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MCD 'ghost employees' under MHA scanner

A week after a report submitted by Municipal Commissioner K S Mehra revealed that the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) had 22,583 "ghost employees" on its payroll, the Home Ministry has reportedly inquired about the scandal and sought a detailed report on how the lapse could go undetected, and a list of all employees responsible for it. The ministry has also sought regular updates of the status on the findings.

"We are in touch with the Home Ministry and have briefed them about our findings so far," Delhi Mayor Kanwar Sain said on Monday. According to Sain, an internal preliminary inquiry is already on and deputy commissioners of all 12 zones have been asked to submit reports of their respective zones within a month, after which the commissioner will submit a detailed report that is aimed at identifying all those responsible for the administrative lapse that has been costing the corporation a minimum of Rs 17 crore every month.

Meanwhile, a host of other agencies and institutions like the Delhi Police and Delhi University seem to have followed suit by announcing that biometric attendance systems are on the cards for their respective staff. The latest entry on the list is the New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC). As part of its e-governance project, the NDMC will soon initiate a biometric attendance system for all its 15,000 employees. The attendance system is a part of its detailed plan of issuing

biometric-enabled smart cards for employees.

A brainchild of the NDMC's Information Technology (IT) department, the attendance system will accommodate the smart cards as well as thumb impressions of the employees. Also, besides serving as the attendance tool the new biometric smart cards will replace the existing I-card, Health Card and Library Card and will merge them into one. These technologically enhanced smart cards are almost "impossible to forge" and cannot be transferred to others.

The smart cards will also be used to control entry to Palika Kendra and some access points inside the building.