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# Akhilesh Yadav introduces barcoding & e-filing for speedy disposal of public complaints

By Manmohan Rai, ET Bureau • Last Updated: May 04, 2013, 08:07 AM IST

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## Synopsis

A low-cost ingenious project steered by a bright young IAS officer has helped the chief minister dispose of almost 90% of some three lakh public complaints his office has received.



A low-cost ingenious project steered by a bright young IAS officer has helped the chief minister dispose of almost 90% of some three lakh public complaints his office has received.

LUCKNOW: Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Akhilesh Yadav does not have much to show off after a year in power, and his government is often accused of misgovernance, but the tech-savvy leader has now got an effective e-governance system to redress public grievances.

A low-cost ingenious project steered by a bright young IAS officer has helped the chief minister dispose of almost 90% of some three lakh public complaints his office has received, directly or through other leaders, in a time-bound manner.

The system involves barcoding all complaints, making them available online and setting a time frame for officers concerned to take appropriate action. "Most complaints are addressed to the satisfaction of the aggrieved within a fortnight," says Amod Kumar, the IAS officer who set up the online Lok

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given a barcode with essential details and contact information. Each application is also given a sixdigit unique 'public grievance' number. Then they are posted on the Internet. The chief minister's website (<http://upcmo.up.nic.in>) has a specific link where both complainants and officers can track the progress of a case real time by feeding the barcode or public grievance number. Once an application is made, the system also sends an acknowledgement SMS to the complainant.

"The sheer fact that each application can be accessed in real time by an official at the CM's office or the officer concerned, who has to take action for instance at the block or tehsil level, makes them more accountable, and makes all the difference," Kumar says. The system has till date received 2,48,841 applications since it started in September last year. Of these 2,20,082, or 88.4%, have been disposed off in a time-bound manner, he says.

Mithun Pasi, a Delhi-based carpenter hailing from a village in Janupur district, swears by the Lok Shikayat system. His mother lives alone in his village and takes care of a small patch of ancestral agriculture land. A neighbour had encroached upon a part of their land and claimed it was his. Pasi and his family made several visits to the local subdivisional magistrate and police station for about two years to get the land measured according to revenue records and establish their ownership, but nobody listened.

Finally, Pasi went to the chief minister's Janta Darshan programme, where the common man can walk into the CM's residence and voice his complaints. "I received an SMS the very next day saying my application is being processed," he says. "Within two weeks, the SDM came and got the field measured by a tehsildar and we were restored the possession of our original land."

Avnish Saxena, a UP provincial civil services officer posted with the cell, says the CM's office receives about 2,500 letters by post every day and most of them are demands or complaints. These too are made online on a daily basis. "Any complaint where a person is aggrieved due to the lethargy of the system or corruption is taken up immediately," he says.

Kumar says the online cell has progressed from processing complaints received at the CM's Janta Darshan to processing public grievances received

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IAS officer working at various levels from districts to the state capital he saw the aggrieved being pushed from one department to another for years. As the district magistrate of Sitapur during 2004-06, he built an effective public grievance redressal system called Lokvani in public-private partnership.

Then he helped some small entrepreneurs set up kiosks to submit online complaints on behalf of the aggrieved for a small fee. Kumar would directly monitor the complaints and mark it to the officials concerned for timely action. It proved to be a huge success and Lokvani received international recognition. That is precisely why Akhilesh Yadav handpicked Kumar to steer the state-level initiative.

Today, his Samajwadi Party — once infamous for its anathema to computers — is betting on technology to reach out to the grassroots and improve its public image.

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