

Regarding need to amend the Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act, 2007 for appropriate protection of senior citizens in the country- laid

SHRI ANURAG SINGH THAKUR (HAMIRPUR): I wish to draw the attention regarding abuse against senior citizens, a grave violation that undermines the very fabric of our society. Recent studies reveal that nearly 50% of elderly individuals endure emotional, physical, or financial exploitation, often at the hands of their own kin, with only a fraction reporting due to fear and dependency. This scourge not only inflicts irreparable harm but also erodes the dignity of our elders deserve after lifetimes of contribution to nation-building. In an ageing population projected to reach 20% by 2050, such neglect threatens social harmony and economic productivity, as traumatized seniors withdraw from community roles they once enriched. Our Government has championed the welfare of the vulnerable through flagship initiatives like the National Action Plan for Senior Citizens and Atal Vayoshree Yojana. Yet, the Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act, 2007, with its modest penalties, remains woefully inadequate against escalating violations. I urge an immediate amendment to impose stringent punishments, such as enhanced imprisonment up to seven years and hefty fines, to deter perpetrators. Furthermore, integrating Elderline helplines with local police for proactive interventions, alongside awareness campaigns in every panchayat, will fortify safeguards.