



Research Unit
Press Information Bureau
Government of India

World Senior Citizen Day 2024

(Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment)

August 20, 2024

World Senior Citizen Day is celebrated every year on **August 21st** to acknowledge the contributions of senior citizens and to raise awareness about the issues they face globally. As we approach this day in 2024, its importance is particularly pronounced in India, where the elderly population is experiencing rapid growth.

Significance and Importance of World Senior Citizen Day in India

The significance of this observance in India is underscored by demographic shifts that are reshaping the nation's social landscape. According to the Report of the Technical Group on Population Projections (July 2020), India's elderly population is expected to reach **193.4 million by 2031**¹. This dramatic increase from the 103.8 million senior citizens recorded in the **2011 Census**², which represented 8.6% of the total population at that time, highlights the urgency of addressing issues related to healthcare, economic security, and social integration for older adults.

In response to these evolving demographic realities, the Indian government has implemented various initiatives for the well-being of senior citizens. These efforts reflect a growing recognition of the unique challenges and opportunities presented by an aging population in one of the world's largest democracies.



¹ <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1847842>

² <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseIframePage.aspx?PRID=1844991>

Challenges Faced by Senior Citizens



01

Health Care Challenges

Senior citizens face chronic illnesses, limited geriatric care, rising mental health issues, and high healthcare costs

02

Economic Challenges

Elderly face insufficient pensions, financial dependency, income insecurity, and difficulties finding post-retirement employment, leading to economic instability.

03

Social Challenges

Isolation, elder abuse, social exclusion, and the digital divide create significant challenges for senior citizens in modern society.

04

Infrastructure and Accessibility

Inadequate housing, elder-unfriendly public spaces, and limited mobility options hinder senior citizens' quality of life.

05

Legal and Policy Challenges

Weak legal protection, lack of awareness, and bureaucratic hurdles prevent elderly from accessing necessary services and support.

Key schemes and programs implemented by the Government of India:

Atal Vayo Abhyudaya Yojana (AVYAY): Department of Social Justice and Empowerment:

□ **Integrated Programme for Senior Citizens (IPSrC):**

- Senior Citizens' Homes for 25 destitute Senior Citizens.
- Senior Citizens' Homes for 50 Elderly Women (including under SAGY).
- Continuous Care Homes for Senior Citizens with Alzheimer's/Dementia.
- Mobile Medicare Units for rural and backward areas.
- Physiotherapy Clinics for Senior Citizens.
- Regional Resource and Training Centres (RRTCs) for technical support and training.

□ **State Action Plan for Senior Citizens (SAPSrC):**

- Collaboration with State/UT Governments to develop and implement State Action Plans for senior citizens' welfare.

- **Rastriya Vayoshri Yojana (RVY):**
 - Provision of physical aids and assisted living devices to senior citizens, especially those in the BPL category.
- **Livelihood and Skilling Initiatives for Senior Citizens:**
 - **Senior Able Citizens for Re-Employment in Dignity (SACRED):** Portal for re-employment opportunities for senior citizens.
 - **Action Groups Aimed at Social Reconstruction (AGRASR Groups):** Elderly Self-Help Groups (SHGs).
- **Promoting Silver Economy:**
 - Financial assistance of up to Rs. 1 crore for entrepreneurs to create innovative solutions for elderly care.
- **Channelizing CSR Funds for Elderly Care:**
 - Utilization of CSR funds for old age homes, day care centers, etc., as per Schedule VII of the Companies Act.
- **Scheme for Awareness Generation and Capacity Building:**
 - National Helpline for Senior Citizens (Elderline) with toll-free number 14567.
 - Awareness, sensitization, and capacity building initiatives.

National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP): Ministry of Rural Development

- Financial assistance to elderly, widows, and disabled persons below the poverty line.
- **Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme (IGNOAPS):** Monthly pension for elderly aged 60-79 years.
- **Indira Gandhi National Disability Pension Scheme (IGNDPS):** Monthly pension for persons with severe disabilities.

National Programme for the Health Care of Elderly (NPHCE): Ministry of Health and Family Welfare

- Provides comprehensive healthcare facilities to elderly persons at primary, secondary, and tertiary levels.

Atal Pension Yojana (APY): Ministry of Finance

- Provides a guaranteed pension to all citizens, especially poor and unorganized sector workers, upon reaching 60 years of age.

Schemes under Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs

- **Model Building Bye Laws, 2016 (MBBL):** Prescribes standards for elder-friendly, barrier-free environments.

- **Urban Bus Specification-II, 2013:** Focuses on elder-friendly public transport with low-floor buses and wheelchair spaces.
- **Housing for All Mission/Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana:** Prioritizes senior citizens for ground or lower-floor housing allotments.
- **Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana-National Urban Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NULM):** Aims to reduce poverty and vulnerability, including providing shelters for the urban homeless, irrespective of age.

These schemes collectively address the financial security, health care, safety, and general well-being of senior citizens in India.



Key Statistics on India's Aging Population and Senior Citizen Support



as on August 2024

Upcoming event for Senior Citizens in India

The Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion (ODPHP) and Trust for America's Health are organizing the **National Healthy Aging Symposium**³ for senior citizens in India, scheduled for **September 26, 2024**. This event aims to showcase innovations in the age-friendly ecosystem and promote the health and well-being of older adults. Building upon collaborations established during the inaugural National Healthy Aging Summit in 2015, the symposium will feature expert panels covering various crucial topics such as caregiving, social engagement, housing, transportation, brain health, and workforce issues. Attendees can expect valuable insights from a diverse range of policymakers, researchers, and professionals across multiple sectors, all contributing to the ongoing dialogue on healthy aging and improved quality of life for seniors.

Conclusion

World Senior Citizen Day serves as a reminder to honor the contributions of the elderly and to address the challenges they face. In the Indian context, where the aging population is growing rapidly, government initiatives play a crucial role in ensuring the welfare and dignity of senior citizens. As the nation moves forward, it is imperative to continue strengthening these initiatives to provide a secure and respectful life for the elderly.

References:

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³ <https://health.gov/news/202406/save-date-national-healthy-aging-symposium-take-place-september-26-2024>