

Pension Payment System : G2C Services in Manipur

The government expenditure towards payment of pension in Manipur constitutes a major component of annual Non-Plan expenditure. The manual system of pension payment suffered from several procedural gaps resulting in forged Pension Payment Order (PPO), impersonation, miscalculation, over payment, non-recovery of excess withdrawals, non-surrender of PPOs after the demise of the pensioner etc. Furthermore, it was difficult to track the number of pensioners that were converted to family pensioners. The payments through token system made it possible to draw pension without proper verification. The overall process was extremely slow and inefficient.



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The State Government after consulting NIC, Manipur decided to modernize the system with the help of ICT in pension management. After the release of the first version of Pension Payment Software by NIC, Imphal Treasury was chosen for the pilot implementation which was later extended to all the remaining 12 pension paying Treasuries of the State.

During April 2006, the State Government in consultation with NIC, Manipur decided to take advantage of ICT which marked the initiative to introduce pension reforms in the State. In October 2006, the first version of Pension Payment Software was released by NIC, Manipur. Pilot implementation was successfully made at Imphal Treasury by February, 2007 and it was extended successfully to all the remaining 12 pension paying Treasuries by November, 2007.

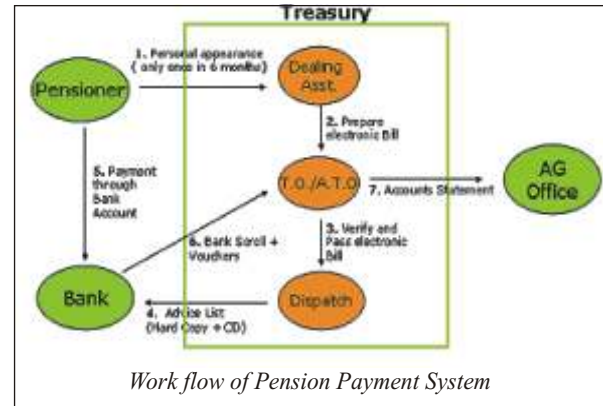
Objectives:

- Direct credit of monthly pension to the pensioner's bank account
- Facilitate fast and efficient processing of pension bills
- Check miscalculation and overpayment.
- Weed out fake PPOs / pensioners
- Track pension payment and check fraudulent and irregular withdrawal of pension
- Remove inconvenience/discomfort to the pensioners
- Improve data exchange between Treasury, AG office and State Finance Department

Strategies adopted:

- Abolish cash payment to pensioner through banks
- Every pensioner should have a bank account at an authorized bank
- Disbursement of monthly pension strictly through pensioner's bank account
- Exclude pensioner from further payment unless photograph and certificate is furnished once in every 6 months
- Bank should honor the monthly advice list generated by computer system

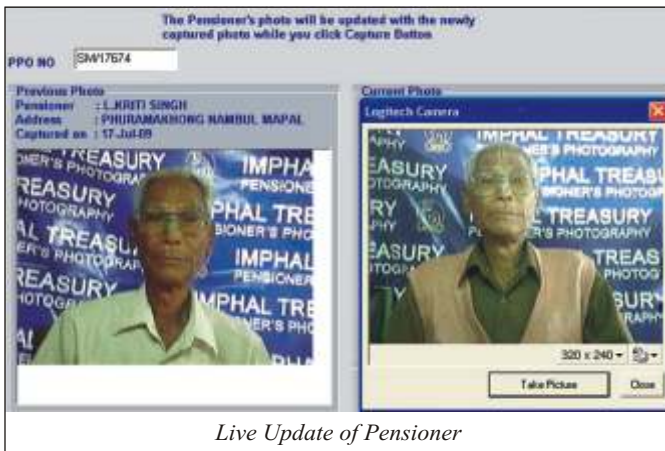
The Software:



The Pension Payment System was developed using Visual Basic 6.0 as User Interface and SQL Server database and operates in Client-Server mode. The software is role based and access to the system is based on the privilege/role assigned to the user during its creation. The types of roles are: Treasury Officer, Operator, Dispatch, Photographer and DBA. This prevents unauthorized access to the system and defines responsibilities of the staff. To ensure genuineness and

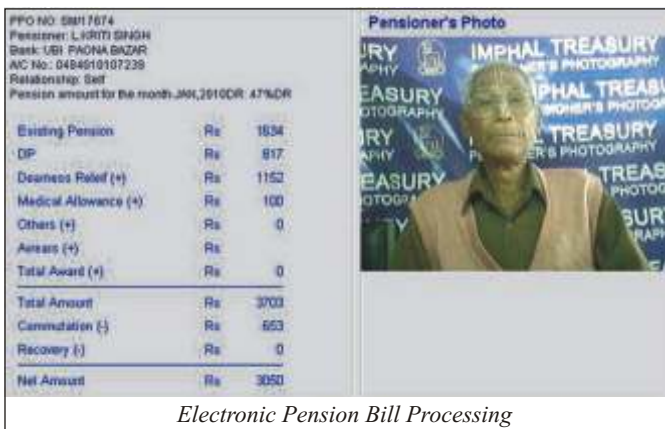
check impersonation, biometrics is used for recording fingerprints while taking photograph of the pensioner through web cam.

Re-engineering of the processes was done and a workflow based computerized system was adopted. Major transformation of the process includes : payment of monthly pension to the pensioner's bank account, taking digital photo (using web-cam) and fingerprints (using biometrics) of the pensioner once in every 6 months and completely abolish the system of preparation of monthly pension using bill forms.



Live Update of Pensioner

Pensioners whose photographs are not captured and details of bank accounts not entered in the database are excluded from payment of pension by Treasuries. With the adoption of the new system, there is minimal paperwork and filing.



Electronic Pension Bill Processing

Data accessibility and accuracy, analysis, systematic collation of information and report generation has enhanced accountability of Treasuries. Productivity of officers/staff has improved with access to data on real time basis.

Benefits:

Computerization of Pension Payment in Manipur has brought about a systemic change in the functioning of the Treasuries. The system controls the processing of pension bills leading to efficient and enhanced treasury operations. Some of the positive outcomes are as follows:-

- i) Pensions released through bank accounts based on electronically generated treasury advices.
- ii) Classification of the pensioners under SM (superannuated pensioners), SF (family pensioners), SP (special pensioners), MLA, those converted to family pensioners etc. at any given point of time.
- iii) Reduced pressure on the Treasuries and faster and efficient processing of pension bills.
- iv) Rationalization by transferring pensioners to Treasuries that are nearest to the respective bank branches from where the pensioners are drawing their pensions.
- v) Disappearance of queues at Banks and Treasuries since the pension can be drawn by the pensioner through ATMs.
- vi) Timely submission of monthly accounts to Accountant General.
- vii) Transparency is achieved which has contributed towards curbing of malpractices, extension of an efficient G2C services for senior citizens.
- ix) Pensioners' data and status of release of monthly pensions made available on the web (<http://webmani.nic.in/pension>) for convenience of pensioners constitutes a major step towards promotion of e-governance for a State like Manipur.

The payment of pension is an example of successful G2C services. Pensioners are no longer required to fill up bill forms on the basis of which pensions were drawn and accounts compiled. The system has facilitated generation of various MIS reports and has ensured timely payments through bank accounts. Enhancing the system by introducing IVRS and SMS facility will go a long way to serve the people of the State in a better way. **i**

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