

Mobile apps to the rescue in case of emergency

Launched in the wake of Dec 16 Delhi gangrape, the applications have been lapped up by women

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AFTER the shocking Delhi gangrape that shook the nation last December, the market was suddenly flooded with several innovative women safety products, gadgets and mobile applications. Matching the zeal to launch these products was the demand, with a huge number of cautious women opting for them. Given the high-tech life led by people these days, what caught on most with urban women were the ICE (In Case of Emergency) mobile apps.

In January, city-based firm SmartCloud launched a mobile application called Nirbhaya. Gajanan Sakhre, CEO of the company, says: "People across the country and even outside have appreciated our efforts. We have got calls from every nook and corner of the country.

The overall response is heartening. We have 15,000 plus downloads across platforms from across the country." About its features, Sakhre says, simplicity and accuracy are the core of the application. The current app sends SOS alerts, along with geolocation, when one is in emergency. One can activate the SOS message in multiple ways, which include 'shake and alert', 'power button press', 'shortcut widgets' and through Facebook. "This feature makes the app quick and easy to use during emergency situations," adds Sakhre.

After the Version 1 launch, he says, the company received a few suggestions and complaints, which helped in upgrading the app. Since its first launch, the app has had 12 more versions. "The app is very stable now and has many unique features — Send SOS on Shake2Alert, on Power On/Off, on



THE APPS

- Nirbhaya, by SmartCloud
- SOS – Stay Safe! by Extentia Information Technology

Home Screen Widget etc. We are also working on bringing a patented technology to market with wearable devices and fashion accessories to make sure the reliability and response is quick," he adds.

In June 2013, Pune-based Extentia Information Technology launched SOS

– Stay Safe! mobile application. While users had to pay for this app till December 15 this year, it was made available for free download from December 16. Since its launch, the app has recorded 325 downloads across the globe, of which 166 have been recorded in the last two weeks. "Generally, all such apps require you to either press the power button in a certain way or open the app and tap on your phone to call for help. But with SOS – Stay Safe! the user just has to shake the mobile device to reach for help and that too discreetly," explains Anuj Kumar from the online marketing department of Extentia Information Technology. Exclusively designed for Android phones, the app sends an automatic text message and/or an email to the user's contacts with name and a voice recording, exact location and battery level the moment she shakes the

mobile device. "These are sent at regular intervals to provide real-time GPS tracking for your location. Besides, messages are sent discreetly, without you having to even look at your device," adds Kumar.

Nearly a month ago, at the first All-India Android Mobile App Design Competition organised by the Global Discovery Academy (GDA) in Delhi, three Pune school students won the title of being the youngest mobile application developers on Android platform. The app called Safety On The Go was designed by Sharvari Pathak, Latika Patel and Ishita Bahadur, Class IX girls of DAV English School, Aundh. The participants of the contest, which was open for students in the age group of 10-13 years, were expected to develop a mobile phone application meant for a social cause.