FACIAL RECOGNITION TECHNOLOGY

867.   **SHRI FEROZE VARUN GANDHI**
            DR. RAM SHANKAR KATHERIA

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION
            नागर विमानन मंत्री   **be pleased to state:-**

(a) the details of the airports in the country where facial recognition technology (FRT) has been introduced;

(b) whether any timeline has been fixed by the Government to implement the system;

(c) the details of private companies providing FRT services at the airports;

(d) whether the selection of the companies was done through tendering and if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether passengers have been given the option to opt out of FRT processing and if so, the details thereof;

(f) the safegaurds taken by the Government to prevent the leakage of passenger data; and

(g) the facilities that will come up with the implementation of the system?

ANSWER

Minister of State in the Ministry of CIVIL AVIATION
            नागर विमानन मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री   **(GEN. (DR) V. K. SINGH (RETD))**

(a) Facial Recognition Technology (FRT) has not yet been introduced at any of the Airport in India. However, Airports Authority of India is working on a project of Facial Recognition Technology based Biometric Boarding System as part of 1st phase of Digi Yatra Implementation at 04 Airports (Varanasi, Pune, Kolkata and Vijayawada).

(b) The proposed Digi Yatra Central Eco-system is planned to go live in March 2022. It is to be scaled up in a phased manner for adoption across various airports of the country.

(c) AAI has engaged M/s NEC Corporation Private Limited for implementation of Facial Recognition Technology based Biometric Boarding System (BBS) at Varanasi, Pune, Kolkata and Vijayawada airports as part of DigiYatra.

(d) Yes Sir, the selection of the vendor was done through open tender process.

An open tender was floated on NIC CPP portal. Name of tender is "Selection of Managed Service Provider (MSP) for Designing, Development, Testing, Implementation, and O&M of E-Boarding - Biometric Boarding System (BBS)" with tender id 2018_AAI_16909_1.

(e) Yes Sir, as per the Digi Yatra policy, registering for the Digi Yatra Central Ecosystem is optional to the passenger. For availing the Digi Yatra services, passenger would send the travel details (Pax details, PNR and Facial Biometrics) through an app to the Biometric Boarding System of the respective departing airport.

Moreover, if for a particular journey, the passenger does not want to avail the Digi Yatra services then the passenger has an option to not send the data and use existing manual process at airports.

(f) The Digi Yatra Central Ecosystem envisages assessments (by independent teams to assess the level of security and system resilience to protect PII) and periodic audits by governing/regulatory bodies e.g. CERT-IN and/or STQC etc., twice every year.

Facial recognition is as per Industry ISO standards with best in class NIST listed algorithms complying to Data Privacy and Data protection requirement as laid down by Government.

Data shared by the Passenger is to be used for the purpose defined and would not be shared with any other external stakeholders. It is important to note that data shared by passenger is to be retained during the transit of the passenger at the airport and will not be retained for more than 24 hours after Take-off / departure of the flight.

(g) With the implementation of Digi Yatra, a seamless travel for passenger is being envisaged. Further, it will facilitate optimized utilization of resources of airports, airlines etc. Digi Yatra Central Eco-system is aligned to the global processes of IATA Travel Pass for interoperability for a seamless international travel.

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