



A new beginning
A Dedicated Website for Senior Citizens and their Family members

Press Note

Activist proposes separate ministry for senior citizens; launches comprehensive website

Mumbai, April 10, 2008: Renowned Right to Information (RTI) activist Shailesh Gandhi today inaugurated **Silver Innings**, a comprehensive and dedicated website to address the concerns of senior citizens, at a function held in Mumbai.

"This is a historic event for senior citizens," said Mr John Thattil, Regional Director (West), Help Age India, who was the guest of honour at the function. "Silver Innings is a new beginning for our elders, as it harnesses the modern, powerful medium of the Internet to help them not only to keep pace with the world, but also to network with each other and bind them together on an unprecedented scale," he said.

Highlighting the growing percentages of senior citizens due to better health care facilities and the increased life span, Thattil revealed that while senior citizens constituted 7.5 per cent of the total population in 2001, by 2050 the number is expected to rise to about 20 per cent. "There is a severe crunch of services for senior citizens and we need to start building them up right now," said Sailesh Mishra.

"This website is complementary to the RTI movement in that it is a one stop destination for all information related to senior citizens, a prominent disadvantaged group," said Mr Gandhi. "We have seen that information invariably leads to empowerment and Silver Innings, by ensuring that relevant and comprehensive information reaches the senior citizens through the modern digital, interactive media, will make life so much easier for them."

The website is a brain child of Sailesh Mishra, founder member, Silver Innings, who has extensive experience as an activist for senior citizens and other social causes. "We at Silver Innings are committed to ensure that ageing becomes a positive, rewarding experience for all, by helping them to overcome the challenges of ageing and show them the way to live with dignity in their silver years," he said.

Mishra observes that while there is no dearth of NGO's working for cause of women, children, education, and AIDS abound, there are few organisation dedicated to the concerns of senior citizens, and those too are concentrated in large cities like Mumbai, Delhi and Bangalore.

"It is for this reason that we wish to eventually develop this website into an NGO dedicated to senior citizens, as this cause is largely a neglected one" says Mishra. "Just as there are independent ministries for women, children and youth and national commissions for women, population and minorities, we now need a separate ministry or an independent state minister for senior citizens," he proposes.

Corresp Add: Bldg: C/22, Flat: 303, Sector: 8, Shantinagar, Mira Road, Mumbai, India
401107

1

Website: www.silverinnings.com

Blog: <http://peopleforsocialcause.blogspot.com/>

Email: silverinnings@gmail.com

Mobile: 0091 9819819145



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Silver Innings is an initiative by four youngsters: Sailesh Mishra from Mira Road, Hendi Lingiah from Paris, Prof Parul Kilbilwala from Kandivali and Swati from Chembur, who have come together for a common cause

"Information available in the public domain on elders is incomplete and not updated. There are many website's for seniors, but most of them are being run by organisations and provide info on service provided by themselves. But there are hardly any website that gives objective and comprehensive information on the issues and problems of elders. This is the gap that Silver Innings fills in, like a super market where you get everything under a single roof," says Mishra.

This website will host sections on health and medical issues, finance and investments, law, leisure activities and hobbies, help line and counseling services and a directory of old age homes and other services needed by the elder population and their family members.

Sailesh says Silver Inning is silver line (ray of hope) in dark cloud and a new beginning for our Elders.

As part of their objective promoting Elder Cause, Silver Innings facilitated **The Family welfare Agency**, Mumbai for their grass root level work for the Elderly in Mumbai's five wards.

About John Thattil – Guest of Honour

John Thattil, Regional Director (West) - Help Age India, A secular, not-for-profit organization set up in 1978, and since then have been raising resources to protect the rights of India's elderly and provide relief to them through various interventions.

About Shailesh Gandhi – Chief Guest

An IIT graduate and career engineer, now Renowned RTI Activist, Social Crusader, He is also the ex-chairman of the IIT Bombay Alumni Association and continues to be a member of the IIT Bombay Alumni Board.

About Sailesh Mishra

Founder, Silver Innings. He left his corporate job of Fifteen years for Social Sector and now passionately involved in Elder Care for more the Three years.

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2

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Vital Statistics – Elder Population

Aged as per 2001 Census 7, 66, 22,321: 7.5% of Total population

Aged Male 37,768,327: 7.1% of total population

Aged Female 38,853,994: 7.8% of total population

General population in Rural 72.2% People in Urban 27.8%

According to UN urban population in India will increase from 30 % in 2010 to more than 50 % by 2045.

Projected Elderly Population in 2008 @ average 7.5% will be 8, 60, 75, 775

According to UN by 2050, nearly 20% of India's population will comprise of people over the age of 60 years

Elder Population in Maharashtra as on 2001

Total Population: 96,878,627

Male: 50,400,596

Female: 46,478,031

Population of above 60 yrs. at National Average of 7.5%: **72, 65,897**

According to UNICEF Life expectancy in India

In 1970 49 yrs

In 1990 58 yrs

In 2005 64 yrs

In 2008 68 yrs

According to UN Global life expectancy at birth, which is estimated to have risen from 46 years in 1950-1955 to 65 years in 2000-2005, is expected to keep on rising to reach 75 years in 2045-2050.

In developed countries, 20 per cent of today's population is aged 60 years or over, and by 2050 that proportion is projected to be 32 per cent. **And by 2050 there will be two elderly persons for every child.**

According to World Life Expectancy.Com as on 2008 Global Life Expectancy:

India 68.6

USA 78

Australia 80.6

South Africa 42.5

China 72.9

Russia 65.9

Saudi Arabia 75.9

UK 78.8

France 80.6

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3

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