the disabled, without seeking assistance from the state.

Reflecting on legal milestones, he mentioned the 2007 enactment of the Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act. As a High Court judge, he had presided over several cases where children took property from their parents for business ventures or to repay loans, only to later abandon them. The Act gives senior citizens the legal right to seek maintenance and, where applicable, to annul property transfers if they are neglected.

Special Address: Dr Vinod K Paul, Member (Health, Nutrition and Education), NITI Aayog

Dr Paul presented three important recommendations as part of his address during the inaugural session. Firstly, he emphasised the need for governments and institutions to devise ways of empowering and educating families and communities so that they can support the elderly financially, physically, and emotionally.

Dr Paul stressed that India needs to focus on building a hybrid model of elderly care, where home-based care remains at the foundation, but is complemented by structured support—whether partial assistance, professional guidance, or full institutional backing when required. This would include both financial aid and service-based interventions to ease the caregiving burden on families.

The second suggestion made by him was to draft a Charter for 'Ease of Living' for the elderly that should list essential services and support systems for the elders to make daily life easier for them. He noted that the elderly often face challenges in carrying out routine tasks such as filing pension applications, paying electricity bills, purchasing medicines, and even daily needs like cooking their meals. He stressed that such essential aspects should be incorporated into the 'Ease of Living' charter, with relevant authorities taking responsibility to ensure that older persons can access these services with greater ease. He also said it was important to acknowledge the needs of rural and urban settings differently.

Finally, he said, people must prepare for their old age when they are young. An important aspect of this is financial planning and starting savings and investing at an early age. India should look into best practices across countries to ensure financial security in the later years and promote creation of innovative financial products that ensure basic sustenance in old age.

Keynote Address: Mr Bharat Lal, Secretary General and CEO, National Human Rights Commission, India

Mr Bharat Lal said that the NHRC was committed to the upliftment of the most vulnerable sections of the society, particularly the dignity and well-being of the elderly individuals. In India, this cohort poses both challenges and opportunities, he emphasised while drawing attention to the needs of the 35 crore individuals who would be above the age of 60 years by 2050. Before the elderly population expands further, India has a crucial window of opportunity to prepare for the future through well-informed and carefully designed policy reforms.

He cited some prominent global examples that India could draw lessons from. Japan has pioneered smart ageing cities, the use of robotics in care, and a public long-term care insurance system. Germany offers paid family caregiving allowances and promotes innovative co-housing models. Sweden focuses on autonomy-focussed care systems and community based efforts for elder care, while the USA and the UK have developed robust programmes for fraud prevention and digital literacy among seniors to access healthcare and banking services.



Mr Bharat Lal delivering the keynote address

While speaking of the Indian situation, he highlighted the high burden of chronic diseases amongst elderly, including prevalence of hypertension, diabetes and cardiovascular conditions. Mental health is also becoming a major challenge. He highlighted the need for community caregiving models by standardising and strengthening the caregiving sector. In terms of managing the growing mental health crisis, he mentioned that the NHRC is working with the National Medical Commission to align India's mental healthcare workforce with global standards and the Mental Healthcare Act, 2017. At present, India has approximately one psychiatrist per 1 lakh population and the government aims to double this in the next five years.

Mr Lal also spoke about the higher vulnerability of elderly due to high out of pocket expenditure on health because of extremely low health insurance coverage. Furthermore, while disability levels are high, access to assistive devices remains very low, specifically hearing and visual aids. Rural elderly face greater vulnerability in this regard. Financial insecurity was another major concern highlighted by Mr Lal. He mentioned that more than 70% of the elderly do not have access to pension.

“India should view this population segment not as a burden, but as an opportunity: to elevate the quality of life; to build a robust silver economy; and to tap into the wisdom, experience, and potential of older citizens.”

Mr Bharat Lal

Secretary General & CEO, NHRC

Despite several challenges, Mr Lal urged all stakeholders to view this population segment not as a burden, but as an opportunity: to elevate the quality of life; to build a robust silver economy; and to tap into the wisdom, experience, and potential of older citizens. He urged for investment in age-friendly infrastructure, including

accessible transport, senior housing and geriatric healthcare. Healthy and empowered elders can help catalyse growth of the silver economy through active and meaningful engagement and volunteering. Mr Lal emphasised on community-based services and inter-generational engagements for elderly care on the models of Scandinavian countries and Japan by adapting them to the Indian cultural context.



A cross-section of participants at the conference



Session I: Strengthening Elderly Welfare: Policy and Practice

Chair: Mr Amit Yadav, Secretary, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment
Distinguished speakers:
Mr Amarjeet Sinha, former Secretary, Department of Rural Development and former Advisor, Prime Minister's Office
Mr Vijay Nehra, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
Dr Arun S. Nair, Director, Social Justice Department, Kerala
Mr Mathew Cherian, Global Ambassador for Ageing, Helpage International
Mr Jaydeep Biswas, Chief of Policy, Advocacy, and Partnership at UNFPA, India

India will need to realign and re-orient its existing policy landscape to ensure a more effective and efficient senior care ecosystem. Its various programs and policies need to address the specific needs of the ageing population, such as increasing access to affordable healthcare services, strengthening the social welfare system, and promoting economic opportunities to ensure seniors are protected against economic hardships.



The first technical session at the conference focussed on strengthening elderly welfare through policy and practice

Chair:

Mr Amit Yadav, Secretary, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment

Mr Yadav stated that the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment was working on a policy for the elderly people with the guiding principles being ageing with dignity, healthy ageing, productive ageing and ageing in place. Mr Yadav highlighted the importance of imbibing Indian values in ensuring dignity and respect to the seniors in the family. He spoke about inter-generational bonding that would create a connect between the older and younger generations. This, however, should not be confined to the families but should also extend to the communities.

Adequate nutrition and a healthy mind and body are important elements of healthy ageing. He stressed that individuals should start preparing for their old age from their early years. Furthermore, the policy will focus on productive ageing, not just in economic terms, but how elderly continue to participate and engage in all aspects of society.

Mr Yadav emphasised the need to regulate senior citizen residences, both public and private, as these facilities often struggle with high costs, limited availability, and inadequate quality of services. He noted that while the concept of old age homes is rapidly expanding in the country, the proposed policy would address these challenges by placing greater focus on the principle of 'ageing in place'.

Expressing concern over the increasing online financial frauds and cybercrimes involving senior citizens, Mr Yadav said security from such frauds was as important as physical safety and there was a need to create awareness among the senior citizens on this issue.

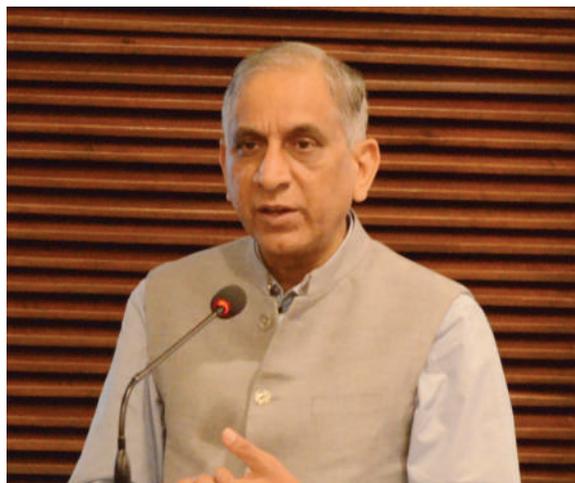
"The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment is working on a policy for the elderly people with the guiding principles being ageing with dignity, healthy ageing, productive ageing and ageing in place."

Mr Amit Yadav

Secretary,

Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment

- » CSR initiatives: Need to look into such initiatives working in areas such health and education



Mr Amit Yadav moderates a session at the conference

Finally, Mr Yadav highlighted certain 'Cs' required for development of any policy for the elderly. These were:

- » Care: refers to healthcare including care by family and society
- » Compassion: needs to be part of the value system to ensure dignified treatment of elderly
- » Convergence: Across governments, agencies and stakeholders
- » Collaboration: Alongside convergence, there is need for collaborative efforts by civil society
- » Communication: Needs to be built into the policy frameworks for purposes of awareness generation amongst people

Mr Amarjeet Sinha, former Secretary, Department of Rural Development and former Advisor, Prime Minister's Office:

Advocating for creating a supportive environment for the ageing population, Mr Sinha said there was a need for a focussed community approach that leverages decentralised action, recognises local governance, and engages civil society organisations and community resource persons effectively for the welfare of the senior citizens.



(From left to right) Mr Amarjeet Sinha and Mr Vijay Nehra at the conference

Mr Sinha also noted that elderly often face challenges in availing and benefiting from existing schemes. He gave the example of the Pradhan Mantri Jan Aarogya Yojana which provides free secondary and tertiary care for all above the age of 70 years but noted that facilitation of the same on the ground comes with many challenges. This is where he highlighted the importance of self-help groups who help in grassroot facilitation.

Advocating for the creation of a cadre of self-help groups (SHG) of the elderly on the lines of the women’s SHGs under the National Rural Livelihood Mission that has revolutionised the rural economy, Mr Sinha said collectives of elderly people with a little support from Community Resource Persons (CRPs) who are also from the same community would go a long way in ensuring that welfare schemes reach the last mile. He said HelpAge India had done this experiment and the results were positive. “Things do not happen on their own. Processes have to be facilitated and a decentralised community action for the elderly was required”, he added.

Mr Sinha said resources are never a hurdle in taking up initiatives for public good. He cited the examples of the Mid Day Meals scheme started in Tamil Nadu that eventually became a national scheme.

In the context of ensuring dignity for the elderly, Mr Sinha noted that dignity comes also from the ability to live on your own. He emphasised that the elderly should be provided with the means to live as independently as possible. Pensions play some role in providing elderly with financial independence. However, old-age pensions as provided under National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP) remain meagre and will need to be increased to ensure financial security.

“We should create a cadre of self-help groups of the elderly. Collectives of elderly people with little support from Community Resource Persons (CRPs) would go a long way in ensuring that welfare schemes reach the last mile.”

Mr Amarjeet Sinha

Former Advisor, Prime Minister’s Office

Mr Sinha urged the government to equip Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHAs) with skills in geriatric and palliative care to ensure that elderly populations in rural areas receive adequate healthcare. He highlighted the example of Kerala, where caregivers make home-based visits to provide palliative care to older persons. To recognise and strengthen the critical role of ASHAs, he stressed the need for enhanced performance-based incentives, noting that this cadre holds immense potential in delivering care to the rapidly growing elderly population.

Mr Sinha also spoke about elderly participation in economic activity as an important pathway of ensuring financial security. He highlighted that a large number of people availing employment under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) are elderly, in spite of such work involving heavy physical manual labour. Earnings through MGNREGA has enabled many elderly to live independently. Other possibilities of work must be explored to generate some income in the later years.

Mr Vijay Nehra, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare:

Mr Nehra said that the Ministry was in the process of evaluating the National Programme for the Health Care of Elderly (NPHCE) and the recommendations of the conference would help in the process. Outlining the key pillars of the Programme, Mr Nehra said that the National Centres for Ageing at AIIMS, Delhi and Chennai, with another coming up in Varanasi, Regional Geriatric Centres and district-level geriatric care units, were all meant to provide healthcare facilities to the elderly population.

He noted that healthcare workers and caregivers are being systematically trained in geriatric care across the country, extending down to the district level. Furthermore, Aarogya Mitras have been deployed at every tier under the Pradhan Mantri Jan Aarogya Yojana (PM-JAY), which also offers health insurance to all individuals above the age of 70, irrespective of their economic status.

Mr Nehra firmly stated that ageing policy cannot be restricted to economic, legislative, or healthcare domains only. It must involve the government, the society and all stakeholders for a long-term strategy.

He outlined the key components of the Ministry's flagship initiative, the National Programme for Health Care of the Elderly (NPHCE):

- Operational National Centres for Ageing at AIIMS Delhi and Chennai, with a third upcoming in Varanasi
- Regional geriatric centres and district-level geriatric care units,
- Comprehensive training of healthcare professionals and caregivers across districts,
- Universal health coverage for all citizens above the age of 70,
- Deployment of Aarogya Mitras at every level through the Pradhan Mantri Jan Aarogya Yojana (PM-JAY).

Mr Nehra called for a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach, one that mobilises every ministry, civil institution, and community organisation to act in a coordinated and sustained manner. Symbolic or episodic measures, he warned, will fall short. Only long-term, integrated interventions can meaningfully address the complex and growing needs of India's elderly.

In his closing remarks, Mr Nehra affirmed the Ministry's intention to continue working closely with partners such as the NITI Aayog and NHRC and expressed the hope that conversations such as this one would lead to more grounded, impactful action for India's elderly population.

Dr Arun S Nair, Director, Social Justice Department, Kerala

Dr Nair said that actionable policies were required for the elderly that can be implemented on the ground. He said that while the Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act, 2007, was a step forward, effective implementation is lacking while suggesting amendments to the Act to enhance the monthly monetary support.

Dr. Nair underscored the importance of healthcare reforms to ensure healthy ageing and quality of life for elderly. He gave the example of Kerala's palliative care policy where a group of experts at the panchayat level make home visits to take care of the elderly as a replicable model.



Dr Arun S Nair at the conference

With the digital economy growing rapidly, Dr Nair stressed the importance of digital and financial literacy among the elderly. Enhancing their competencies in these areas can improve access to services, protect them from fraud, and foster independence. He gave the example of digital literacy efforts through panchayats and Kudumbashree already operational in Kerala. He also said that the state will soon announce elderly in the age group of 60-70 years as digitally literate and will carry out similar digital literacy efforts for those above 80 years in the mission's second phase.

Dr Nair said there is also a proposal for creating a Skill Bank in Kerala where seniors aged 60+ can register with their skillsets and area of expertise. This database can be leveraged to connect senior citizens with income-generating opportunities, ensuring productive ageing and social inclusion and create a silver dividend.

Lastly, Dr Nair spoke about ensuring physical safety for our elderly, such as avoiding cases of falls amongst the elderly. He said that such cases are extremely high amongst those above the age of 80 years and individuals are often unable to get proper treatment for the same. In this regard, he mentioned that the Kerala State government is in the process of designing a programme to create fall-free panchayats. The programme will function by incentivising homes that have elder friendly infrastructure, such as fittings of ramps, etc within homes. On a broader note, he emphasised the role of decentralisation in ensuring safe environment and inclusive physical infrastructure at the village level.



Participants found the sessions engaging and full of new insights



(From left to right) Mr Mathew Cherian and Mr Jaydeep Biswas at the conference

Mr Mathew Cherian, Global Ambassador for Ageing, HelpAge International:

Mr Cherian listed out the financial and physical challenges faced by the elderly population India, particularly those above 80 years. He recommended pensions for all elderly citizens along with livelihood security.

Mr Cherian highlighted the “feminisation of ageing”, noting that 55% of India’s elderly population comprises women, who tend to outlive men by three to four years. However, widowhood often plunges them into deeper vulnerability. After the death of a spouse, elderly women face issues such as lack of mobility, physical ailments like osteoarthritis, and the absence of caregiving support. Most have no pension, and widowhood frequently isolates them from economic and social networks. Therefore, there is a need to stress on the need for including women-centric policies in discussions around ageing.

Advocating for establishment of a comprehensive policy and a dedicated Ministry for Senior Citizens to address their specific needs, Mr Cherian said the goals of this Ministry should be to achieve health for all, enhancing care and safety systems, social security, and ensuring accountability and adaptive governance.

Pointing out that there was no dedicated healthcare for those above the age of 80 years, Mr Cherian said their health needs were different from others. Quoting from a HelpAge India report, Mr Cherian said that the biggest demand from the elders was that of free treatment and healthcare followed by financial aid. He said there was a need for separate hospitals for the elderly care. He said Kerala was the only state that had volunteers under the Kudumbashree health scheme who supported the elderly in their health care through training in geriatric and palliative care in every district.

Mr Cherian highlighted on the need to work on age friendly environment in the country, health promotion across life course, and primary health care and long-term health care for the people.

Mr Jaydeep Biswas, Chief, Policy & Partnership, UNFPA:

Mr Biswas appreciated the intersectoral nature of the dialogue, which he stressed was essential to tackle the complex challenges of elderly welfare.

Fewer than one-third of elderly individuals have consistent income support. Mr. Biswas highlighted that there is a need

to incrementally invest in and redesign pension systems to make them more meaningful, especially for the unorganised sector and informal workers who often do not plan for retirement.

Reflecting on the demographic landscape, Mr Biswas noted that India stands at a pivotal juncture. Over the next three decades, the country is expected to undergo a significant demographic transition. By the year 2046, he stated, India will witness a crossover, where the population of older persons will surpass that of the younger demographic. This projected shift, he argued, represents a strategic “sweet spot,” offering India both an urgent challenge and a critical opportunity to shape inclusive and forward-looking policies for its ageing population.

Mr Biswas outlined three key policy priorities:

Income Support: He highlighted that less than one-third of India’s elderly currently have any form of stable income support. He called for incremental investment in pension systems, designed in ways that ensure they are meaningful and accessible. While pensions may not be wholly sufficient, they remain a necessary pillar in securing the economic autonomy of older persons.

Health Systems: Mr Biswas stressed the need to redesign existing health programmes to better align with the needs of an ageing population. He called for increased geriatric investment, noting that policy frameworks must be matched by adequate financial outlays if they are to translate into tangible outcomes.

Feminisation of Ageing: Noting the rising proportion of elderly women in India, he drew attention to the gendered dimensions of ageing. Issues faced by widows, including social isolation and lack of access to healthcare, require targeted policy responses. Different forms of investment, he argued, are needed to address the specific vulnerabilities of older women.

Mr Biswas commended the inter-ministerial collaboration evident at the conference and reaffirmed UNFPA’s commitment to be a helping hand in this collective effort.

Session II: Health and Mental Wellbeing of the Elderly

Chair: Ms Preeti Sudan, former Chairperson, UPSC and former Secretary, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
Distinguished speakers:
Dr Sanjay Wadhwa, Professor and Head, Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, AIIMS, New Delhi
Dr Manohar Agnani, Professor, Public Health, Azim Premji University, Bhopal, and former Additional Secretary, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
Dr Rajendra Pratap Gupta, Founder, Health Parliament, former Advisor to the Union Health Minister, Government of India
Dr Sivakumar Palanimuthu Thangaraju, Professor of Psychiatry and Head, Geriatric Unit, Department of Psychiatry, NIMHANS, Bengaluru
Mr Yudhistir Govinda Das, Director of Communications, ISKCON, India

In India, seniors face a higher risk of degenerative diseases, requiring long-term care and support. The burden of communicable diseases among the elderly is also high. Reforms in the elderly healthcare landscape are needed. Long-term palliative care and senior care needs immediate attention. Geriatric care is still a relatively new area in healthcare and has not expanded beyond some cities.



(From left to right) Dr P T Sivakumar, Professor, Psychiatry and Head, Geriatric Psychiatry Unit, NIMHANS, Dr Rajendra Pratap Gupta, Founder, Health Parliament, former Advisor to the Union Health Minister, Govt. of India, Dr Sanjay Wadhwa, Professor and Head, Dept of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, AIIMS, New Delhi, Ms Preeti Sudan, former Chairperson, UPSC and former Secretary, MoHFW, Dr Manohar Agnani, Professor, Public Health, Azim Premji University, Bhopal, former Addl. Secretary, MoHFW and Mr Yudhistir Govinda Das, Director of Communications, ISKCON, India

Chair:

Ms Preeti Sudan, former Chairperson, Union Public Service Commission:

Ms Sudan stressed on the importance of communicating with the elders to help them vent their feelings while highlighting on the need for family support and encouraging the younger generations to follow traditional family structures.

She emphasised the importance of communication in safeguarding the mental well-being of the elderly. She noted that many older adults suffer in silence, often without anyone to truly listen to them. She underscored the value of intergenerational engagement and meaningful social interaction in combating loneliness and emotional distress among the ageing population.

Ms Sudan also reflected on the evolving dynamics of Indian families, observing how younger generations are increasingly gravitating toward individualistic and self-reliant lifestyles. This shift away from traditional joint family systems, she noted, has significant implications for elder care—resulting in reduced familial support and, in many cases, increased social isolation for the elderly. She called for the creation of flexible and adaptive support systems that respond to these emerging realities.



Ms Preeti Sudan moderates a session at the conference

Dr Sanjay Wadhwa, Professor & Head, Department of Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation, AIIMS:

Dr Wadhwa explained the concept of geriatric rehabilitation stating that medical rehabilitation was important for all age groups, but particularly more for the elderly people. He said some health conditions of the elderly were reversible and treatable if rehabilitation is started early because delay may cost lives or even adversely impact the quality of life. There are a large number of medical colleges in India but very few specialise in geriatric rehabilitation. More collaboration is required across different stakeholders to address this issue.

Dr Wadhwa spelt out the eight `Es of geriatric care:

1. Evaluation - Health issues, resources and family structure of individuals concerned need to be evaluated for proper rehabilitation.
2. Education - Lack of awareness means hesitance to ask the doctor. There is overuse of medical jargon which most patients do not understand and also hesitate to ask questions. Hence, there is a need to simplify medical jargon for the patients and medical professionals both. Lack of education could also result in further issues such as improper consumption of medicines.
3. Exercise - This is the core of medical rehabilitation. Exercise itself is a medicine. It is the least understood and least utilised but most effective way of keeping healthy. Poly medication is an emerging concern among the elderly due to consumption of 4-5 medicines at once. This may not be needed if regular exercise is incorporated into daily routine.
4. Equipment - This means equipment required for elderly support such as walking sticks, hearing aids, and visual aid. Not much attention is given to the type of equipment needed as largely available equipment is not suited to all.
5. Environment - Sometimes a senior citizen becomes disabled not because of medical issues but because the environment around him/her is disabling.
6. Exploration - Surgical interventions for elderly medical issues such as joint replacement required for medical rehabilitation of the elderly population.
7. Enablement - Enabling the elderly to perform day to day activities by themselves.
8. Empowerment - Empowering the elderly to lead life with dignity through appropriate policy measures



(From left to right) Dr Sanjay Wadhwa and Dr Manohar Agnani at the conference

Dr Manohar Agnani, Professor, Azim Premji University, Bhopal, Former Addl. Secretary, MoHFW:

Dr Agnani spoke of the real-life challenges faced by the caregivers as balancing external responsibilities and eldercare has become increasingly difficult. He said that families were not prepared for the demands of the future, especially given the changing dynamics of the younger generation.

Dr Agnani also pointed out how caregiving continues to be deeply gendered, with women primarily expected to assume this responsibility, often without adequate support or recognition.

The growing preference of older persons to age at home has made home-based and palliative care increasingly relevant. Most caregivers today remain informal, underpaid, uncertified, and often work in poor conditions, especially in smaller cities where such services are scarce.

Dr Agnani noted that steps are already underway to formalise the caregiving sector, with initiatives led by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (MoSJE) and the Home Management and Caregivers Sector Skill Council, including the establishment of national certification systems and the development of standardised caregiving curricula aligned with industry needs.

To take existing efforts a step forward, Dr Agnani proposed the creation of a trained cadre of caregivers. However, he also acknowledged that there are challenges associated with this since providing certified training needs to be matched with adequate and appropriate jobs in the market. To address this, he suggested creation of a digital platform that provides a list of trained caregivers along with details of certification who can be readily matched with employment opportunities. Additionally, as pathways to create employment linkages, he stressed the importance of mandating certifications in eldercare institutions, offering subsidies and tax breaks to employers and linking caregivers to social insurance schemes.

“I propose the creation of a trained cadre of caregivers. There should be certified trainings and a digital platform that provides list of trained caregivers to match with appropriate jobs.”

Dr Manohar Agnani

Professor, Azim Premji University, Bhopal,
Former Addl. Secretary, MoHFW



(From left to right) Dr Rajendra Pratap Gupta and Dr PT Sivakumar at the conference

Dr Rajendra Pratap Gupta, President, Global Digital Health Corporation:

Dr Gupta highlighted the importance of shifting from a mindset of demographic dividend to one of demographic opportunity. He observed that although India's median age is only 30 years, the country already has nearly 150 million elderly citizens, placing it at a demographic crossroads in deciding whether to prioritise investments in its youth or its ageing population. Furthermore, with family structures changing, many older persons live alone. He cited the example of Japan, where one in eight houses are abandoned, referred to as 'AKIYA'.

He emphasised that policymakers must recognise how rapidly declining fertility rates will result in a significant reduction in population growth, ultimately leading to higher old-age dependency ratios. Given this context, there is a pressing need for realistic policy planning and a reorientation of healthcare policies and resources to adequately address the needs of an ageing population.

He noted that over 60% of India's senior citizens have at least one chronic illness, and a significant percentage live with multiple conditions, yet there is a critical shortage of geriatric specialists—less than 1,500 practitioners in a country that needs over 30,000. He advocated for the creation of a dedicated cadre of healthcare professionals, with nurses playing a larger role in geriatric care delivery.

Further, he pointed out that healthcare schemes such as PM-JAY need re-evaluation in light of the average life expectancy and actual coverage utility. Future planning must account for falling mortality rates, falling birth rates, shifting family structures, and increased internal and international migration—all of which will impact the support ratio for the elderly.

Dr Sivakumar Palanimuthu Thangaraju, Professor and Head, NIMHANS, Bengaluru:

Dr Sivakumar focussed on the heterogeneity of the ageing experience and outlined what he referred to as the healthy ageing spectrum. One-third of the elderly population in India remains relatively healthy and independent. Another third comprises individuals who have health conditions requiring regular medical attention and care. The remaining one-third of the elderly population is largely disabled or fully dependent on caregivers for their daily functioning. Despite this wide spectrum, disability and mental health issues in older persons remain poorly addressed due to a persistent lack of public awareness and the stigma surrounding age-related illnesses such as dementia. He noted that the treatment gap in geriatric mental health stands at nearly 90 percent. He said there was a need to realign mental health services towards geriatric care.



A cross-section of participants at the conference

Dr Sivakumar highlighted the importance of building a workforce equipped to provide specialised care for the elderly. This includes not just professional healthcare providers but also family members and volunteers who must be adequately trained to offer informed and compassionate care. He particularly emphasised the need for structured mental healthcare services for older persons, which includes accurate diagnosis, long-term caregiving support, and post-diagnostic engagement

He also said inter-sectoral collaboration was required, particularly, between NITI Aayog, civil society organisation and other government stakeholders to address the issues related to mental healthcare of the elders.



Mr Yudhistir Govinda Das speaking at the conference

Mr Yudhistir Govinda Das, Director, Communications, ISKCON, India:

Mr Das spoke of cultural and spiritual traditions of ageing in India, drawing from Indian epics and religious literature.

Mr Das explained how modern society, with its emphasis on individualism and nuclear families, often leaves the elderly isolated. He linked this to the Hindu philosophy and emphasised that sensitising younger generations to caregiving from an early age is crucial to reversing this disconnect.

Pointing out that caregiving must be viewed as a lifelong cultural value, not merely a duty that begins in adulthood, Mr Das said ISKCON approached aged caregiving by creating intergenerational support systems pairing younger monks with older ones to ensure mutual learning, respect, and emotional wellbeing.

He concluded with a reminder that the caregiving culture must be rebuilt, especially as nuclear family structures strain intergenerational bonds. Public sensitisation, he said, is essential to strengthening the social fabric and reviving traditional Indian values of care and gratitude.

Session-III: Leveraging Ageing for Growth and Development

Chair: Mr Amitabh Kant, former G20 Sherpa, India and former CEO, NITI Aayog
Distinguished speakers:
Dr Kiran Bedi, former Lt. Governor of Puducherry
Mr V Srinivas, Secretary, DARPG and Department of Pensions and Pensioners Welfare, Govt of India
Mr Manoj Yadava, former Director General, Railway Protection Force, former DG, National Human Rights Commission, India
Prof T V Sekhar, Department of Family and Generations, International Institute for Population Services, Mumbai

The economic impact of an ageing population is significant. The contribution of the old adults to the labour force substantially decreases with increase in their population. Also, the social benefits extended by the elderly population through their unpaid work, which includes care tasks, volunteer activities, etc., are neither recognised nor quantified. The country’s pension system also needs to be strengthened.



(From left to right) Mr Manoj Yadava, Director General, Railway Protection Force, former DG, NHRC, India, Dr Kiran Bedi, former Lt. Governor of Puducherry, Mr Amitabh Kant, former G20 Sherpa of India and former CEO, NITI Aayog, Mr V Srinivas, Secretary, DARPG and Dept. of Pensioners’ Welfare, Govt. of India, and Prof. T V Sekhar, Department of Family and Generations, International Institute of Population Sciences, Mumbai

Chair:

Mr Amitabh Kant, former G20 Sherpa, India and former CEO, NITI Aayog

Mr Amitabh Kant chaired the session on ‘Leveraging Ageing for Growth and Development’.

Mr Kant posed the first question to **Ms Kiran Bedi, former Lt Governor of Puducherry** on how an ageing population is not seen as a burden but an asset.

Dr Bedi began her address by playing the reflective country song “The Older I Get” by Alan Jackson, setting the tone for an introspective and forward-looking discussion on how society understands and prepares for ageing. She used the song to illustrate that the process of growing older must not be viewed with resignation, but with purpose, preparation, and pride.

Emphasising the importance of starting early, Dr Bedi called for a cultural and educational shift that begins in childhood.

Children and young adults, she stated, must be sensitised from an early age to view ageing not as decline, but as a natural and valuable phase of life. This change in mindset must be supported by preparation across financial planning, health awareness, and emotional resilience. “We must not take our youth for granted,” she said, stressing the need to value nutrition, physical fitness, financial literacy, and strong family ties from the outset. She specifically highlighted weight training as essential for building long-term strength and mobility and encouraged systematic education around healthier ageing. She also advocated strongly for adopting yoga from a young age.

Alongside good health, financial and social security are critical for dignified ageing. She mentioned the concept of ‘Gati Shakti’ to be introduced in projects and schemes meant for older people and proposed a “SWOT” (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) framework for senior citizens to guide policymakers on ageing in India. Dr Bedi said that all ministers and ministries responsible for senior citizen policymaking must come together once a month for this, even at the rural level.

Dr Bedi said families, friends, professional and spiritual fraternities should be recognised as strengths, and policies should incentivise intergenerational living as is done in countries like Singapore. At the same time, she flagged certain weaknesses in the preparation for ageing, i.e., inadequate infrastructure, poor coordination at the village and RWA levels, and health concerns

Mr Kant’s second question was to **Mr V Srinivas, Secretary, DARPG and Department of Pensions and Pensioners Welfare, Govt of India**, from whom he sought to know what policies and infrastructure investment were needed for active, age-friendly living for the senior population.

Mr Srinivas said life expectancy has increased tremendously with a number of people living for over 100 years and many of them living for over 90 years. A life of dignity was only possible only if there is a good pensions scheme, good healthcare



Mr Amitabh Kant moderates a session at the conference

“Children and young adults must be sensitised from an early age to view ageing not as decline, but as a natural and valuable phase of life.”

Dr Kiran Bedi

former Lt Governor of Puducherry



(From left to right) Dr Kiran Bedi and Mr V Srinivas at the conference

facilities, digital empowerment and engagement of the senior citizens.

The government's policy for improving pensioners welfare is to ensure that everyone gets a pension from the date of retirement for which a digital life expectancy certificate is to be provided. The government has worked on simplifying pensioners' interface with the government by digital empowerment where an individual does not need to visit a bank or treasury for authentication. Mr Srinivas said that last year 1.62 crore pensioners submitted digital life certificates and this year the number is expected to touch two crores.

Mr Srinivas also spoke about the Anubhav Awards, an initiative that allows retired civil servants, scientists, and public officials to document and share their professional experiences. Every month, the government highlights one Anubhav awardee whose contributions have shaped governance, science, policy, or administration. This is not only a recognition of their legacy, he explained, but also a way to inspire future generations by capturing institutional memory.

"A life of dignity is possible only if there is a good pension scheme, good healthcare facilities, digital empowerment and engagement of the senior citizens."

Mr V Srinivas

Secretary,

DARPG and Department of Pensions and Pensioners Welfare, Govt. of India

Mr Srinivas said noted that the ensuring healthcare, digital empowerment and timely pension have been given immense attention by the government. However, he mentioned that there have been challenges as well. He said there are about 200,000 grievances received from the pensioners every year regarding timely disbursement of pension, upgradation and revision of pension. There are a number of litigations also. For this, the government has a dedicated grievance redressal mechanism.

Responding to Mr Kant's question on how to better leverage the economic schemes aimed at older people and improve the existing scheme, **Mr Manoj Yadava, former Director General, Railway Protection Force and former DG Haryana Police** said globally the potential of the grey economy was being recognised. If India has to achieve its targets of Viksit Bharat by 2047, it will also have to work towards harnessing the potential of its senior citizens to contribute to the economy.

He emphasised the importance of leveraging the skills and experience of senior citizens for social good. Mr Yadava



(From left to right) Mr Manoj Yadava and Mr T V Sekhar at the conference

suggested establishing schools for underprivileged and marginalised communities, where older persons could contribute as teachers with flexible working hours, thereby not only supporting education but also providing the elderly with a renewed sense of purpose. Mr Yadava said there were outstanding examples of senior citizens who have done exemplary work for the society.

He further stressed that the elderly should be regarded not only as consumers but also as potential investors, underscoring the need for safety nets to protect their interests. Citing the example of retired individuals who often possess savings they wish to invest but lack adequate financial literacy, he noted their heightened vulnerability to fraud. In this context, he emphasised the importance of financial education. While acknowledging the government's ongoing efforts to raise financial awareness among senior citizens, he pointed out that existing data protection laws remain weak. Mr Yadava also mentioned that grievance redressal mechanisms are in place to address such concerns.

Further, Mr Kant sought to know from **Prof T V Sekhar, Department of Family and Generations, International Institute for Population Services, Mumbai**, some of the best practices models of the world on ageing which India could learn from. Responding to this, Prof Shekhar said India needs to develop its own model as the increasing elderly population was likely to pose a serious challenge particularly because of the changing family traditions with many youngsters migrating for livelihood leaving their parents behind.

Prof Sekhar said his Institute carried out the second round of Longitudinal Ageing Study in India (LASI), a survey with over 73,000 older adults wherein it was found that around 94% respondents lived with their families. Only 5% were living alone and 5% reported that they are not comfortable with their current living arrangement and would want to shift elsewhere.

Talking about the international models, Prof Sekhar said in some countries, youngsters are encouraged to live with parents through financial incentives. However, in the Indian traditional system emotional attachment and support provided by the family is very useful for the aged people.

There are many people who are willing to contribute, and it is for us to promote and develop some programmes that are attractive for them and useful to the society. There are retired people who are working as consultants or taking online classes.



Participants put several questions to the panel of experts at the conference

Session IV: Shaping Futures: Preparing for an Ageing Society

Chair: Dr Vinod K Paul, Member (Health, Nutrition and Education), NITI Aayog
Distinguished speakers:
Ms Preeti Nath, Advisor, Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology
H E Mr Lim Sang Woo, Charge d’Affaires, Embassy of the Republic of Korea in New Delhi
Prof Irudaya Rajan, Founder, International Institute of Migration and Development, Kerala
Ms Pavithra Reddy, COO, Vayah Vikas, Bengaluru
Mr Asheesh Gupta, Founder and MD, Samarth Elder Care

There is an urgent need for targeted actions that enhance social inclusion, healthcare access, economic security, and community-based support systems for the aged. By employing these techniques, stakeholders can help create an atmosphere in which older individuals are not just cared for but also respected as valuable members of their communities. Partnerships between governments, non-profits and private enterprises may be fostered for collective action to cater to the diverse needs of senior citizens.



(From left to right) Mr Asheesh Gupta, Co-founder, Samarth Eldercare, Prof. Irudaya Rajan, Chair, International Institute of Migration and Development (IIMAD), Dr Vinod K Paul, Member (Health, Nutrition & Education), NITI Aayog, H E Mr Lim Sang Woo, Charge d’Affaires, Embassy of the Republic of Korea in New Delhi and Ms Pavithra Reddy, Chief Operating Officer, Vayah Vikas

Chair:

Dr Vinod K Paul, Member (Health, Nutrition, and Education), NITI Aayog:



Dr Vinod K Paul moderates a session at the conference

Dr Paul spoke about the usefulness of digital wearable devices and artificial intelligence in the context of elder care. He emphasised on the need to develop and scale 'Made-in-India' solutions that are not only technologically advanced but also affordable and accessible for India's ageing population.

Dr Paul noted that while ageing is often viewed through the lens of numbers; life expectancy, dependency ratios, and demographic curves, it is crucial to focus equally on the quality of those additional years. It is not enough to simply live longer, he emphasised; the imperative is to live well. With this framing, he turned the attention of the session to the importance of global learning, referencing in particular a meaningful exchange held with Mr Lim Sang Woo of the Republic of Korea. Drawing from South Korea's institutional experiences, Dr Paul explored the design, sustainability, and cultural acceptance of elderly homes and institutional care. He noted the importance of understanding how eldercare systems

are evolving elsewhere, and how such models might offer points of reflection, though not necessarily replication, for India.

Dr Paul brought attention to the emerging role of technology, particularly wearable digital devices and artificial intelligence, in elder care. He spoke of the potential these tools hold in enabling early diagnosis, remote monitoring, and customised care pathways for older persons, especially in under-resourced or remote settings. Rather than importing solutions, he urged the development of affordable, Made-in-India innovations that reflect the lived contexts of India's ageing population, are inclusive and are designed with India's unique socio-economic realities in mind. He noted that such solutions must prioritise accessibility and simplicity, especially for seniors who may have limited digital literacy.

"While ageing is often viewed through the lens of numbers; life expectancy, dependency ratios, and demographic curves, it is crucial to focus equally on the quality of those additional years."

Dr Vinod K Paul

Member (Health, Nutrition, and Education),
NITI Aayog

Ms Preeti Nath, Senior Economic Advisor, Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology:

Ms Nath spoke about the customised training programmes for the elderly on digital literacy including mobile usage and navigation; smart home safety solutions such as the smart locks, cameras for doorbell, financial inclusion and wearable emergency devices for health and security of elderly.

To encourage social engagement and entertainment for the elderly people, digital companions for emotional support are now available and online group activities for social inclusion are being encouraged to combat social isolation.

On its part, the governments have launched cybersecurity awareness through precautionary message played before each call, Bhashini app for language translation, and availability of Jeevan Praman, Bhavishya for ease in receiving pension.



(From left to right) Ms Preeti Nath and HE Mr Lim Sang Woo at the conference

Digitisation of records through Digi Locker, digitisation of health records, E-courts, MyGov portal, land records, E-Passport, E-Consultation or E-Hospital services for elderly patients are also being made available, Ms Nath said adding that digital inclusion of elderly was critical.

Mr Lim Sang Woo, Charge d’Affairs/Acting Ambassador, Embassy of Korea:

Providing an insight into Korea’s unique demographic challenges and the efforts taken by the government to address these, Mr Lim said the number of aged people in his country was increasing and the birth rates going down that required to be addressed urgently. It’s population over 65 grew from 14% in 2017 to 20% in 2025, with life expectancy rising from 76 to 83.5 years between 2000 and 2023. By 2040, it is projected to reach 87.2 years. Korea also faces a low birth rate, currently at 0.75 children per woman, the lowest ever recorded.

To promote birth rate, the Korean government is focussing on creating a child-bearing friendly environment. The government allows mandatory parental leave for up to 1.5 years. This is being extended to part-time workers and the self-employed individuals besides giving parents the option of flexible working hours with the options for reduced hours with compensation for lost wages and promoting work-life balance.

Free public childcare centres have been established for children aged up to five years with some cities also offering financial assistance until the children turn adults.

As part of support systems for the elderly, the Korean government provides contributory as well as non-contributory pension to 70% senior citizens. Universal Healthcare Coverage is provided for most illnesses and day care facilities for senior citizens is also covered insurance scheme, Mr Lim said.

South Korea was looking at a possibility of collaboration with India’s healthcare professionals to help tackle its demographic crisis, as the country was fast becoming one of the world’s oldest societies, Mr Lim added.

Prof Irudaya Rajan, Founder, International Institute of Migration and Development:

Prof Rajan called for a paradigm shift in how ageing was viewed. He urged the society to create environments that support



(From left to right) Professor Irudaya Rajan and Ms Pavithra Reddy at the conference

purposeful ageing, build dignified pathways for older persons, and embrace the richness that comes with a longer life. Prof Rajan emphasised that as people live longer and healthier lives, it becomes essential to empower and engage the elderly, rather than marginalise them. This shift, he noted, begins with rethinking the very concept of ageing.

Challenging the conventional notion of when someone becomes elderly, Prof. Rajan pointed out that retirement at 55 made sense in an earlier era, but with life expectancy steadily rising, such classifications must evolve. He called for a policy-level redefinition of ageing, arguing that age alone should not determine one's relevance or ability.

Prof Rajan stressed on the need for elder-specific issues to be reflected in election manifestos, and for this demographic to be mobilised as a political constituency.

He particularly highlighted the neglect of rural elderly populations, who are often left behind in policy narratives, and called for their inclusion in sustainable development frameworks.

Ms Pavithra Reddy, COO, Vayah Vikas:

Ms Reddy spoke about the Vayah Vikas, a digital platform led by senior citizens for inclusion of elderly people in decision-making process. This platform now has 1.5 lakh members. She said aged were being viewed only as those needing pensions and shelter rather than as potential contributors.

Ms Reddy said the need was to listen to the senior's voices rather than imposing solutions assumed to be beneficial to them. The silver economy is currently valued at Rs 5 lakh crores and projected to grow to Rs 25 lakh crores by 2025. There is also a market willing to invest in goods and services for those over 60 years, she said while adding that there was a need for targeted marketing and product design that resonates with seniors, moving beyond pharmaceuticals to include hobbies and leisure activities.

Ms Reddy called for a shift in how senior citizens are portrayed: from tired, inactive retirement figures to engaged, dynamic individuals actively participating in society.

"There needs to be a shift in how senior citizens are portrayed: from tired, inactive retirement figures to engaged, dynamic individuals actively participating in society."

Ms Pavithra Reddy
COO, Vayah Vikas

Mr Asheesh Gupta, Founder & MD, Samarth Enterprise:



Mr Asheesh Gupta at the conference

Mr Gupta pointed out that absence of dedicated geriatric clinics constituted a major gap and the current healthcare systems were not adequately equipped to address age-specific needs. A robust healthcare system enables prolonged independence among the elderly.

Enabling the elderly population also meant enabling family caregivers. Family caregivers, particularly women, have historically filled this role based on perceived potential. While families are critical, over-reliance on them is unsustainable; external institutional support is necessary, Mr Gupta said.

Mr Gupta recommended engaging businesses and academia in designing and delivering elderly care solutions. Ecosystem must integrate public, private, and community-led initiatives.

Emphasis should be placed on helping the elderly age in their own homes rather than relying on hospitalisation or institutional facilities. For this, Mr Gupta suggested two primary care models that were applicable in the Indian context- Market-based models for ageing and caregiving and Welfare-based models focused on state-supported care.

Mr Gupta recommended establishment of a Ministry of Ageing or development of a comprehensive National Policy on Ageing as had been done in some countries.



Several participants presented insightful remarks

Closing Session

Summing up: Mr Bharat Lal, Secretary General and CEO, National Human Rights Commission, India
Way forward: Dr Vinod K. Paul, Member (Health, Nutrition and Education), NITI Aayog
Vote of Thanks: Dr Abha Jaiswal, Visiting Fellow, Sankala Foundation



Mr Bharat Lal and Dr Vinod K Paul summarised the day-long event's key outcomes during the closing session

Summing up by Mr Bharat Lal, Secretary General and CEO, NHRC, India:

Summing up the proceedings of the conference, Mr Bharat Lal said India needs to provide physical, mental and emotional support to its elderly population. Giving them opportunities to contribute meaningfully to the 'silver economy' is equally critically, as India moves towards a developed nation. Citizens must start preparing early for an active, productive, and aspirational ageing.

At present, the country's approach towards its senior citizens is based on Indian values and ethos that supports family and community-led initiatives. This approach must continue as we prepare for a growing ageing population. In this context, communities and local self-governments must take on bigger responsibilities for the care and wellbeing of the elders, he said.

Mr Lal said better nutrition and improved healthcare had led to increased life expectancy. This increasing number posed



Mr Bharat Lal speaking during the closing session of the conference

a challenge for a developing country like India. However, this provided an opportunity as well. Lowering of labour-intensive work and use of technology provided an opportunity for the older people to use their knowledge, skills and wisdom in making a purposeful contribution to economy.

Mr Bharat Lal suggested the development of an application that enables the “uberisation” of elderly employment and opportunities by leveraging a demand-supply model. Such a platform would allow employers or individuals to post requirements, which could then be matched with elderly persons possessing the relevant skills and experience. This model, he noted, could promote active ageing while ensuring that the elderly remain socially and economically integrated.

Mr Lal said the government was committed to upgrade the National Programme for Health Care of Elderly (NPHCE) to improve the lives of elderly people. He said Kerala’s Palliative Care model could be a benchmark for other states to improve

upon and implement similar programmes for the welfare of the elderly and added that ensuring financial security of elderly was of paramount importance including expanding pensions for unorganized sector. There was also a need to create awareness among those above the age of 60 years, on financial frauds including digital, banking and cybercrimes since this was the most vulnerable cohort. Other than providing healthcare solutions, ensuring their safety is equally important, he said.

Digital healthcare technologies must be scaled up for elderly-friendly deployment with the introduction and mainstreaming of long-term care insurance products to significantly reduce financial vulnerability among the elderly.

Way Forward by Dr Vinod K Paul, Member (Health, Nutrition and Education), NITI Aayog:

Dr Paul emphasised on the need to look at senior citizens as assets and not burdens, and build cooperatives, SHGs, skill exchange, employment exchange, and women entrepreneurship platforms to help them contribute purposefully to the economy. He also stated that private enterprise will have a role to play, and that technology will be essential to enhance the welfare and security of the elderly.

He expressed gratitude to all participants for the enriching discussions on ageing, emphasising the importance of engaging and empowering the elderly in matters of health, welfare, and overall wellbeing.

He highlighted the strong sentiment that society must move beyond viewing ageing purely through a welfare lens and instead adopt a more forward-looking approach. As societal values and aspirations evolve, he stressed the need to build on cultural foundations and social strengths to support this shift.

Among the key takeaways, Dr. Paul outlined the potential of concepts like cooperative, skill exchanges, and employment exchanges for the elderly. He noted the importance of structuring



Dr Vinod K Paul speaking during the closing session of the conference

and facilitating these ideas into tangible schemes across sectors. He also called attention to the use of technology for enhancing the welfare and security of senior citizens.



Close to 200 participants attended the conference



The elderly already make up a significant proportion of India's population. By 2050, the country will need to prepare to cater to nearly 350 million people. A large aspect of catering to the elderly population is to ensure access to universal healthcare. While across the globe, life expectancy is increasing, discussions at the conference pointed out how these additional years are prone with higher healthcare concerns and disparities across groups. This calls for dedicated investments to ensure adequate availability and access to geriatric care services and formal caregivers. Deliberations at the conference underscored that policy interventions will have to go beyond addressing just the healthcare needs of elderly, and take a multi-sectoral approach by including social security provisions, community based practices and opportunities for economic engagement.

Due to their relatively lowered physical capacities and increased financial vulnerability, for a long time, the elderly have been viewed as dependents, with popular narratives painting them as pitiful and in need of care. With elderly living longer and advancements in healthcare and assistive technology making them more able even in the later years, the present narrative must change to utilise their knowledge and wisdom in societal growth.

The National Conference on Ageing in India: Emerging Realities and Evolving Responses, organised by the Sankala Foundation, was held in partnership with NITI Aayog, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, and the National Human Rights Commission, India. It brought together thought leaders, policymakers, sector experts, medical practitioners, private sector and civil society leaders to deliberate on the emerging challenges put forth by an ageing population along with diverse ideas and perspectives on how India can adapt and innovate. Key areas of deliberation included discussions around existing policy and practice, healthcare and mental wellbeing, avenues to leverage elderly in economy and innovations and technology.

The discussions come at an important time as the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment is in the process of revising the National Policy of Older Persons. Outcomes of the conference can be a powerful tool to guide policy reforms in this regard.

Conference Outcomes

The following outcomes provide a foundational framework and roadmap to guide future policies, strategies, and interventions for addressing the challenges and opportunities of an ageing population:

- Experts highlighted the growing reliance on the government for eldercare, particularly with the disintegration of joint family systems. In this context, it was emphasised that policy frameworks must also integrate traditional values and moral responsibilities that have historically guided familial care.
- A strong call was made for hybrid models of care, with home-based care forming the foundation, supplemented by institutional support where required. Such approaches would not only relieve families of excessive caregiving burdens but also ensure continuity of care for the elderly.
- Suggestions included the adoption of a life-course approach to ageing. Meaningful steps need to be taken early in life, such as financial planning, nutrition, and lifestyle management, to ensure healthier and more secure later years.
- The need for elder-friendly physical infrastructure was underscored, to enable older persons to participate fully and independently in social and economic life.
- Mental health emerged as an area of pressing concern. Anxiety and depression are extremely common amongst the elderly arising from high disease burden, discrimination, isolation and abuse. Large treatment gaps in addressing

disabilities among the elderly need to be reduced by tackling awareness gaps and stigmatisation.

- Technology and innovation were seen as crucial enablers. The use of digital health solutions, assistive technologies, and inclusive digital platforms can help ease the challenges of later life.
- Models of intergenerational bonding and community-based support were recognised as impactful and sustainable. India, too, must develop its own culturally relevant models to strengthen solidarity across generations.
- Concerns were raised around the vulnerability of the elderly to digital and financial fraud. It was suggested that awareness programmes, stronger regulatory mechanisms, and effective grievance redressal systems are urgently required.
- Speakers emphasised the urgent need to strengthen the geriatric care workforce. A separate trained cadre of caregivers should be developed, supported by a robust certification and regulatory system, a sector which is currently dominated by informal arrangements.
- Special attention must be attributed to women, as they are more vulnerable and face higher healthcare challenges in later years.
- Pension systems must be strengthened and expanded, particularly for those who are financially insecure.
- The skills, knowledge, and expertise of the elderly should be harnessed to build and strengthen the silver economy.

In conclusion, addressing the realities of an ageing population will require a coordinated and forward-looking approach that transcends sectoral boundaries. Strengthening healthcare systems, reimagining social security, fostering innovation, and enabling meaningful community participation must go hand in hand to ensure dignity and inclusion in later years. The deliberations of the conference reaffirm that ageing is not merely a policy challenge but also an opportunity to harness the experience and wisdom of older persons as contributors to social and economic development. With the revision of the National Policy for Older Persons on the horizon, India is at a pivotal moment to embed these insights into actionable strategies that can serve as a model for inclusive and resilient ageing societies.



The conference on “Ageing in India: Emerging Realities, Evolving Responses” received extensive coverage across national and regional media outlets. This visibility helped carry forward the conversation, taking insights from the deliberations and the status report to a much wider audience.



The screenshot shows the Outlook magazine website. At the top, there are social media icons for Facebook, Instagram, X, and YouTube. The Outlook logo is prominently displayed in red. Below the logo, there are navigation links for BUSINESS, MONEY, TRAVELLER, EATS, RESPAWN, and LUXE. A 'Buy Latest Issue' button and a 'SUBSCRIBE' button are also visible. A search icon is located on the right. The main navigation bar includes links for NATIONAL, MENTAL HEALTH, INTERNATIONAL, MAGAZINE, WEEKENDER, BUSINESS, MONEY, SPORTS, ENTERTAINMENT, TRAVEL, OTHERS, and a language selector. The featured article headline reads: "No Universal Healthcare Leaves India's Elderly Vulnerable, Warns New Report". Below the headline, there is a date and time stamp: "Aug 28, 2025 5:26 pm" and a "Subscribe" button. The logo for "THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS" is also present. A dark navigation bar at the bottom contains links for NATION, WORLD, STATES, OPINIONS, CITIES, BUSINESS, SPORT, GOOD NEWS, MOVIES, and PHOTOS.

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70 per cent of India's elderly financially dependent, mental health issues and social isolation on rise: Report

The erosion of joint family structures has exacerbated loneliness, especially among older women.



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With rise in India's elderly population, experts suggest a review of financial policies

These are some of the recommendations of a report by Sankala Foundation that gets support from NITI Ayog, National Human Rights Commission, the Ministry of Social Justice and Ministry of Health. The report was released here on Friday.

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Delhi

NHRC chairperson advocates integration of ancient Indian values into modern policies for dignity of senior citizens

National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) Chairperson, Justice V Ramasubramanian, has said that India has a rich cultural tradition that advocates care and reverence for the elderly as a fundamental societal value.

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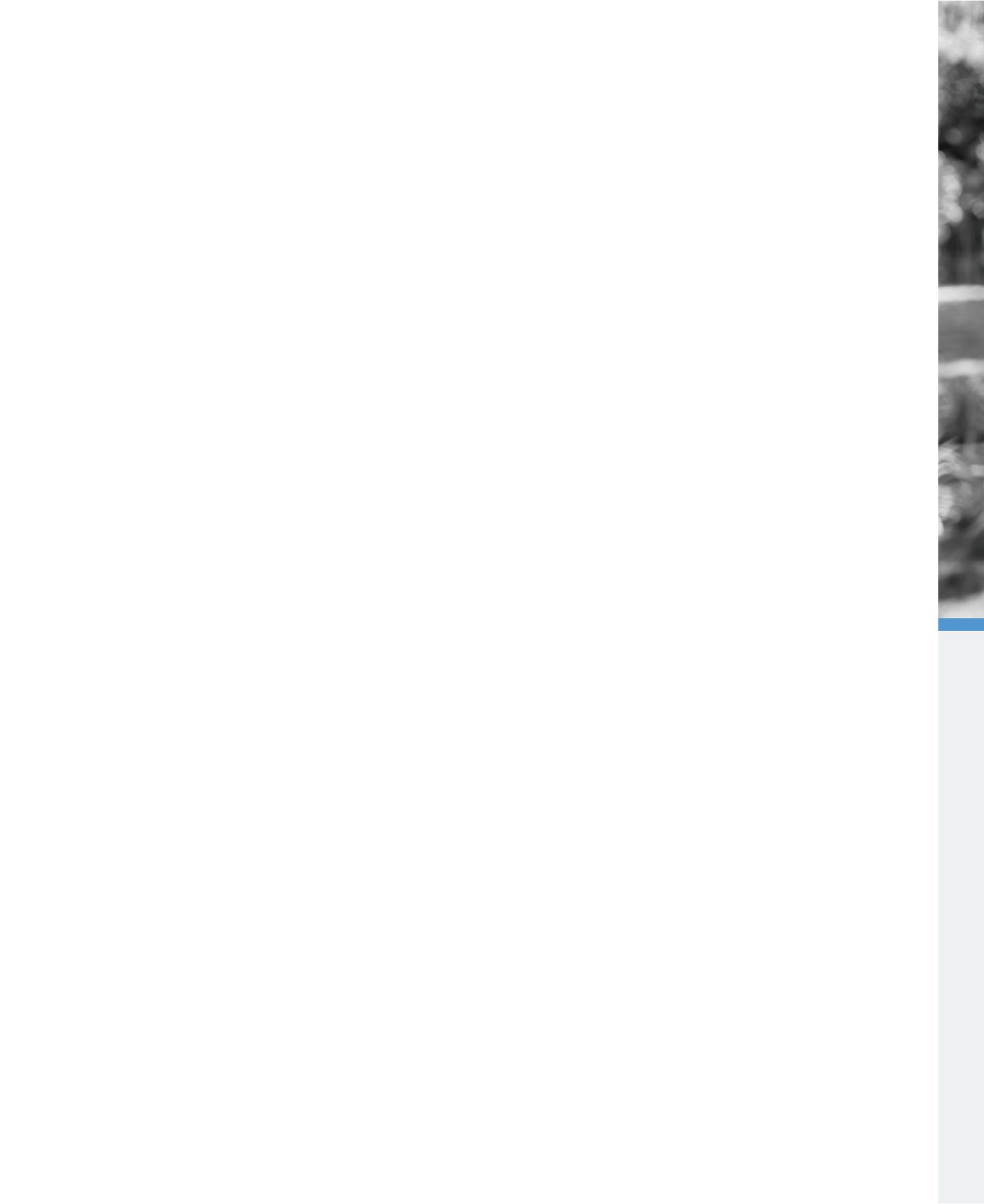
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Ageing India: Beyond Longevity to a Life of Dignity





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