

View of the Bangalore City

Bangalore Municipality gets tech savvy

The BBMP is transforming from its archaic system of financial monitoring to the modern financial management system on a real-time basis with the help of a pioneering e-governance technology developed by the Indian CST. The service is scalable, secure and efficient, while improving overall service and reducing costs.

-Nandhini Sundar

Mention government projects and the first reaction is great deal of scepticism about: feasibility, executive skills, quality of the end product and timely completion. While this may sound extremely cynical and even unjustified, unfortunately interactions with the government authority have given ample reason to become sceptical.

Recognising this regrettable state of affairs and with the objective of taking the country forward in the right direction to meet its needs of becoming a global economic leader by the year 2035, the Indian Center for Social Transformation (Indian CST) was recently formed to improve e-governance through the global project management system. "Indian CST truly believes in information technology for social change," says its website. In a first of its kind project in India, Indian CST recently rolled out a financial management system for the municipality of Bangalore – BBMP (Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike) which proposes to deliver services that are scalable, secure and efficient, while improving the overall service and reducing costs.

BBMP, with annual budget of Rs 14,000 crore is one of the largest municipalities in the country, with the help of the Indian CST's solution will enable efficient monitor-

ing of the various payments received from the 198 wards in the City under various departments.

For the seamless operations of government departments multiple applications and services need to be addressed and delivered in a scalable, secure and efficient manner. To achieve this, the Indian CST has come up with a Global Project Management Solution (GPMS) as a service for the use of various government agencies. While this 'software as a service' (SaS) is done without technically licensing or installing the software, it enables the use of data across projects, to improve efficiency and cost.

Interestingly, the computing environment will be based on the tenants of Cloud Computing environment where the customers do not own the physical infrastructure and access and process data on the cloud. Typically here, the capital expenditure is avoided by renting the usage from a third-party provider where payment is made only to the extent to which the service is used.

The Indian CST provides such infrastructure under the GPMS where it can be shared across a set of e-governance applications as well as services rendered to common man. Further, to address the sensitivity of information in various e-governance projects as well as information about citizens, data security will be addressed by CVC (Central Vigilance Commission) India and CSIR (Centre for Scientific and Industrial Research).

How does GPMS work?

GPMS essentially addresses the complete life cycle of a project by using the technique of capture, validate, check, measure, analyse, report along with key performance indicators. While it enables organisations to easily monitor their projects, it can also be successfully used for pre and post award analysis of projects besides enabling investigations if any that need to be carried out. While the projects are effectively checked, analysed, measured and reported using relevant indicators, the data gathered is issued as a Knowledge Management System which holds a vast repository of RFPs (request for proposals), tender processes, vendors and their performance, rates as well as technologies available in the market.



This is a step forward in the eradication of corruption and malpractices in the government

The GPMS also stores data on the brief history of the organisation, details regarding the tenders, analysis of payment process, tax deduction practices, duplicity, besides also analysing the necessity of a project under consideration. Further, apart from the 360 degree view of the projects under consideration, the employee's and contractor's history is also stored, facilitating a detailed analysis from all angles as and when required.

GPMS to help BBMP

As the fifth largest city in the country, Bangalore commands a budget of Rs 14,000 crores for carrying out its municipal functions. Interestingly, BBMP Accounts department was unaware, on a real-time basis, the quantum of funds received by its 198 wards. After this shocking truth had dawned, BBMP approached the Indian CST to implement the GPMS to monitor its fund management in real time.

To meet the specific requirements of BBMP, Indian CST has customised the GPMS cloud computing solution, where it enables the efficient monitoring of the various payments received from the respective departments across the 198 wards. Besides providing adequate training to the BBMP staff on the use of the GPMS-BBMP financial management system, site visits were initiated to ascertain its implementation in every zone.

Through the GPMS, BBMP integrated all the 936 branches of nationalised, private and cooperative banks across the city with their departments that span 8 zones, 198 wards

and 450 offices where each engineer can report revenue collected on a daily basis. This, besides enabling reporting on a real time basis, also brings in transparency in the BBMP operations.

GPMS-BBMP-Financial Management System packs in:

1. Revenue Monitoring System
2. Revenue Receipt data entry sheet
3. Generation of Automatic Receipt online
4. View Receipt online
5. Generation of relevant reports

Incidentally, the capturing of this data makes it the single largest information collection system in civil infrastructure project in any government body in Karnataka, offering information on payment, collection and deposit into the various bank accounts of the BBMP.

A Palike transformed:

This project has drastically transformed the face of BBMP within its short period of implementation. Besides ushering in a paperless office and clarity of data through the computerised receipts, there has been a drastic increase in the revenue collection, claimed Raja Seevan, Founder Trustee, Indian CST. "The revenue collection increased by over Rs 100 crores in the very first 60 days of its implementation, a pointer to the tremendous advantage of technology facilitated by the GPMS," he said.

The new system also brings in accountability, with the name, designation and contact details of the receipt issuing person made available. The user-friendly system also allows the data to be easily retrievable for any future reference, besides enabling authorised persons access the site to view collections online in real time.

Adds Seevan, "This initiative is a sure step forward in the eradication of corruption and malpractices in the government, lending credibility to its functioning."

Indian CST's efforts to make BBMP more transparent and efficient can be good example of how technology can benefit the officials as well as the recipients of the service. Many a time, the e-governance initiatives do not reach or address the common man in the manner it is envisaged, especially in the rural areas. This is particularly so due to the digital divide that exists between the urban and rural masses. The Indian CST's aim is to provide e-governance services that are efficient and scalable right from the grass root level such as Municipalities and Panchayats. Supporting this will be a portal that will be accessible to people and link them to a varied range of projects that will offer cost effective computing, knowledge management systems and critical applications at affordable costs. In short, it would ensure that the e-governance reaches and addresses effectively the needs of the common man.