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VMC abolishes manual collection of house tax

Varanasi: Taking a step towards paperless office, Varanasi Municipal Corporation had taken an initiative to bring its property and taxation department online.

"We have abolished 100% manually collection of house tax. The inspectors equipped with spot billing machine (SBM) go to the houses to collect tax. Around 20% of people are paying house tax bills online," Sandeep Srivastava of computer coordinator cell of VMC. The SBM service has been started from September 2 and till September 15, as many as 1,119 people paid their house tax through this service, he said. VMC was first in Uttar Pradesh to begin online portal for paying tax in 2009.

In the current financial year from April to September 15, as many as 330 people had deposited house tax worth Rs 3.78 lakh online. The department has established computerised centres for paying tax in Bhelupura, Dashashwmedh, Kotwali, Adampura and trans-Varuna zones with the headquarters at VMC. People are free to pay bills anywhere at these six places.

A tax payer said: "The computerised system is bringing transparency in the system, which gives a feeling of satisfaction." E-services has brought more transparency in the department as till 2009, VMC used to collect only Rs 7 crores to Rs 8 crores as tax but using e-services, the amount reached above Rs 22 crores annually.

VMC is also gearing up to provide death and birth certificates of individuals on the spot in hospitals. The process is in its last stage as the software of incurring digital signature of people into the computer system has been stocked at NIC in Lucknow. For experiment, ten hospitals including government and private nursing homes, are to be connected with main computer system that would be located in VMC.