The concluding part of the silver economy series looks at innovative apps and wearables that are empowering seniors and their families

How tech is changing the landscape of elder care

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Bengaluru/Mumbai, 23 December

As India's population ages, elder care is becoming an urgent priority, both for families and the healthcare industry. This has spawned new businesses: Startups that are developing innovative tech-driven solutions that help manage elder care remotely, especially for families living far from their ageing parents.

One such example is Dozee, a healthtech firm that offers AI-powered, contactless remote patient monitoring and an early warning system. The Bengaluru-based firm recently unveiled Shravan, a system that enables families living away from their elderly parents to monitor their vital health metrics like heart rate, blood pressure, and sleep patterns. This health data is shared with both the families and healthcare providers via a mobile app and can be accessed 24x7. By providing real-time alerts, Shravan helps families, even those overseas, stay connected to their parents' well-being and enables early medical intervention when needed.

Mudit Dandwate, chief executive officer and co-founder of Dozee, pointed out that traditional health monitoring methods often fall short of providing clinical-grade, real-time data necessary for early detection. And existing support systems — such as occasional check-ins, help from relatives and neighbours, and limited telemedicine — offer limited reassurance and often fail during emergencies. As a result, even manageable conditions are overlooked until it's too late. Dozee, which is now present in over 200 hospitals in 40-plus districts, intends to bridge this gap through early detection of a potential health deterioration and timely medical interventions. The firm is also expanding its operations to Africa.

Beyond individual products, elder care is also undergoing a broader transformation.

Organisations like KITES Senior Care are focusing on delivering healthcare and assistance in a familiar, home-like setting, allowing seniors to maintain their independence while receiving the support they need.

Rajagopal G, CEO of Columbia Pacific Communities and KITES Senior Care, emphasised that families increasingly prefer this approach over traditional old-age homes.

KITES has served over 6,500 elders in the 'out of hospital care' segment and caters to 2,400-plus seniors in retirement homes. "Many seniors are becoming more comfortable with digital tools for healthcare consultations, health monitoring, and staying in touch with family members," said Rajagopal. "At KITES, we assist them in navigating these technologies, ensuring they feel confident and supported" rather than overwhelmed.

The need for such solutions is growing as India's elderly (60-plus) population, which is currently over 149 million, is expected to more than double to 347 million by 2050. As the country's demographic shifts, the demand for more efficient, technology-driven healthcare solutions will only increase.

But technology alone cannot solve the issue; it must be accompanied by thoughtful implementation that takes into account the real-life challenges faced by seniors.

Khyaal, another player in the elder care space, offers an app that goes beyond health monitoring. It engages seniors with live workshops, games and curated travel packages, besides offering on-demand assistance and safe payments, while also allowing families to stay connected. With over 2 million users across tier I and II cities, Khyaal demonstrates how community-building and elder care can go hand in hand.

The rise of wearable technology is another aspect reshaping elder care. Devices that monitor heart rate, oxygen saturation levels, blood pressure, temperature and even ECG data are becoming common.

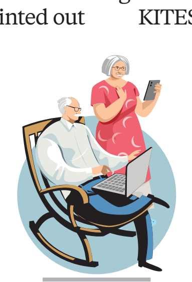
Aashish Contractor, director-Rehabilitation and Sports Medicine, Sir HN Reliance Foundation Hospital, Mumbai, has seen first-hand how wearables can provide critical insights.

"Recently, I had a patient who showed me his smartwatch readings of a heart rate, which was below 40 beats per minute," he said. "We investigated further, and discovered that he needed a pacemaker immediately. In summary, I do believe that these wearables can give us some good information, but it needs to be used judiciously."

He cautions against over-reliance on these devices, noting that false positives can lead to unnecessary stress and costly, often needless, medical tests.

NEW-AGE SOLUTIONS

- Startups are developing solutions that can help manage elder care remotely
- Healthtech firm Dozee developed a system enabling families living away from their elderly parents to monitor their vital health metrics
- KITES Senior Care is focusing on delivering healthcare and assistance in a familiar, home-like setting
- Khyaal is engaging seniors with live workshops, games, and curated travel packages
- India's elderly (60-plus) population is expected to more than double to 347 million by 2050



SILVER LINING
PART 4

SHYAM BENEGAL 1934-2024

Pioneer of parallel cinema dies at 90

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
Mumbai, 23 December

Veteran filmmaker Shyam Benegal, who heralded the Indian parallel cinema movement in the 1970s and 1980s with films such as *Ankur*, *Nishant* and *Manthan*, died on Monday, his daughter Pia said. He was 90.

The filmmaker passed away at Mumbai's Wockhardt Hospital due to chronic kidney disease, Pia Benegal told *PTI*. "He passed away at 6.38 pm at Wockhardt Hospital Mumbai Central. He had been suffering from chronic kidney disease for several years but it had gotten very bad. That's the reason for his death," she said.

Wockhardt Hospital sources said Benegal had been admitted in the ICU.

In his prolific career, Benegal made films on diverse issues, documentaries and television serials, including *Bharat Ek Khoj* and *Samvidhaan*. He had celebrated his 90th birthday just 10 days ago on December 14.

The director told *PTI* on the occasion that he had to frequently visit the hospital and was on dialysis.

Benegal is survived by his wife Nira Benegal and daughter.

His films include *Bhumika*, *Junoon*, *Mandi*, *Suraj Ka Satvaan Ghoda*, *Mammo and Sardari Begum*, most counted as classics in Hindi cinema.

The director's most recent work was the 2023 biographical *Mujib: The Making of a Nation*.

And he wasn't calling it quits anytime soon.

"I'm working on two to three projects; they are all different from one another. It's difficult to say which one I will make. They are all for the big screen," Benegal told *PTI* just last week on the occasion of his 90th birthday.

He also spoke of his frequent visits to the hospital and that he was on dialysis. Benegal's *Manthan* on Varghese Kurien's milk cooperative movement in Anand, Gujarat, starring Smita Patil, Girish Karnad and Naseeruddin Shah, was restored and screened at the Cannes Classics segment in the French riviera town in May this year.

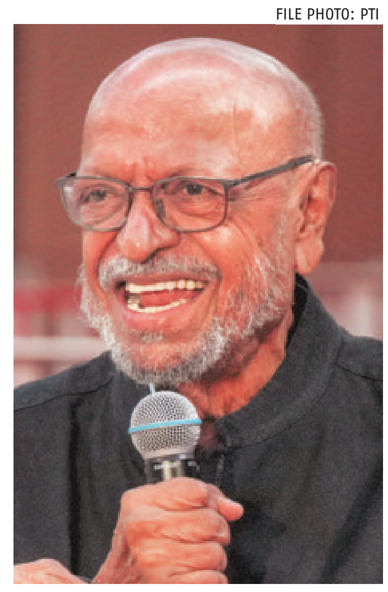
Tributes to Shyam Babu, as he was known to friends and colleagues, who rewrote the rules of Indian movies poured in.

Filmmaker Shekhar Kapur said Benegal created 'new wave' cinema and will always be remembered as the man who changed the direction of Hindi cinema with films like *Ankur* and *Manthan*.

"He created stars out of great actors like Shabana Azmi and Smita Patil. Farewell my friend and my guide," he added.

Actor-director Atul Tiwari said, "It is difficult to believe but our icon Shyam Benegal is no more." "Go well Shyam babu. Thank you (for) inspiring many like me. Thank you for the cinema. Thank you for giving tough stories and flawed characters such amazing dignity. Truly among the last of our greats." Akshay Kumar described him as one of the finest filmmakers in the country. "If there is one thing Shyam Benegal expressed best: it was the Poetry of the ordinary face and ordinary lives," director Sudhir Mishra said.

FILE PHOTO: PTI



The veteran filmmaker passed away at Mumbai's Wockhardt Hospital due to chronic kidney disease

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[TECH DIGEST]

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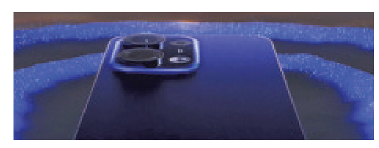
APPLE PLANS SMART DOORBELL WITH FACE ID

Apple will reportedly expand its smart home product lineup, including a doorbell with facial recognition similar to Face ID. This doorbell, expected to launch by 2025, would double as a door-locking system, unlocking doors when it recognises registered faces. Additionally, Apple is planning other devices powered by Apple Intelligence, such as a wall-mounted iPad (due in March 2025), a robotic tabletop device with AI capabilities, and a smart home camera.



Oppo plans to launch Reno 13 series in Jan

Oppo's series will encompass the Reno 13 and Reno 13 Pro. Both models will feature premium design with unique colour finishes and an aluminium frame. The Reno 13 series will boast sculpted glass back and Corning Gorilla Glass 7i protection for the display. The series will offer drop protection.

Samsung set to launch Slim model in S25 series

Expected to debut in Q2 2025, the Galaxy S25 Slim is reported to feature a 6mm slim profile, a 6.66-inch display, a 4,700mAh battery, and a triple-camera system with a 200MP main sensor. Powered by the Qualcomm Snapdragon 8 Elite processor, it is anticipated to rival Apple's thin-profile iPhone 17 Air, also anticipated for a 2025 release.