

Four MTC staff among five arrested in fake bus pass scam

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CHENNAI: Five persons, including four MTC staff, were arrested for selling fake monthly bus passes and siphoning off the fees paid by the bus passengers. It is believed that the gang had been carrying out the fraud for nearly last two years and making out nearly one lakh every month.

The fraud was unearthed when in May a ticket checker of the public transport corporation found that the “Travel as you please ticket” (Rs 1000 per month) bus pass carried by one of the passengers was a little different, though it matched all other features, including the hologram. As the ticket checker alerted senior officials, an internal enquiry was started.

“We started collecting the passes when passengers come for renewals. Then we caught hold of about 25 fake bus passes,” said a senior MTC official.

Then the officials started checking the sales figures of the various bus depots in the city when they noticed that the sales have dipped in Thiruvananthapuram and Anna Nagar bus depots.

“We started finding out the people who were at the counters in these depots and zeroed in on a few suspects. The fake passes are exactly the same as the original and even the hologram was also the same. But they missed the serial numbers,” said the official.

V Krishnamoorthy, Managing Director of MTC, lodged a complaint with the Chennai city police on July 20 and the Central Crime Branch started investigating the case. Four MTC staff – S Krishnakumar, M Jagedesh, D Suresh Kumar, T Prakash – and another person S Ramesh Babu were arrested.

Police said while Krishnakumar, who is posted in Adambakkam depot, and Jagedesh, posted in Thiruvananthapuram depot, were printing and selling the fake bus passes at the Thiruvananthapuram bus depot, the other three were selling them in the Anna Nagar bus depot.

Police said both Krishnakumar and Ramesh Babu were separately having colour xerox and printers to make the fake bus passes.

Jagedesh was posted in the counter at the Thiruvananthapuram bus depot and Prakash was posted in the counter at Anna Nagar bus depot. Suresh Kumar was also serving in the Anna Nagar bus depot as accountant and was in connivance with the other two in the fraud.

From the date of purchase of these printers, the police suspect that gang had carried the scam for the last two years. “We estimate that they were making `1 lakh per month,” said a police officer.

“We constantly change the bus pass colour and also put 3D hologram as an additional safety feature,” Krishnamoorthy told Express. All five were remanded and the police are further investigating.

Source: <https://www.newindianexpress.com/cities/chennai/2017/jul/30/four-mtc-staff-among-five-arrested-in-fake-bus-pass-scam-1635583.html>