



## Rights of the elderly people: A legal framework analysis

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### Abstract

Ageing is a natural process, which inevitably occurs in human life cycle. It brings with a host of challenges in the life of the elderly, which are mostly engineered by the changes in their body, mind, thought process and the living patterns. Ageing refers to a decline in the functional capacity of the organs of the human body, which occurs mostly due to physiological transformation, it never imply that everything has been finished. The senior citizens constitute a precious reservoir of such human resource as is gifted with knowledge of various sorts, varied experiences and deep insights. May be they have formally retired, yet an overwhelming majority of them are physically fit and mentally alert. Hence, given an appropriate opportunity, they are in a position to make significant contribution to the socio-economic development of their nation. The problem of the elderly must be addressed to urgently and with utmost care. There is urgent need to amend the Constitution for the special provision to protection of aged person and bring it in the periphery of fundamental right. With the degeneration of joint family system, dislocation of familiar bonds and loss of respect for the aged person, the family in modern times should not be thought to be a secure place for them. Thus, it should be the Constitutional duty of the State to make an Act for the welfare and extra protection of the senior citizen including palliative care. The problem of old age in India-A man's life is normally divided into five main stages namely infancy, childhood, adolescence, adulthood and old age. In each of these stages an individual has to find himself in different situations and face different problems. The old age is not without problems. In old age physical strength deteriorates, mental stability diminishes; money power becomes bleak coupled with negligence from the younger generation. There are 81 million older people in India-11 lakh in Delhi itself. According to an estimate nearly 40% of senior citizens living with their families are reportedly facing abuse of one kind or another, but only 1 in 6 cases actually comes to light. Although the President has given her assent to the Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act which punishes children who abandon parents with a prison term of three months or a fine, situation is grim for elderly people in India. According to NGOs incidences of elderly couples being forced to sell their houses are very high. Some elderly people have also complained that in case of a property dispute they feel more helpless when their wives side with their children. Many of them suffer in silence as they fear humiliation or are too scared to speak up. According to them a phenomenon called 'grand dumping' is becoming common in urban areas these days as children are being increasingly intolerant of their parents' health problems. After a certain age health problems begin to crop up leading to losing control over one's body, even not recognizing own family owing to Alzheimer are common in old age. It is then children began to see their parents as burden. It is these parents who at times wander out of their homes or are thrown out. Some dump their old parents or grandparents in old-age homes and don't even come to visit them anymore. Delhi has nearly 11 lakh senior citizens but there are only 4 governments' run homes for them and 31 by NGOs, private agencies and charitable trusts. The facilities are lacking in government run homes. Rights of the Elderly Parents cannot be evicted from a house without due process of law if they have been staying there from before. There are three enactments that can be applied. Under section 125 of the Cr. PC, a magistrate can order a child to maintain his old parents under the Maintenance of Parents Act. The Hindu Adoptions and Maintenance Act say an aged parent can demand maintenance from children in the same way that a wife can demand it from her husband. The Domestic Violence Act too provides parents with the right to seek relief from any kind of abuse. A National Policy on older persons was announced which identified a number of areas of intervention-financial security, healthcare and nutrition, shelter, education, welfare, protection of life and property for the wellbeing of older persons in the country. A National Council for Older Persons (NCOP) was constituted by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment to operationalize the National Policy on older persons.

**Keywords:** elderly/ageing /older people/persons, palliative care, maintenance and welfare of parents, international (un) efforts on sdg2030 and who, national programme and scheme etc

### 1. Introduction

Elderly or Aged People is an inevitable and inexorable process in life. In India, the population of the elderly is growing rapidly and is emerging as a serious area of concern for the government and the policy planners. According to data on the age of India's population, in Census 2001, there are a little over 76.6 million people above 60 years, constituting 7.2 per cent of the population. The vulnerability among the elderly is not only due to an

increased incidence of illness and disability, but also due to their economic dependency upon their spouses, children and other younger family members. According to the 2001 census, 33.1 per cent of the elderly in India live without their spouses. The widowers among older men form 14.9 per cent as against 50.1 per cent widows among elderly women. Among the elderly (80 years and above), 71.1 per cent of women were widows while widowers formed only 28.9 per cent of men. Lack of economic dependence has an

impact on their access to food, clothing and healthcare. Among the basic needs of the elderly, medicine features as the highest unmet need. Healthcare of the elderly is a major concern for the society as ageing is often accompanied by multiple illnesses and physical ailments. The rights of older persons are the entitlements and independence claimed for senior citizens. Elderly rights are one of the fundamental rights of India. The International Day of older persons is celebrated annually on October 1. The 2001 census of India demonstrated that aged people in India have crossed over 100 million. Many older people in India are not alert about the human rights of older persons, due to high occurrence of illiteracy and lack of alertness. Elder illiteracy directly contributes to a lack of knowledge regarding the human rights for older people in India, and contributes to the infringement of those rights. Surveys have found that one out of every six older persons living in urban areas in India aren't obtaining proper nutrition, one out of every three older persons does not obtain sufficient health care or medicine, and one out of every two older persons don't receive due respect or good conduct from family members or people in general. In today's state of urbanization in which women are increasingly joining the workforce, the roots of joint family systems are eroding. Higher numbers of older people who have spent most of their life with their joint/extended families may face loneliness and marginalization in their old age. In rural areas the older members of families are respected more and are considered a strong part of the family as the joint family system remains part of their roots. In villages 46.91% of the older men and 50.1% of older women are from joint families. In rural areas 13,560 out of 29,000 rural elderly have joint families. India is the only country in the world where we touch the feet of our elders as a mark of respect. We live in a country where we compare our elders to God and have a special place for them in our traditions, culture, and scriptures. Unfortunately, India is also one of those countries which have very few laws regarding the rights of senior citizens.

## 2. Huge number of growing population of elderly persons

The population of the elderly persons has been increasing over the years. As per the UNESCO estimates, the number of the aged (60+) is 590 million in 2005. The figure will double by 2025. By 2025, the world will have more elderly than young people and cross two billion mark by 2050. In India also, the population of elder persons has increased from nearly 2 crores in 1951 to 7.2 crores in 2001. In other words about 8% of the total population is above 60 years. The figure will cross 18 % mark by 2025.

## 3. Problems faced by the age old/elderly people

### Problems of the aged as follows

- Economic problems, include such problems as loss of employment, income deficiency and economic insecurity.
- Physical and physiological problems, include health and medical problems, nutritional deficiency, and the problem of adequate housing etc.
- Psycho-social problem which cover problems related with their psychological and social maladjustment as well as the problem of elder abuse etc.

## 1. Difficulties faced by elderly persons

### ▪ Health and care

Physical and mental health care availability and community and social care aspects of life for the elderly are key concerns. Nutritional problems are also a concern.

### ▪ Income and housing

Access to employment opportunities, transportation, housing and income are key concerns. Inhumane living conditions are also a concern.

### ▪ Social networks and customs

Poor social interaction with family and friends, poor social networks, and those without families are some difficulties faced by some senior citizens. Social customs based upon elder neglect, which the elderly may internalize as beliefs are topics of concern. Losing the will to live from a lack of social support is another issue.

### ▪ Multifactor concerns

Educational access and opportunities, the potential for leisure pursuits, consumer protections and having access to information are also key concern

## 5. International efforts

### 1. Challenges and opportunities of an ageing population-sdg-2030

In today's world states face many challenges cutting across their own borders and even continents that are affecting areas spanning from economy to ecology. This has prompted new ways of working together to be able to respond adequately to these new needs. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are the result of such attempts to address cross border issues and they serve as a blueprint guiding towards a better and more sustainable future for all. Front-page topics such as climate change, poverty and gender inequality have been on the agenda for decades now, but demographic change is about to join. An increase of the percentage of elderly in many countries has proven to be one of the overreaching trends impacting the very foundation of our societies. It is expected that one in six people in the world will be over 65 years of age by 2050, and the number of persons over 80 will triple. This is bound to demand changes in labour market, health care systems and more. Inspired by the SDGs, the World Health Organization has dedicated the next decade to healthy ageing, which is in line with AAL's aspirations to highlight opportunities for a happy and fulfilling life in old age. This agenda not only includes protection from vulnerabilities, fostering a sense of security, but also focuses on strengthening the autonomy and opportunities for retaining an active role in the society. It helps us to think beyond the assistive-only discourse and focus on the important aspect that older persons must be recognized as the active agents of societal development in order to achieve truly transformative, inclusive and sustainable development outcomes. SDGs guide the international community and demonstrate the importance of the working on a multi-level scale and focusing on the sustainability of the policies and economic systems. This approach reminds us that everything is connected, and we need to diversify our actions to adjust to various population groups, as each of them experience the world differently. Therefore, AAL

strives to create an ecosystem model involving not only researchers, but end-users and private actors as well as policy makers to create solutions, which will actually benefit the targeted users.

## 2. Looking to the future

The European Union already has a history of shaping the international agenda, and it aims to stay at the forefront of global sustainable development too. The EU encourages mainstreaming SDGs across the member states, but it is not enough. Europe needs to amplify its efforts in addressing the challenges and opportunities posed by the demographic change AAL places a high priority on developing new and existing ecosystems that refine and expand the deployment of successful ICT-based solutions for older adults and their networks. Exploiting the knowledge that is generated through these ecosystems will be essential for the success of the programme. But we also need new structures and technologies that enable groups to move from their habitual thinking and practices to co-create new ways of working and living. Now, we need to focus on creating structures that bring together different stakeholders to address the challenges that our ageing demographic brings. The European Commission is currently considering how to meet the challenges of our ageing population, and it is likely that a new partnership programme will emerge funding both research as well as helps stimulate innovation in digital markets such as those in health and social care, the Internet of Things and home care and assistance. AAL has been working over the last year to develop a proposal for a new partnership involving all stakeholders involved in active and healthy ageing – and now we want your ideas through a new online consultation survey-

1. In 1992, the U.N. General Assembly adopted the proclamation to observe the year 1999 as the International Year of the Older Persons.
2. The U.N. General Assembly has declared “1st October” as the International Day for the Elderly, later rechristened as the International Day of the Older Persons.
3. The U.N. General Assembly on December 16, 1991 adopted 18 principles which are organized into 5 clusters, namely-independence, participation, care, self-fulfillment, and dignity of the older persons.

## 6. These principles provide a broad framework for action on ageing. Some of the principles are as follows

- Older Persons should have the opportunity to work and determine when to leave the work force.
- Older Persons should remain integrated in society and participate actively in the formulation of policies which effect their well-being.
- Older Persons should have access to health care to help them maintain the optimum level of physical, mental and emotional well-being.
- Older Persons should be able to pursue opportunities for the full development of their potential and have access to educational, cultural, spiritual and recreational resources of society.
- Older Persons should be able to live in dignity and security and should be free from exploitation and mental and physical abuse.

## 7. National efforts: (i) provisions in the constitution Safeguarding the rights of elders

The framers of our constitution were well aware of the plight of our country’s elderly people. They knew that it is quite difficult to meet ends when one hits their 60s. They would face problems like those of housing, taxes, healthcare facilities, and psychological help for aging and social support. Hence, they gave ample provisions to the lawmakers of our country to make laws for them. A few of the provisions in the constitution are:

### Article 38. State to secure a social order for the promotion of welfare of the people

1. The State shall strive to promote the welfare of the people by securing and protecting as effectively as it may a social order in which justice, social, economic and political, shall inform all the institutions of the national life.
2. The State shall, in particular, strive to minimize the inequalities in income, and endeavour to eliminate inequalities in status, facilities and opportunities, not only amongst individuals but also amongst groups of people residing in different areas or engaged in different vocations.

### Article-41-Right to work, to education and to public assistance in certain cases

The State shall, within the limits of its economic capacity and development, make effective provision for securing the right to work, to education and to public assistance in cases of unemployment, old age, sickness and disablement, and in other cases of undeserved want.

### Article 42-Provision for just and humane conditions of work and maternity relief

The State shall make provision for securing just and humane conditions of work and for maternity relief

### Article 47-Duty of the state to raise the level of nutrition and the standard of living and to improve public health

The State shall regard the raising of the level of nutrition and the standard of living of its people and the improvement of public health as among its primary duties and, in particular, the State shall endeavour to bring about prohibition of the consumption except for medicinal purposes of intoxicating drinks and of drugs which are injurious to health

All of the above provisions of the constitution give the right to the elderly to live a peaceful, dignified life. All the above articles provide provisions to get social, economic and political support from the government as their legal right. However, these articles come under the Directive Principles, which means that though these articles give directions to the State to ensure a minimum standard of living to our elderly; these are not enforceable in courts

## 8. Legal provisions Under personal laws

The moral duty to maintain parents is recognized by all people. However, so far as law is concerned, the position and extent of such liability varies from community to community.

### 1. Hindus laws

Amongst the Hindus, the obligation of sons to maintain their aged parents, who were not able to maintain themselves out of their own earning and property, was recognized even in early texts. And this obligation was not dependent upon, or in any way qualified, by a reference to the possession of family property. It was a personal legal obligation enforceable by the sovereign or the state. The statutory provision for maintenance of parents under Hindu personal law is contained in Sec 20 of the Hindu Adoption and Maintenance Act, 1956. This Act is the first personal law statute in India, which imposes an obligation on the children to maintain their parents. As is evident from the wording of the section, the obligation to maintain parents is not confined to sons only, and daughters also have an equal duty towards parents. It is important to note that only those parents who are financially unable to maintain themselves from any source, are entitled to seek maintenance under this Act.

### 2. Muslim law

Children have a duty to maintain their aged parents even under the Muslim law. According to Mulla:

- a. Children in easy circumstances are bound to maintain their poor parents, although the latter may be able to earn something for themselves.
- b. A son though in strained circumstances is bound to maintain his mother, if the mother is poor, though she may not be infirm.
- c. A son, who though poor, is earning something, is bound to support his father who earns nothing.

According to Tyabji, parents and grandparents in indigent circumstances are entitled, under Hanafi law, to maintenance from their children and grandchildren who have the means, even if they are able to earn their livelihood. Both sons and daughters have a duty to maintain their parents under the Muslim law. The obligation, however, is dependent on their having the means to do so.

### 3. Christian and Parsi law

The Christians and Parsis have no personal laws providing for maintenance for the parents. Parents who wish to seek maintenance have to apply under provisions of the Criminal Procedure Code.

### 4. Under the code of criminal procedure

Prior to 1973, there was no provision for maintenance of parents under the code. The Law Commission, however, was not in favour of making such provision. According to its report: The Cr.P.C is not the proper place for such a provision. There will be considerably difficulty in the amount of maintenance awarded to parents apportioning amongst the children in a summary proceeding of this type. It is desirable to leave this matter for adjudication by civil courts. The provision, however, was introduced for the first time in Sec. 125 of the Code of Criminal Procedure in 1973. It is also essential that the parent establishes that the other party has sufficient means and has neglected or refused to maintain his, i.e., the parent, who is unable to maintain himself. It is important to note that Cr.P.C 1973, is a secular law and governs persons belonging to all religions and communities. Daughters, including married daughters, also have a duty to maintain their parents.

### 5. Governmental policies and practices

1. The Government of India approved the National Policy for Older Persons on January 13, 1999 in order to accelerate welfare measures and empowering the elderly in ways beneficial for them. This policy included the following major steps :
  - Setting up of a pension fund for ensuring security for those persons who have been serving in the unorganized sector,
  - Construction of old age homes and day care centers for every 3-4 districts,
  - Establishment of resource centers and re-employment bureaus for people above 60 years,
  - Concessional rail/air fares for travel within and between cities, i.e., 30% discount in train and 50% in Indian Airlines.
  - Enacting legislation for ensuring compulsory geriatric care in all the public hospitals.
2. The Ministry of Justice and Empowerment has announced regarding the setting up of a National Council for Older Person, called agewell Foundation. It will seek opinion of aged on measures to make life easier for them.
3. Attempts to sensitise school children to live and work with the elderly. Setting up of a round the clock help line and discouraging social ostracism of the older persons are being taken up.
4. The government policy encourages a prompt settlement of pension, provident fund (PF), gratuity, etc. in order to save the superannuated persons from any hardships. It also encourages to make the taxation policies elder sensitive.
5. The policy also accords high priority to their health care needs.
6. According to Sec.88-B, 88-D and 88-DDB of Income Tax Act there are discount in tax for the elderly persons.
7. Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) has also been providing several scheme for the benefit of aged persons, i.e., Jeevan Dhara Yojana, Jeevan Akshay Yojana, Senior Citizen Unit Yojana, Medical Insurance Yojana.
8. Former Prime Minister A.B.Bajpai was also launch 'Annapurana Yojana' for the benefit of aged persons. Under this yojana unattended aged persons are being given 10 kg food for every month.
9. It is proposed to allot 10 percent of the houses constructed under government schemes for the urban and rural lower income segments to the older persons on easy loan.

### 9. The maintenance and welfare of parents act, 2007

This act aims at providing maintenance to senior citizens in the country. It is an Act to provide for more effective provisions for the maintenance and welfare of parents and senior citizens guaranteed and recognised under the Constitution and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto (Maintenance and Welfare of Parents Act, 2007) <sup>[18]</sup>. It is a 'go-to' statute for providing maintenance as it applies to the whole of India except the state of Jammu and Kashmir. This Act defines a senior citizen as a person who is above 60 years of age and is a citizen of India. Under section 5(1) of this Act, any senior citizen who is also a

parent is entitled to get maintenance; where “parent”, according to section 2 means “father or mother whether biological, adoptive or step father or step mother, as the case may be, whether or not the father or the mother is a senior citizen”. The Act also provides provisions for maintenance of child-less senior citizens. Such citizens may be maintained by their legal heir or the person to whom the property maybe transferred after the death of such citizen. If the senior citizen or parent is incapable, any other person or a voluntary organization authorised by the senior citizen or parent can apply for maintenance on their behalf. This provision is very helpful as most of the senior citizens or parents do not have the time and energy to go around courts and tribunals (Singh, 2008). Section 24 of the Act provides a punishment for those who, taking care of any senior citizen, leave the senior citizen with an intention of wholly abandoning them to place where no one can find them. Thus, this Act is very useful in protecting the dignity of our senior citizens.

#### **10. Scheme of integrated programme for older persons (IPOP)**

This scheme was launched by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment in 1992 and was revised in 2008. Under this scheme, funds were provided to the state government, local bodies, NGOs etc. to run and maintain old age homes, day care centres, mobile Medicare units, help lines and counseling centres, day care units for persons with Alzheimer’s disease and dementia etc.

#### **11. Indira Gandhi National Age Pension Scheme (IGNOAPS)**

This scheme was introduced by the Ministry of Rural development. This scheme provided central assistance towards pension by providing Rs 200 per month to persons above 60 years of age and Rs 500 to persons above 80 years of age who belong to households below poverty line (Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment).

#### **12. National programme for the health care for the elderly (NPHCE)**

This scheme was launched by the Ministry of Health and Family welfare in the year 2010-11. The major features of this scheme were community based primary healthcare approach, strengthening of health care services, dedicated facilities at 100 districts hospitals etc. All these policies were aimed at working at the lower levels of the society and ensure that the poorest of poor senior citizens were provided the basic amenities to live their life peacefully. We also need to change our approach of viewing our senior citizens as a burden on us. We need to come up with policies and statutes which will not only help them in living a peaceful and dignified life but also help us utilise their experience and knowledge on certain aspects. We should also come up with schemes that provide certain compensation in medicines. Medicines now days have become too costly and as we grow old our body weakens and we need medical assistance. Medicine for certain diseases is very costly and is not affordable by even young people. Such medicines should be made available at a subsidised rate to senior citizens. There are 103.6 million elderly people (60+) living in India today (Government of India, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, 2016) <sup>[7]</sup>. And according to a recent survey conducted by the NGO Help Age-India in

2014, 50% of elderly people are being abused in their homes. Most of these people don’t know their rights and even if they do, they wouldn’t report such incidences as they do not want to spoil their family name.

#### **Health**

Many government and private hospitals provide concessions to the older persons in the treatment of the diseases like cardiac problems, diabetes, kidney problems, blood pressure, joint problems and eye problems. There is also a condition for separate queuing of reservations for hospital beds.

#### **Travel**

Indian railways give 30% concessions in the ticket prices to all the persons aged 60 years and above. It is 50% for women aged over 60 years. Proof of age is required. There are also conditions of lower berth for older persons and also separate counters for booking and cancelling tickets to avoid rushes at the counters. Indian airlines provide 50% concessions in its economy class, (with particular terms and conditions applied). Air India provides 45% concessions to older persons in wheel chairs and are allowed to board the plane first. High rates of interest to its senior citizens on certain savings plans which are run by the post offices and other private banks.

#### **Housing**

The Indian government provides housing facilities such as retirement homes and recreational or educational centers. These centers provide older persons with opportunities to spend their free time doing various activities. Most recreational centers have fitness clubs, yoga centers, parks, spiritual sessions, picnics, food fests for the health and entertainment of senior citizens. Some old age homes also have libraries other activities such as music classes, arts and crafts, quizzes and indoor games. These activities help to spiritually uplift seniors and can contribute to overall health improvements and mental stability The layout of the housing colonies will respond to the needs and life styles of the elderly so that there is no physical barriers to their mobility; they are allotted ground floor; and their social interaction with older society members exists. Despite all these attempts, there is need to impress upon the elderly about the need to adjust to the changing circumstances in life and try to live harmoniously with the younger generation as far as possible. It may be pointed out that recently the Madurai Bench of the Madras High Court has ruled that the benefits conferred on a Government employee, who is disabled during his/her service period, under Section 47 of Persons with Disabilities (equal opportunities, protection of rights and full participation) Act, 1995 cannot be confined only seven types of medical conditions defined as ‘disability’ in the Act. The seven medical conditions are blindness, low vision, leprosy-cured, hearing impaired, locomotor disability, mental retardation and mental illness. A Division Bench comprising Justice F.M. Ibrahim and Justice K. Venkataramansaid: “We feel that the court cannot shut its eyes if a person knocks at its doors claiming relief under the Act.

#### **13. Need for a change approach in social security**

Policy making, planning and programming etc. will have to be adopted in order to harness this vast human resource for promoting the involvement and participation of senior

citizens in socio-economic development process on a much larger scale. This participation must result in an end to their social isolation and an increase in their general satisfaction with their life. Any attempt to secure the help of the elderly in offering their service to the nation must simultaneously ensure some sort of package of services aimed at arranging for them a better quality of life and a well-designed social security network for the senior citizen. The society and the state in India need to accept the challenge of their effectively focusing their attention on the following twin issues of:

- a. How to provide a fair-deal to the senior citizens so that they are able to peacefully, constructively and satisfactorily pass their lives; and
- b. How to utilize the vast treasure of knowledge and rich life experience of the older people so that they are able to utilize their remaining energies and contribute to the all-round development of their nation.

#### 14. Palliative care: Need of the immediate hour

According to a pilot survey, 70% of city's elderly population is undergoing some kind of medication. The average spending per day ranges between Rs. 3 to 200. However, nearly half of the money goes waste. The reason is absence of proper palliative care in the country. World Health Organization has marked October 7 as a day to create awareness about the importance and need for hospice and palliative care. "Access to the best quality care, while facing terminal illness is a human right. Ironically, many people in the world are denied this right.

#### 15. Conclusion

India has the largest population of young people in the world according to the United Nations. This is an asset for India now. But, once these young people grow old, India might also become a country with the largest number of old people in the world. And to handle such large population of old people with all their demands and pensions, it is better if we start working towards better policies and statutes from right now and create a better standard of living for our senior citizens and let them know that they still are considered next to Gods as in our traditions. In India, around 2/3rd of the population is below or close to 30, so does talking about old age problems (which exist) sound awkward. Consider this, out of every 10 elderly couples in India, more than 6 are forced by their children to leave their homes. With no place to go and all hopes lost, the elderly have to resort to old age homes, which do not guarantee first class treatment. In India, unlike USA, parents do not leave their children on their own after they turn 18 (of course there are exceptions), but children find it hard to accept the fact that there are times when parents want to feel the love that they once shared with them. There are times when parents just want to relax and want their children to reciprocate their care. Every parent wants to see their child grow and be successful but no parent wants their child to treat them like an unnecessary load on their responsibilities. Every other day, we see news of parents being beaten up by their children, parents and in-laws being forced to do the household chores, being made to live in small dungeon-like rooms, their property being forcefully taken over by over ambitious children. There are 81million older people in India-11 lakh in Delhi itself. According to an estimate, nearly 40% of senior citizens living with their families are

reportedly facing abuse of one kind or another. After a certain age health problems begin to crop up leading to losing control over one's body, even not recognizing own family owing to Alzheimer are common in old age. It is then children began to see their parents as burden. It is these parents who at times wander out of their homes or are thrown out. Some dump their old parents or grandparents in old-age homes and don't even come to visit them anymore. Delhi has nearly 11 lakh senior citizens but there are only 4 governments' run homes for them and 31 by NGOs, private agencies and charitable trusts. The facilities are lacking in government run homes. Forget the rights that the elderly enjoy in India. Just forget about the action that they can take. Think on moral grounds. Why do we tend to forget that the reason we are in this world is our parents, the reason we studied is our parents, the reason we were alive all this while is our parents, the reason we survived all the diseases is our mother's care. The hands who made us walk is our parents'. When we were kids we never thought of it but we knew that no matter what, our parents will be by our side. But when our time came to show our respect, to reciprocate the love, to show our gratitude, we back out. But the truth is that even when they are counting their last breath, they are still thinking of useless the youth too insensitive to the elder. Passing comments at an old man walking slowly on the road and disturbing the flow of the traffic are our ethics. Come on youth, stand up against such injustice. Do not treat your parents like burden especially when they need you.

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