

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 4697
TO BE ANSWERED ON: 29.03.2023

FACIAL RECOGNITION SYSTEM

4697. SHRI BALASHOWRY VALLABHANENI:

Will the Minister of Electronics and Information Technology be pleased to state:

- (a) the total number of facial recognition systems already in use by Government authorities in the country;
- (b) whether the Government is aware of any cases where the Facial Recognition Technology (FRT) has been misused for malicious purposes;
- (c) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken by the Government in this regard;
- (d) whether it is a fact that a minimum accuracy rate of 95% is required for vehicle recognition;
- (e) if so, whether the Government is aware that the accuracy rate of FRT is between 80-90% which leaves a lot of room for false positives;
- (f) the number of false positive cases reported by authorities using FRT during the last three years; and
- (g) whether the Government plans to regulate the FRT to avoid misuse by law enforcement agencies and if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE FOR ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
(SHRI RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR)

(a): Facial recognition is a way of identifying or confirming an individual's identity using their face. Facial recognition systems can be used to identify people in photos, videos, or in real-time. The areas where facial recognition is being used by government authorities are as under:

- i. Facial recognition system is part of the Digi Yatra initiative of the government for providing passengers seamless and hassle-free experience at airports without the need for verification of ticket and ID at multiple touch points. Digi Yatra has been launched on 01.12.2022 at Delhi, Bangalore and Varanasi Airports.
- ii. Department of Telecommunication has undertaken a project on AI and Facial Recognition powered solution for Telecom SIM Subscriber Verification (ASTR) which is a Next-Gen indigenous and innovative solution for detecting and weeding out fraudulent SIM subscribers, who have obtained mobile multiple connections using fake/forged documents, across all TSPs, by utilizing Artificial Intelligence, Facial Recognition and Big Data Analytics.
- iii. C-DOT has deployed its indigenously designed facial recognition system at its New Delhi campus office, TCIL office in New Delhi and at the DOT Sanchar Bhawan, as part of a proof of concept (POC).
- iv. Facial Recognition System by NIC AI Satyapikaanan API based services is facilitated over Meghraj Cloud. Around 6.86 Crore AI service requested were received by AI

Satyapikaanan from various users in FY 2022-23 till 20th March 2023. The users of the services are:

- CBSE, NTA, Result Division – Candidate’s Registration System (CARES)
 - Meghalaya pensioner life certificate
 - SarathiParivahan
 - Utkarsh Bangla
 - ePrisons
- v. The face authentication used in UIDAI is different from the facial recognition system as the face authentication utilizes one-to-one face matching for authentication after obtaining the consent of the individual. UIDAI had provided the modality of face authentication of Aadhaar number holders on PoC basis to National Health Authority, Department of Pension & Pensioners Welfare for Jeevan Pramaan application, and CeG, Karnataka. Vide circular dated 03.06.2022, it was rolled out for all Authentication User Agencies (AUA).
- vi. Facial recognition system is being used for identifying the applicant during contactless Learner License Test in Sarathi application. The FRT is facilitated by NIC AI Division.

(b) and (c): No, Sir. Government is not aware of any cases where the FRT technology has been misused for malicious purposes. Government has notified the establishment of 3 Grievance Appellate Committees under the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules 2021 with an objective to ensure safety and trust of every Digital Nagrik.

(d) to (f): There is no reliable information regarding inaccuracy of the FRT technology. As per NIC AI Division, which is providing the FRT technology used in Sarathi system, the accuracy rate is 99.9%. As regards vehicle recognition, ANPR (Automatic Number Plate Recognition) system is used by external agencies authorized by State Police/ Transport Authorities for identification of traffic violations, which are converted into traffic challans/ notices by MoRTH/ NIC eChallan system.

(g): Use of FRT is presently regulated and governed by the provisions of Information Technology Act 2000. ‘Police’ and ‘Public Order’ are State subjects and the responsibilities to maintain law and order including investigation and prosecution of crime rests with the respective State Governments. There have been no reports with regard of any misuse of FRT.
