

Union Minister Dr. Virendra Kumar chaired the 4th Meeting of National Council of Senior Citizens (NCSrC) and Charted Forward Path for Elderly Welfare and Empowerment

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The 4th meeting of National Council for Senior Citizens was held in New Delhi today, under the chairmanship of Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment, Dr. Virendra Kumar. The meeting served as a crucial platform for reviewing existing schemes, discussing emerging needs, and setting a forward-looking agenda aligned with the vision of *Viksit Bharat @2047*. The Council stressed the importance of ensuring that every senior citizen in the country lives with dignity, respect, and active engagement in society.



During the meeting, the Council undertook a detailed review of the progress under Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana (RVY) and Integrated Programme for Senior Citizens (IPSrC), Senior Citizen Portal in terms of enhancing quality, post-distribution follow-up, and expanding the scope to include the digital inclusion of senior citizens. There was discussion on the National Policy for Senior Citizens (NPSC) to reflect demographic realities—especially with the elderly projected to constitute 20% of India's population by 2047.

The Council also explored strategies to establish a dedicated grievance redressal mechanism to address abuse and neglect, implementation of minimum standards for old age homes across the country and senior care institutions, while promoting community engagement and intergenerational bonding. Further emphasis was placed on institutionalizing the participation of NGOs and senior citizen associations in policy formulation, implementation, and feedback mechanisms to ensure last-mile delivery and contextual relevance.

Recurring themes that emerged from this and previous Council meetings included the urgent need for inter-ministerial convergence in addressing elderly issues, leveraging technology for elderly welfare, centralized data systems, and a broader philosophical shift from welfare to empowerment—positioning the elderly as active stakeholders in India's development journey.

Review of Performance of Existing Schemes

Over the past year, the Ministry has undertaken several impactful initiatives designed to promote the well-being of senior citizens. **Under the RVY, more than 5 lakh beneficiaries from across 371 districts**

received free assistive living devices. Camps, organized in partnership with ALIMCO, included on-the-spot medical assessments and delivery of devices thereby improving accessibility and enhancing the quality of life for the elderly.

Through the **IPSrC**, the Ministry is supporting over **708 NGOs** operating continuous care home, physiotherapy centres, old age homes, and mobile medicare units. **Around 2.24 lakh senior citizens availed a wide range of services** including health check-ups, physiotherapy, counselling, and recreational activities, contributing to their physical, emotional, and mental well-being during the last five years.

The International Day of Older Persons (IDOP) 2024 was observed nationwide with the participation of over 2.5 lakh elderly citizens. The events featured cultural performances, digital literacy workshops, intergenerational dialogues, and health awareness camps—creating platforms for inclusion, respect, and visibility of senior citizens in public life.

The Ministry also organized a unique **mega cultural event, ‘Aradhana’**, which showcased the immense talent and vitality of elderly artists. Over 100 senior performers aged 60 and above took to the stage with performances in classical music, folk dance, and theatre, reaffirming the message that ageing is not a limitation but a celebration of experience, creativity, and lifelong contribution.

In addition, **more than 500 awareness and sensitization workshops** were conducted across states and union territories to address issues such as elder abuse, legal rights, and access to welfare schemes. **These outreach efforts reached over three lakh citizens**, including caregivers and youth, strengthening community-based care and creating awareness about ageing-related challenges.

In a significant event titled '**Ageing with Dignity**' held at Rashtrapati Bhawan on 2nd May 2025, President of India Smt. Droupadi Murmu launched several key initiatives for senior citizens. These included the inauguration of the **Senior Citizen Welfare Portal**, a comprehensive digital platform aimed at empowering elderly citizens through seamless access to government schemes, healthcare benefits, welfare services, and updates on relevant events.

Additionally, President of India virtually inaugurated **five new Senior Citizen Homes** located in Tawang (Arunachal Pradesh), Wokha (Nagaland), Vellore (Tamil Nadu), Anakapalli (Andhra Pradesh), and Nainital (Uttarakhand). These facilities are designed to provide safe, nurturing, and dignified living environments for indigent senior citizens across the country.

An MoU was also signed between the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment and the Brahma Kumaris organization to promote mental health, mindfulness, and spiritual enrichment for both younger and older generations.

As India moves steadily towards the vision of *Viksit Bharat @2047*, the voices and wisdom of its senior citizens will not be left behind—they will lead the chorus. The Ministry's efforts are not just about care, but about honouring a lifetime of contribution, and ensuring that ageing is not seen as an end, but a new chapter of participation, purpose, and pride.



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