



# Lack of basic rights for the aged a concern

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## **Lack of basic rights for the aged a concern: SC-Says they have right to dignity, health and shelter**

- Terming the rights of the rising elderly population of the country an “emerging situation” not envisaged even in the Constitution, the Supreme Court said the government could not tighten its purse strings in the name of “economic budgeting” to explain the inadequate welfare provided to senior citizens and the aged.
- The court said it was a statutory right of every aged person under the Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act of 2007 to be provided dignity, health and shelter. All the three are important components which make the fundamental right to life under **Article 21**.
- A Bench of Justices Madan B. Lokur ordered the Centre to obtain the “necessary information” from all the State governments and the Union Territories about the number of old age homes in each district and file a status report by January 31.

### **‘Pension a pittance’**

- The court directed that the Centre should prepare a plan of action for giving publicity to the provisions of 2007 Act and ensure that the State governments carry out and execute the provisions of the law.
- The court’s judgment, based on a petition filed by former Union Law Minister Ashwani Kumar, expressed shock at the “pittance” paid to senior citizens and the elderly in the form of pension.