

FOCUS ON FLAT DWELLERS' RIGHTS

EVENING POST, JULY 13, 1999 By Mawande Jack, Municipal Reporter

The rights of flat dwellers in Port Elizabeth came under the spotlight at a workshop organised by the Organisation of Civic Rights (OCR) at the Consumer Affairs premises.

Durban-based OCR chairperson Sayed-Iqbal Mohamed spoke about the widespread violation of tenants' rights by landlords.

Increasing rents, poor living conditions, low maintenance of flats, lighting and leakage were listed as the major problems facing flat dwellers in PE.

Mohamed said the situation was compounded by the ignorance of tenants of their rights and the absence of tenants' organisations to defend these rights.

"Tenants are just like other consumers - entitled to specific rights which are protected by law," he said.

In Durban the formation of tenants organisations had, through its campaigns against flat-owners, increased the awareness of tenants about their rights and the available legal processes for the enforcement of these rights.

He said the challenge for PE tenants was to form these organisations to bring their exploitation by landlords to an end.