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Title: Discussion on the motion for consideration of the Senior Citizens (Provision of Geriatric and Dementia Care) Bill, 2014 moved by Shri Bhartruhari Mahtab (Discussion not concluded).

HON. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Now we shall take up Item No.75 – Shri Bhartruhari Mahtab.

SHRI BHARTRUHARI MAHTAB (CUTTACK): Sir, I thank you for allowing me to move a Bill titled the 'Senior Citizens (Provision of Geriatric and Dementia Care) Bill, 2014.

Sir, I have moved this Bill especially to bring to light and to deliberate in this House the problems that our older generation is facing or will be facing in near future. A disease like dementia – loss of memory – is affecting a large number of people of our society. I came to know about this disease and many of came to know about this disease after the former President of the United States of America, Mr. Ronald Regan, was affected by that disease. That is how, the whole world came to know that here is a disease which is not curable and only certain amount of treatment can be given and that treatment is only to take care of them so that they do not make mistakes and be victims of certain circumstances.

Dementia is a disease ...(*Interruptions*) Parkinson is different. Dementia is a syndrome usually of a chronic nature caused by a variety of brain illness. So, it is forgetfulness and is disconnect between ones thinking process and his speaking ability. One will be aware that certain things are happening around him but he will not find the actual words to express himself. At times when one is inside his room, inside one's house and one feels like going outside and when one goes outside and moves around in the streets, one does not then recollect as to which was the way to come back to one's own house. He does not recognize his house again. At times a person even does not recognize his own children and relatives. It is not Parkinson but it is Dementia...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI ADHIR RANJAN CHOWDHURY (BAHARAMPUR): You mentioned about Ronald Regan and that is why I told Parkinson.

SHRI BHARTRUHARI MAHTAB : The word that came into more use was Alzheimer. Alzheimer and Dementia have a very thin line of difference. Parkinson was a general concept which the medical world and the general public were using in the 60s. But later on when the doctors of neurology and Neuro Sciences surveyed the matter, they have said that this is something of Dementia and something of Alzheimer.

Sir, as I propose this Bill for consideration of the House, I would like to say that we have been talking about demographic dividend, the country's youthful demographic curve transaction into a geronatalogical bulge by 2020, but the plight of the aged will aggravate. India which had traditionally enjoyed a robust joint family system that had taken care of the elderly yet the sweeping currents of globalization is rupturing our social fabric and is having a baleful effect on our society. With the disintegration of the joint family system and the emergence of the nuclear families, elders are increasingly getting neglected, uncared for and in some cases, mal-treated. Elderly people rarely complain, at least not in public. But if you enquire about their well-being, the tales of sorrow are endless.

Here I am reminded of a story. Some 100 years ago, a famous writer of Odiya literature, whom we consider as the father of modern Odiya literature Fakir Mohan, had written a short story named *Dak Munshi*. The story is like this. An old *chowkidar* had devoted all his life to bring up his son. The son got educated and got a good job and became a Post Master. One day this old man went to meet his son. He met his son, stayed there for a night. But the next day when he was coming back, a friend of his son went to that office and asked, 'who is this old man going out'? The son said, 'he is a servant who has come from my village'. From that day the old man decided not to have any contact with his son. The dream that he had of having a better living in his old age was shattered and he was relegated to his own fate. That is how the story ends. This is, no doubt, generation gap. But my concern here is about taking care of the older people. As nuclear families are now the rule of the day, the number of older people is increasing day by day. The population of senior citizens, as a percentage of total population which stood at 7.5 per cent during 2001 census is likely to increase to 12.4 per cent in 2026 as per the report of the Technical Group constituted by the National Commission on Population.

So, in that respect, I would say that greater responsibility is now both with the State Governments and the Central Government. Therefore, I would say that, other than taking care of their health, there is also a need to take care of their well-being.

HON. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Shri Mahtab, you may continue next time.

Now it is 6 p.m. We may now take up 'Zero Hour'. Shri Kaushalendra Kumar.

**18.00 hrs.**