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New attendance scanners installed at civic body headquarters

NAVI MUMBAI: Following repeated complaints of faulty finger scanners meant for attendance of civic staff, which have been installed at the NMMC head office in Belapur Bhawan, the civic administration has replaced them with new sophisticated and fool proof hand geometriscanners. Thus, enabling in zero error attendance system to keep a tab on latecomers.

G.V.Rao said, " For accurate attendance, the two hand geometry scanners have been installed at the civic head quarters at Belapur Bhawan building's ground floor. Initially, only two such machines have been installed on experimental basis for checking the acceptance and errors as proof of concept (POC). Once successful, they will be installed at other civic departments, which are already using the conventional method of registering the attendance of the civic staff. The new hand geometry scanners have replaced the previously installed finger scanners as there were multiple complaints by the civic staff alleging that the finger scanners were faulty and did not show perfect attendance timing claiming that they did not scan the finger properly. Since, the new scanner has been installed on December 1 till December 7, we have not received a single complaint regarding the malfunction or faulty reading shown by the new scanner."

"It was learnt that some civic staff who were habitual late comers and did not want the attendance system so that they could come to work as per their convenience, were deliberately fiddling with the machine thus damaging its sensor and later blamed that the finger scanning machine was defective. Hence, the new machine has been installed which scans all the five fingers and even if the finger print of any one finger matches with that of the person whose palm is been scanned, the machine immediately accepts the impression and registers the attendance. When single finger scanner was installed, the miscreant civic staff used to deliberately keep their finger erroneously on the machine's sensor such that it could not be scanned properly and should error, thus enabling them to claim that the scanner was faulty and did not record accurate attendance, thus blaming the attendance system. The fact cannot be denied that about 90% of the civic staff was compatible with the finger scanner for attendance, while it was the remaining 10% staff, who were affiliated to the trade unions, who had objected to the use of finger scanners for attendance by alleging that they were faulty."

He added, " The new hand geometry scanners requires the civic staff to keep their entire palm on the machine after which it scans all the five fingers and even if 10% of the finger print matches then the attendance is registered by the machine. The hand geometry scanners purchased by NMMC are from the branded US based Ingersoll Rand company and each scanner costs Rs 65,000. We opted for this brand as it has shown good results with the number of failures/ complaints been zero."

Meanwhile, when the finger scanning machines were newly installed at the NMMC HQ in December 2007, it was alleged that the late-comer civic staff and those leaving early before the duty hours, had twice deliberately fiddled with the machines resulting in its malfunction. The miscreant employees had scratched the delicate screen of the machine with a coin or a metal. As a result, the machine could not detect the thumb impression. Taking a serious note of the unpardonable mischief the then municipal commissioner Vijay Nahata has issued an inter-office circular stating that if anybody is found guilty of fiddling with the attendance finger scanning machine, the concerned person shall be prosecuted. After, the stringent notification, there has been no repetition of damaging the finger scanning machines. It took around 10 days to repair the machines. For the first time, the concerned agency namely Eviska Pvt Ltd had repaired the machines free of cost but the second time, the repairing was chargeable. Accordingly, for repairing the machines, NMMC had incurred Rs 3000 each while the new finger scanning machine costs around Rs 15k.