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Ahmedabad BRTS moves towards smart ticketing

Vinay Umarji / Mumbai/ Ahmedabad June 24, 2011, 0:06 IST

On its way to make commuting paperless, Ahmedabad Janmarg Limited (AJL) that runs the city Bus Rapid Transport System (BRTS) has roped in an IT solutions player for introducing smart card in ticketing. The new smart card ticketing system will be launched in August 2011 through GMV Vayamtech, a joint venture company of Spain-based GMV and Delhi-based Vayamtech, which recently won the bid.

"The attempt has always been to move towards paperless ticketing and commuting on Ahmedabad BRTS. Which is why AJL went through a bidding process to select an IT solutions provider who can provide and manage smart card system for BRTS commuters. While around 50 players had shown interest in the pre-bidding process, only two companies finally bid for the smart card systems. Of them, GMV Vayamtech won the bid since Siemens' bid, the other player, was not suitable," said an AJL senior official.

Having won the bid, GMV Vayamtech has received an initial order of 25,000 smart cards that will be launched in August this year. "The company is now our total solutions provider. It will now be responsible for procuring smart cards and integrating them into the IT systems. While an initial order of 25,000 smart cards has been placed, it can be extended to 100,000," the official added.

Currently, the Ahmedabad BRTS sells around 80,000 paper tickets daily. However, AJL has also been working a new system of plastic tokens in the interim. According to AJL officials, introduction of plastic tokens in lieu of paper tickets was a step towards paperless ticketing, before any smart card system is launched.

The plastic tokens would be issued from the ticket booth, which can be then dropped by commuters in boxes at exit points, enabling turnstile machines to allow commuters exit the bus station.

The Ahmedabad BRTS opened in 2009 and now carries 113,000 passengers per day. The system features median stations, level boarding, and fare pre-payment. Services are operated over 42 km, serving 61 stations.

When current extensions are completed, the network will span 90 km, covering the entire city.

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