

There's little awareness on seniors' rights

TNN | Jan 28, 2012, 04.59AM IST

BANGALORE: Five years have gone by since the Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens' Act, 2007, was implemented, and two years since special tribunals were set up to deal with disputes related to senior citizens. Yet, the 48 district-level tribunals in Karnataka have registered just 50 cases so far.

At a meet to discuss minimum standards and regulatory mechanisms for old-age homes, VA Machakanur, director, department for the empowerment of the differently abled and senior citizens, blamed a lack of legal awareness to protect the rights of seniors as the root cause for this. Many disputes are resolved through the elders' helpline before approaching the tribunals," said Machakanur.

Stressing the need to set up 'homes away from home' for senior citizens, he said: "By 2050, about 20% of India's population will constitute senior citizens. We have to improve our care centres for seniors so they live with dignity and happiness," he added.

Machakanur pointed out the government's role in regularizing old-age homes. "Such homes in other countries are far better than those in India, because it took 50 years for our government to come out with a special law to protect the rights of senior citizens," he said.