

DeitY banks on mobile devices to deliver e-Governance services

By *Muntazir Abbas*, ET Bureau | 26 Aug, 2014, 05.12PM IST

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NEW DELHI: Mobile handsets would be a "preferred mode" for delivering e-governance programs since cellular devices addresses the last-mile connectivity, says Rajendra Kumar, joint secretary, e-Governance, at the Department of IT & Electronics (DeitY).

The national e-Governance plan (NeGP) that received budgetary allocation of Rs 1275-crore in 2014-15 fiscal, and aims to provide infrastructure for integrated citizen-centric services at local levels, is hit by a slew of hurdles including low e-literacy, lack of interoperability and last mile access.

The DeitY is now turning towards mobility devices to unlock the potential of e-Governance programs, and Kumar believes that the 900-million strong subscriber-base could be leveraged to disseminate information and public services that also include financial inclusion.

M-Seva or the national mobile governance program offers push and pull SMS, IVRS and USSD integration services in addition to select apps to reach out to rural and remote inhabitants with government-to-citizen (G2C) services.

Based on open standards, M-Seva is a national platform that currently integrates 1098 government departments. The platforms delivered more



M-Seva is a national platform that currently integrates 1098 government departments. The platforms delivered more than 120 crore SMSes so far.

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than 120 crore SMSes so far and in August alone, 10.3 crore transactions have taken place.

The AppStore, launched by the national mobile governance initiative, currently hosts 310 Android OS-based apps. Till now, more than 2-lakh downloads have taken place across spectrum. These include electoral, healthcare, public grievances, and birth and domicile certificates.

"We have currently 310 apps and have a team of around 15 app developers", told Kumar told ET. He felt that the reach through mobility devices have increase manifold.

"Even a low-cost basic device would facilitate e-Governance services through voice, SMS and USSD," he added.

All states are using DeitY infrastructure as a backbone to rollout m-Governance initiatives. M-Seva data centre is currently located in Delhi's Shashtri Park and has been scaled up to manage growing workloads.

Currently, 23 State Data Centres (SDC) are operational and DeitY plans to take this count to 33 by 2015-16. These data centers are regarded as the core infrastructure for supporting e-Governance initiatives of NeGP.

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