

Overview

The Department of Information Technology & Communication (DoIT&C) initiated a project of integration of mobile telephony with the developed pensioner's software being run at Sub Treasuries (ST) for disbursing pensions to eligible old age pensioners, widow pensioners and physically handicapped pensions. The project was to empower such pensioners in the area of rural area with a voice call (to those whose own or reference mobile/land-line numbers have been captured) for intimating them regarding release and sanction of monthly pension. This is an automatic information dissemination (AID) system was also known as **Project-AID** which was subsequently.

Under the present circumstances, the pensioners get to know about the status of his/her pension after considerable delay and that too by personally visiting the office or through some contact person who is able to find out the status of the application. There is no established mechanism to intimate these pensioners about their pensions soon after its sanction / release which gives rise to uncertainty making this socially underprivileged section dependent on non-institutional support for obtaining information regarding the status of this pension application. The existing pilot project seeks to:

- (a) Provide information to the applicant / contact person approved of by the applicant regarding the status of sanction of pension soon after the pension payment order (PPO) has been issued.
- (b) Provide information to the applicant / contact person approved of by the applicant soon after the pension amount has been released by the sub treasury to be credited into the bank account / post-office account of the applicant and facilitates transfer into the bank account of the applicants who have volunteered for opening of bank account for receiving pension.
- (c) The voice call, apart from the above information flow also presents the humane face of administration and helps build up lots of trust and faith in government besides bringing in efficiency and effectiveness in administration through greater transparency, accountability, responsiveness and accessibility.

The aforesaid objectives can be met only when the information flows over a mobile platform, which has a much larger penetration in rural areas as compared to IT. Moreover, transmission of information as outlined above through voice call does away with the problem of illiteracy, which is quite common in this age group as well as in the target population being covered under the pilot project.

Keeping the aforesaid ground realities in mind and with a view to meeting the aforesaid objectives, the pilot project by the name of e-SANCHAR (e-Speech Application through Network for Communication, Help and Response) was conceived of by Shri Tanmay kumar, Secretary, IT & C, Government of Rajasthan.

Apart from meeting the objectives outlined above e-SANCHAR has the ability to have reality check conducted in a wide variety of other Individual Beneficiary / Group Beneficiary programme and remove any intermediaries between the Government and the targeted beneficiary. Besides, e-SANCHAR can be used as a

very effective IEC tool for social messages which are quite common in several Government run schemes / programmes. It would be relevant to mention that the application if up-scaled and implemented through out the State by various Government department would help generate a large data base of the deprived section of rural population which can be targeted through other social benefit schemes also.
