

INFRASTRUCTURE SNAPSHOT APP, ASSAM

In a nutshell: The application enables a user to monitor the maintenance of public services in the district and hold the concerned officials accountable for tardy work. The application has ushered in a new era of transparency by enabling people to track the progress of their complaints and suggestions.

Nodal agency: District administration, Goalpara, Assam

Goalpara in Assam is a district that is in a difficult terrain with undulating topography and riverine chars. The population of this district comprises mostly of tribal groups and minorities, who lack basic facilities and awareness. As a result, monitoring in this district is a challenge. The Infrastructure Snapshot App, an innovative Android-based mobile application, newly launched by the Goalpara district administration, is envisaged to address this issue.

It is a convergence application developed specifically for the all-round monitoring of infrastructure, human resources, of public institutions like government offices, hospitals, schools, anganwadi centres, government schemes like Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Grameen/Urban) Houses, Swacch Bharat Mission individual household latrines and Public Water Supply System (PWSS) and public sites like municipality dustbins and plantation areas. The initiative is envisaged to combat relatively meagre levels of current redressal mechanisms.

The app has smart features like GPS-based service to capture current location in both online and offline modes with data sync facility, options to upload photos, reporting of encompassing issues-non-existent/damaged infrastructure, repair needs, absence of government personnel, doctors, teachers, nurses, Anganwadi workers, lack of electricity, proper toilet facilities and medicines etc.

Monitoring is the first step in the process. The app is designed to enable follow-up of the issues reported by the concerned department and action taken reports to ensure an end-to-end solution of issues and grievances reported. Based on the daily reports, alerts are marked to the concerned departments for necessary action and the action taken is then reviewed in the DDC and special review meetings headed by the Deputy Commissioner. The app also allows users to provide suggestions to fix the irregularities/anomalies with tailored admin features, which aims to provide a seamless, easy, transparent investigation and troubleshooting tool, grievance reporting and redressal mechanism ultimately envisaged to bring complete transparency and public audit.

The provision of GPS ensures a check against spurious complaints as the exact location gets tagged. Anyone who wishes to contribute, complain or register an issue in the district can register on the app through their android mobile phone. The application is authenticated and thereafter, user-id and password are generated.

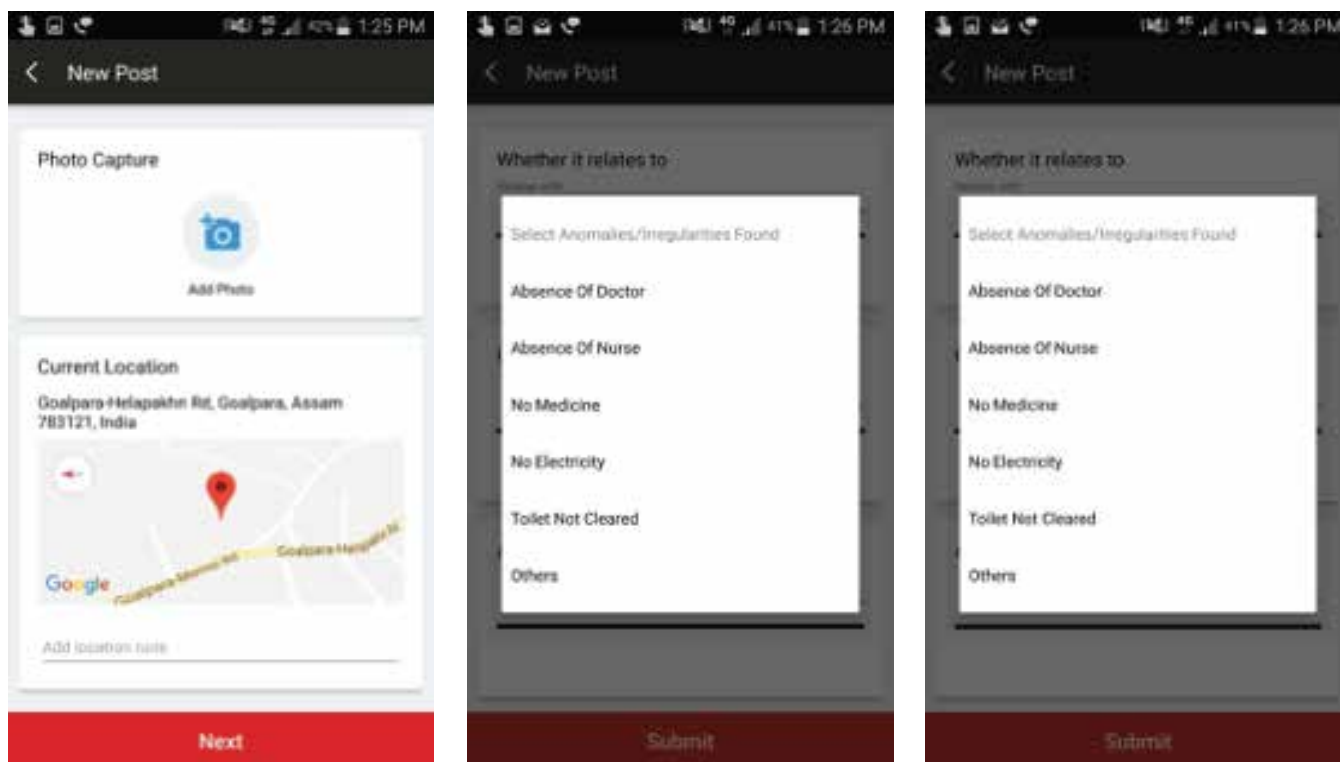
The app is essentially an attempt towards all-round monitoring of all Departments and schemes for monitoring by government officials as well as any members of the public, citizens, media, community-based organizations, NGOs and interest groups.

Multiple rounds of training sessions and awareness camps were organized with all officials of district administration, all heads of the departments, department-wise nodal officers, members of media, leading citizens, community-based organizations, civil society organizations etc. of the district. All development block officials and even grassroot level functionaries such as Gram Panchayat Secretaries were given hands-on training on the mobile app. Special care was also taken to make the elderly users and senior citizens get acquainted hands on to the mobile app.

Impact

- With the launch of the Infrastructure Snapshot App, there has been a qualitative and quantitative increase in the redressal of public grievances and rigorous monitoring of Government infrastructure
- There has been a significant improvement in the inspection regime. Now, any Government scheme and infrastructure is open for inspection by third parties, bringing quantum enhancement in the transparency and accountability of the system with a check on whether public funds and benefits are reaching the public, acting as a check against pilferage of government funds.
- Many stakeholders have already registered and lodged the details of their grievances, and many are coming forward every day. It can also act as an alert during natural disasters, law and order issues or cases of violence. Thus, from monitoring to action to redressal to review there is a 360-degree change and enhancement in the paradigm of Infrastructure review and Public Grievance Redressal Mechanism.
- An interesting feature of this application is that an instant snapshot of the whole district is readily available with this new application. This is helping the administration in identifying the areas of focus and in prioritizing the affected areas.
- The reported issues are being closely monitored by the Public Grievance cell of district administration under the supervision of a designated Additional District Magistrate. Necessary actions are being taken for resolution of the issues reported within set timelines.
- The issues related to other line departments are forwarded to the concerned department for necessary action with defined timelines for action taken report. Thereafter the actions initiated are reviewed at the district level DDC meeting and

special review meetings. Senior officials and field officers have engaged themselves on a regular basis for field verification and inspections of schemes and infrastructure and actions are being taken accordingly.



Snapshots from the Infrastructure Snapshot App