

Senior living goes hi-tech

With a growing preference for assisted living, India's senior housing market is set to transform

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The senior living industry in India has been witnessing growth in the past couple of years and is expected to grow further. "According to reports, by 2050, the share of the senior housing market is expected to go up from 10 to 20 per cent of the population," remarks Manju Yagnik, senior vice president of NAREDCO Maharashtra.

This has nudged several developers to consider dappling with senior living and care sectors. "As the demographic shifts, it is anticipated that there will be a noticeable rise in the number of senior citizens by 2032. Evolving family structures, with more nuclear families and increased financial independence among seniors, have contributed to a growing preference for personalised living arrangements. Additionally, there is a growing need for specialised medical services, highlighting the necessity for purposefully designed senior care facilities. The influx of Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) seeking high-quality care options for their ageing family members further amplifies this trend," shares Seema Jobanputra, director of a real estate group.

■ The technological side

Senior living homes are equipped with technology for both independent and assisted living. These tools help to ease the lives of its residents by providing them comfort and easy access to essential needs. Anantharam Varayur, co-founder of a senior living home, lists some of the

key technologies used at such facilities:

- Wearable panic devices;
- Video bells with mobile connectivity;
- Adjustable rods to hold washbasins, commode seats etc.;
- Voice-enabled applications for calling;
- Voice-enabling option for switching on, and switching off various devices, like lights, curtains, ACs, fans, etc.;
- App-enabled medicine boxes;
- Wearable airbags for fall protection;
- Robots to perform routine jobs;
- AI-enabled battery cars and wheelchairs.

■ The nature of this trend

Senior living spaces are designed to cater to the medical and personal needs of ageing residents. "Senior living in India caters to both independent as well as assisted living. Independent living allows elderly people to stay in community living centres with minimal support, whereas assisted living provides the essential services of medical care and housekeeping to ensure comfort and security," Yagnik explains.

Senior living has been gaining traction in tier-II cities led by a preference for a slower pace of life, ease of living and lesser population-related infrastructure stress. Cities like Ahmedabad, Surat, Coimbatore, Kochi and Panaji are preferred for senior living accommodation. The segment is also witnessing a boom in places of pilgrimage such as Vrindavan, Ayodhya, Dwarka and Rameswaram.