

# Senior Citizens' Lounge

## Six Months of Serving Kashmir's Forgotten Elders

### Reflection on the Journey of Moul Mouj Foundation



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In the twilight of their lives, our elders deserve care, dignity and respect. Yet, for many senior citizens in Kashmir, the reality is far from this ideal. Abandonment, untreated illnesses and emotional struggles for thousands of elderly parents. At Moul Mouj Foundation, we refuse to let them fade into the shadows.

#### A Mission Born from Decade of Experience

The Moul Mouj Foundation formally began its journey in June 2024, marking World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD-2024). However, its roots lie in over a decade of grassroots experience and deep engagement with the struggles of Kashmir's elderly especially their health. For the past 12 years, Dr. Zubair Saleem, Founder and Chairman of Moul Mouj Foundation, has treated more than 30,000 seniors, witnessing firsthand the devastating effects of neglect, financial hardship and the silent suffering of parents left behind.

It was this understanding that led to the establishment of **Moul Mouj Health Centre** (initiative of Kashmir Clinics Central), a dedicated facility for Senior Citizen care. The overwhelming response from elderly patients confirmed what was already known—Kashmir's seniors needed urgent and sustained medical support. Among the many who believed in Moul Mouj Foundation's mission, late Muhammad Shafi Pandit (May his soul rest in Jannah), Khurshid A Ganai (IAS Retd), Naseem Lankar (IAS Retd), Mandip Kaur (Civil Society), Masooda Yasin (Retd Director), M Iqbal Shah (Civil Society), the founding members and other well wishers, played an important role in supporting and encouraging its foundation. The name "Moul Mouj", reflecting the dignity and care aging parents deserve, was suggested by Syeda Afshana, a noted columnist and Professor at Kashmir University. After witnessing the impact of Moul Mouj Foundation's work, director and writer Faruq Masudi proposed the powerful slogan "**Zan Te Panun Aulad**" for Moul Mouj Foundation.

#### The Crisis We Cannot Ignore

Urbanization and shifting family dynamics have left thousands of elderly individuals without financial and emotional support. Many struggle with chronic illnesses such as diabetes, hypertension and heart disease, yet they have no means to afford treatment. Others are trapped in the devastating cycle of loneliness, depression and emotional abuse—silent sufferers in their own homes.

At Moul Mouj Foundation, we believe that growing old should not mean growing invisible. Our mission is not just about providing medical care but about restoring dignity, ensuring companionship and creating a safety net for those who have given their entire lives to raising and nurturing families.

#### What We Learned in Six Months

During OPDs, home visits, medical camps and community visits,

Moul Mouj Foundation came face-to-face with the harsh realities of elderly life in Kashmir. Many seniors arrived with untreated chronic illnesses—diabetes, hypertension, heart disease, and arthritis, conditions that required long-term care, not just a one-time consultation and temporary relief. A significant number of elderly individuals were still smoking, unaware of its risks or unable to quit due to lack of guidance.

Beyond medical neglect, we received distress calls from seniors who simply wanted to be heard. Many live in silence, longing for conversation, warmth, and a sense of belonging. Elderly patients shared stories of being financially dependent on others, left with no means to buy medicines, or being completely abandoned by their families. Some had no proper nutrition, while others had nowhere to turn for help when they were sick.

Moul Mouj Foundation realized that occasional free consultations and short-term medication assistance were not enough. This led to the launch of Lifetime Privilege Cards, ensuring that the most vulnerable seniors would receive free consultations, medicines, and essential diagnostic tests for life.

#### What we did in Last Six Months

Moul Mouj Foundation was founded with a singular mission: **to restore dignity and well-being to neglected and financially disadvantaged elderly parents.** Over last six months, we have provided:

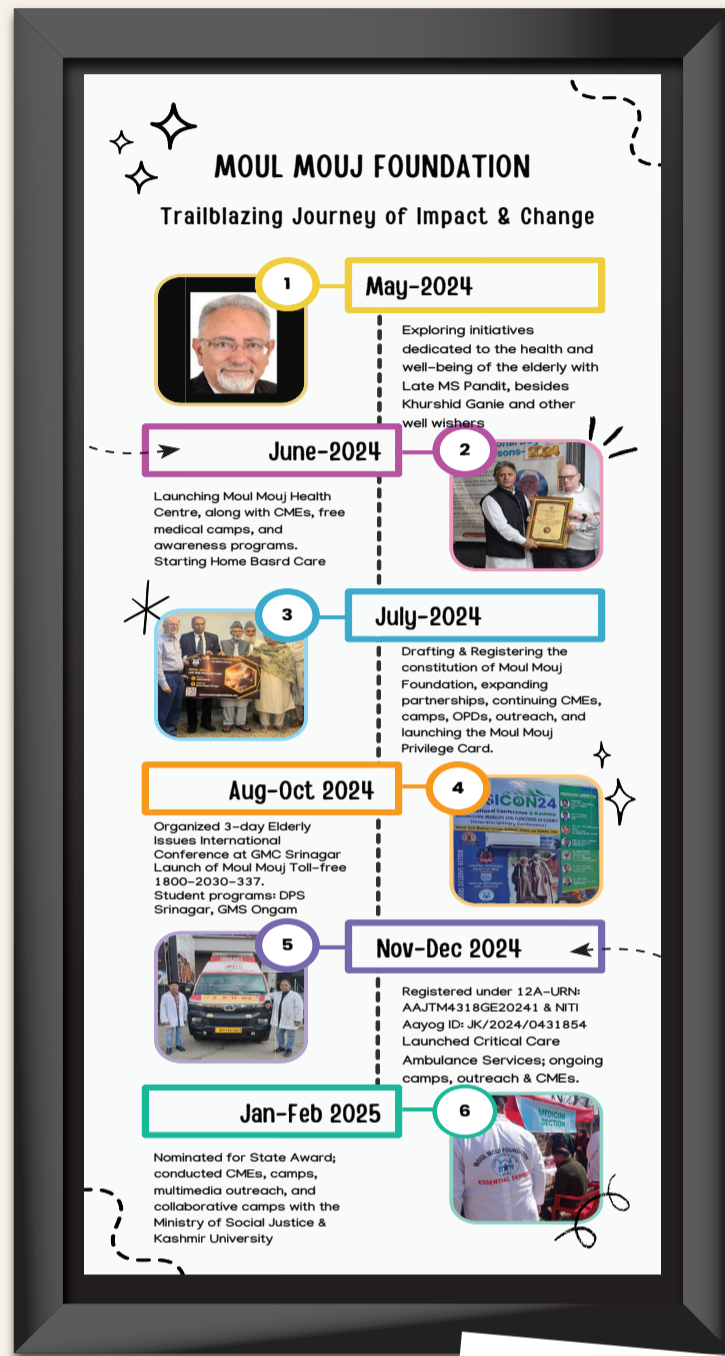
#### Medical and Healthcare Services

- 537 treated under Moul Mouj Privilege Card
- 82 treated under Lifetime Privilege Card
- 1,765 elderly patients treated in OPD (981 males, 784 females)
- 109 home visits conducted by specialist doctors, including ECGs, blood

- tests, wound dressings of bedsores, IV medicines and medication support
- 24x7 Toll-Free Helpline: 1,026 calls received, 889 cases resolved
- Ambulance Support: 62 intra-state and 11 inter-state patient transfers
- Oxygen Support: 17 oxygen concentrators and 12 oxygen cylinders provided to seniors in need

#### Community Outreach and Awareness Initiatives

- Senior Citizens Lounge (Greater Kashmir): 24 editions published, focusing on elderly issues
- Radio Awareness Programs: 8 broadcasts on elderly health care, legal rights, and well-being
- Social Media Awareness Campaigns: 3 digital initiatives, including GKTv Podcast, weekly Doctor's Mic, promoting elder welfare
- Free Health Camps: 10 camps conducted, benefiting 1217 elderly patients
- Monthly Ration Support: 12 financially dependent senior couples provided with essential groceries
- Intergenerational Bonding Programs: Campaigns in



monthly ration support, ensuring that their final years are lived with the respect and care they were once denied.

**Deceived, Displaced and Forgotten:** A Mouj, trusting her sons, unknowingly signed away her home—the very walls that once sheltered them. Now, with nowhere to go, she and her unmarried daughter face a world that has turned its back on them. *While the Moul Mouj Foundation cannot undo the betrayal, we ensure she receives regular healthcare, offering at least one form of solace in an otherwise cruel reality.*

**The Bedridden Moul, Alone in His Struggle:** Once independent, once strong, he now lies confined to a bed, suffering in silence. With no means to access medical care, his condition worsened with each passing day—until *Moul Mouj Foundation stepped in.* Now, he receives the essential treatment he needs, proving that no elder should ever have to suffer alone.

These are not just stories; they are the painful realities of the elderly in Kashmir. And still many more stories remain untold.

#### Future Plans

Despite being in its early stages, Moul Mouj Foundation was nominated for a prestigious award, recognizing its efforts in innovative healthcare for seniors. However, the challenges remain vast and urgent. The foundation is now working towards:

- **Expanding the Lifetime Privilege Card Program** – Ensuring that more neglected and financially dependent seniors receive lifelong access to free medical consultations, medicines, and diagnostic services.

#### Acknowledgments

The work of Moul Mouj Foundation would not have been possible without the collective support of many organizations and individuals. We extend our gratitude to:

Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, GoI, Kashmir University, GMC Srinagar, GK Labs+, Geriatric Orthopedic Society of India, Help Foundation, Friends Association, Gauri Kaul Foundation, Group of Concerned Citizens (GCC), CGPWA Kashmir, DPS Srinagar, GMS Ongam and Anugraha Delhi.

Heartfelt gratitude to Greater Kashmir Editor-in-Chief Fayaz A Kaloo and the entire teams of Greater Kashmir, Kashmir Uzma and GKTv. Your unwavering media support has been instrumental in amplifying Moul Mouj Foundation's mission, ensuring that the voices of our elders are heard, their struggles acknowledged and their dignity upheld.

The patronage of esteemed doc-



universities as part of their academic curriculum

#### Stories That Reflect a Harsh Reality

Every number above represents a life impacted, a parent supported, a story of resilience and survival. Some stories stand out as painful reminders of how easily elders are forgotten:

**Widow Betrayed by Blood:** She raised three sons, sacrificing her own dreams to secure their future. Yet, when she needed them most, they abandoned her. Left to survive on the mercy of strangers, she found herself battling not just old age but also the heartbreak of neglect. *Today, Moul Mouj Foundation has become her lifeline, ensuring she receives the medical care she deserves, so her health is no longer another burden to bear.*

**Parents Left to Wither in Silence:** They spent their youth nurturing their two sons, expecting love and care in return. Instead, they were met with indifference, left struggling for the very basics—healthcare, food, and dignity. *Moul Mouj Foundation stepped in, offering free medical treatment and*

schools and colleges to encourage youth-senior interactions, particularly between grandchildren and grandparents

#### Research and Academic Contributions

Moul Mouj Foundation has actively contributed to geriatric research and medical education. The foundation organized:

- 4 CMEs (Continuing Medical Education) programs for medical professionals on aging-related diseases
- 6 Elderly Awareness Programs for the general public
- 3-day International Conference on Mobility Issues in Seniors at GMC Srinagar
- Offering internships to undergraduate and postgraduate students from Social Work departments of various uni-

- **Strengthening Home-Based Geriatric Care** – Many seniors, particularly those who are bedridden or unable to travel, remain cut off from essential healthcare. Moul Mouj Foundation aims to scale up mobile medical teams, providing doorstep consultations, physiotherapy, and palliative care for the most vulnerable
- **Organizing More Free Medical Camps** – Regular Healthy Ageing Camps will be held across different districts of Kashmir, offering free specialist consultations, medicines, blood tests, ECGs, dental checkups, eye screenings, and awareness sessions on common geriatric health issues and identifying elderly parents for awarding them with Lifetime Privilege Card
- **Moul Mouj Helpline Expansion** – Strengthening the existing 24x7 helpline to provide immediate support, emergency assistance, and legal guidance for elderly individuals in distress.

Moul Mouj Foundation envisions a Kashmir where no elder is abandoned, unheard, or uncared for. With sustained efforts, medical outreach and community participation, we can ensure that our seniors age with dignity, security, and respect.

#### We Need You

As more neglected elderly parents turn to the Moul Mouj Foundation for help, we urge you to stand with us. Supporting MMF is not just charity—it's a moral duty. Your contribution becomes a lifeline for a father who cannot afford his medicines, a mother seeking warmth in her final days, and countless others who deserve dignity and care. Join us in making a difference.

The Moul Mouj Foundation is more than just an organization; it is a movement—one that demands collective responsibility.

For more details log on to [www.moulmoujfoundation.org](http://www.moulmoujfoundation.org) or call on 6005463346.

We understand that you may have prior commitments for giving your Zakat. However, we encourage you to consider allocating a portion to the Moul Mouj Foundation



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