

# GOOGLE - LOCATE THE PUBLIC TOILET

## • Background

Taking a step towards making India cleaner, Minister of Urban Development M. Venkaiah Naidu launched a Google Map toilet locator to help people find public restrooms. Google Maps will provide information on thousands of public toilets in Delhi National Capital Region and in Madhya Pradesh. Toilets can be located not just through the app on mobile phones (Android and iOS), but on desktop computers as well.

The New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC) has partnered with Google on the latter's toilet locator awareness campaign through which public toilets across Delhi, Gurugram, Faridabad, Ghaziabad and Noida zones can be located on Google Maps.

## • Location, Date

Delhi, Gurgaon, Faridabad, Ghaziabad and Noida and two cities from Indore and Bhopal; 2017

## • Areas

Urban

## • Stage/Scale

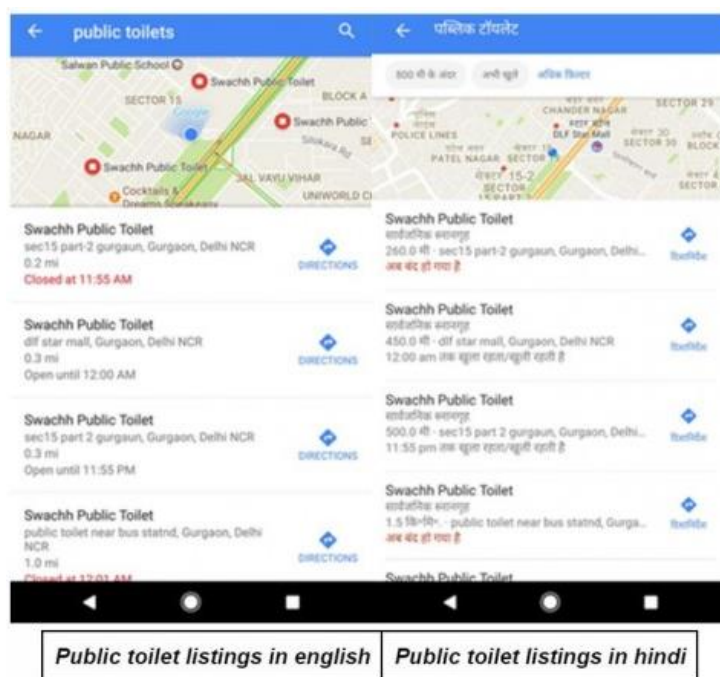
Pilot

## • Objective of the assignment

It aims to encourage citizens to locate toilets and give feedback on Google maps which will help force the civic bodies to improve the public amenities.

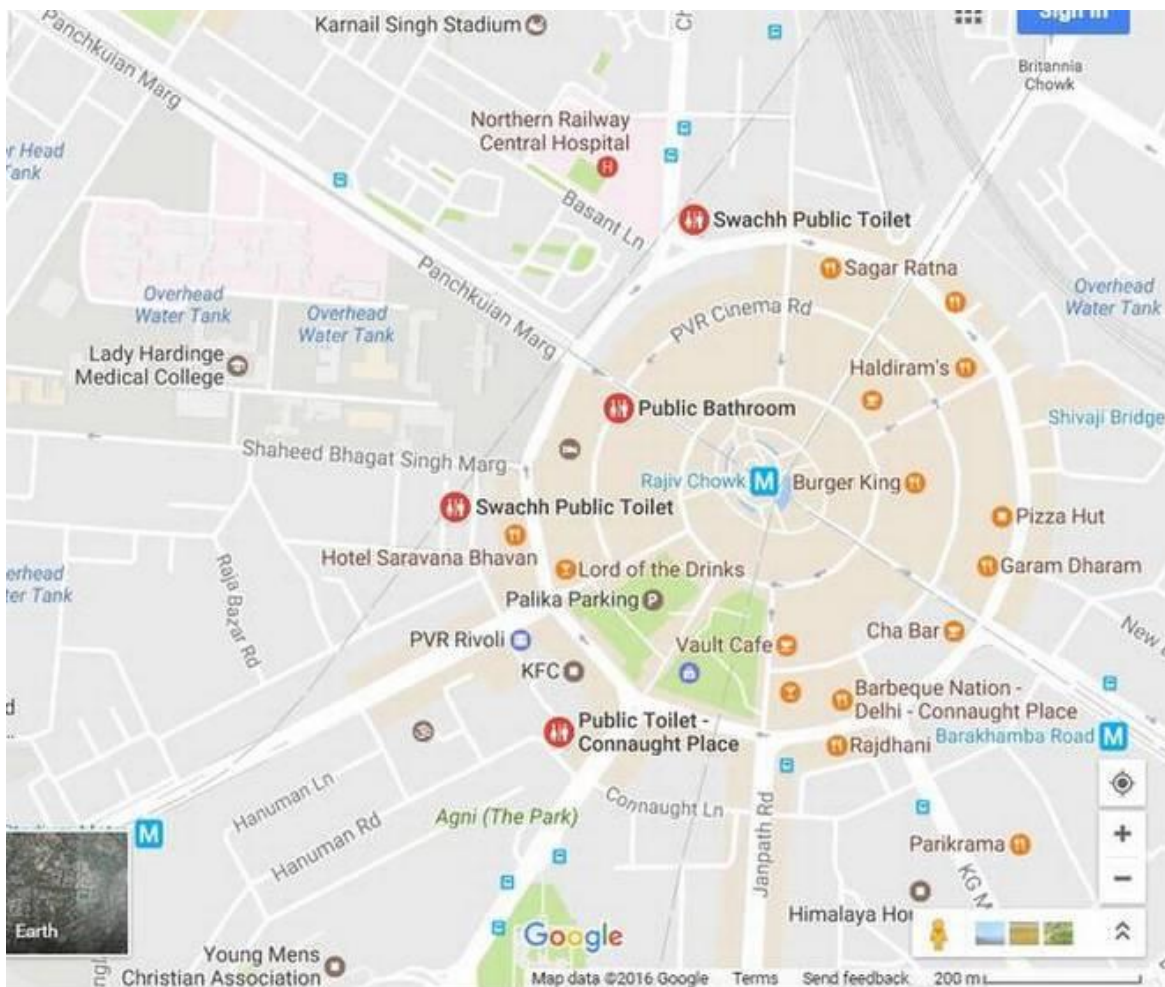
## • What was done

- Working in tandem with the Urban Development Ministry, Google provides the listings of public toilets in Delhi NCR, including Ghaziabad, Gurugram, Noida and Faridabad, and Bhopal and Indore in Madhya Pradesh.
- Information on the address and opening hours of 4,000 public toilets will be regularly updated. The service will be accessible to users both in English and Hindi. Google toilet locator is an attempt to making access to toilets easier by providing information on their locations every 500 metres in more



cities.

- Also, since the primary point of the feature is to be able to locate a clean toilet, Google and the ministry will be putting a system in place, which would majorly rely on crowdsourcing and the users' feedback. Therefore, if a person finds that a toilet is not clean, and gives it a bad review, that particular loo will automatically fall under poorly rated lavatories. Essentially this would work like Zomato for restaurant. You search for a place around, check the ratings and reviews, and make your decision. Also, the toilets would include not only the public restrooms or Sulabh Shauchalays in the area, but also those in public places like metro stations, malls, petrol pumps and hospitals.
- The civic body is in the process of launching smart toilets across the region that will come attached with facilities like ATMs, rooftop solar panel, sanitary pad vending machine, digital health clinic and online user feedback tablet. A total of 109 smart toilets are being constructed," says Naresh Kumar, who is the chairperson of NDMC.
- The civic body has launched a toilet locator awareness campaign, under which community toilets besides those located at petrol pumps, railway stations and bus stands are being added to the database.
- The users will also be asked to give feedback for toilets they locate using Google. The campaign will be run from July 12 to August 11. Once the campaign ends, the cleanest toilet will be awarded.
- At present, 333 public toilets have been mapped on Google to enable citizens and visitors to locate the nearest public toilet in an area. While the step is aimed at reducing public urination, it is important that the toilets are in good condition and hence the feedback is being sought.



Reportedly, the campaign had emerged as an imminent resort to tackle the never-ending crisis of open defecation and urination across the country by the Ministry of Urban Development (MoUD) last year. Though the initial reports had been about piloting the campaign across the National Capital Region or NCR, the talks have been going on about scaling and expanding the project across other cities after receiving feedback from users in the region. The toilets falling under the NDMC region can also be located using the NDMC Mobile App — **NDMC311**.

- **Impact**

Over 5,000 community toilets and toilets near petrol pumps, railway stations and bus stands have been geo-tagged and are part of the database on Google Maps.

- **Challenges and Issues**

The biggest challenge was about utilizing the technology effectively. Coordinating with the local addresses and the database was an issue before the launch of the program but the qualified team working for the project succeeded in meeting the required standards of the work.

- **Innovation**

All you need to do is open Google Maps, search for public toilets and the closest ones will be listed along with the address, distance from your location, and opening and closing time. Write 'Toilet' or 'Public Toilet' in Google map and it will help you navigate through the busy New Delhi lanes. The toilets can also be searched on NDMC mobile application 'NDMC311'. There will be rewards also for users who give feedback and rate the toilets.

- **Lessons learnt**

Looking from the ministry's perspective, this is an important cornerstone of the government's Swachh Bharat campaign for a clean India. This includes making information about existing sanitation facilities easily accessible to people. Google is beginning to roll out these new local listings on Google Maps today, and they will be available to users both on desktop and Google Maps on both Android and iOS. This project is a good example how a multinational giant can bring a revolutionary change with the help of local governing bodies.

- **Financials**

Not available

- **Economic sustainability/Revenue Model**

The Ministry of Urban Development (MoUD) collaborated with the tech-giants to ease the pain of finding public toilets in NCR and Madhya Pradesh areas, to begin with. The cost will be borne by the participating stakeholders in a proportion not disclosed publicly.

- **Implementer Contact Persons**

Not available

## • Sources and References

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