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Abu Dhabi airport improves security

UAE airport implements facial recognition system, surveillance cameras
Gulf News
via *NewsEdge Corporation*

Abu Dhabi, UAE - Biometric face recognition technology will soon be deployed across the UAE to enhance national security and deliver the highest level of public safety, a senior official said on Sunday.

The highly advanced technology, launched by General Shaikh Mohammad Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces, at Abu Dhabi International Airport last Monday, is the first of its kind, said Maj Dr Fawwaz Khalil Dawood, head of the committee in charge of the system at the Interior Minister's office.

"The system will perform identity checks of all people who enter the country and those at transit lounges from a distance and without their active participation," he said.

Recognition

A facial recognition system verifies the identity of a person from a digital image or a video frame by comparing selected facial features from the image and a facial database. The system analyses the relative position, size and shape of the eyes, nose, cheekbones and jaw. It also identifies a face from a range of angles, including a profile view.

He added the Interior Ministry has started constructing a watch list based on a facial biometrics database to identify persons that should be examined more closely, denied entry to the country or even detained.

"A total of 46 cameras and an enrolment centre have been installed at the Abu Dhabi International Airport in the first phase. Soon 50 more enrolment centres and as many cameras will be deployed at all checkpoints across the country," Maj Dr Fawwaz said.

He said the system will integrate the iris recognition system, currently being deployed at 35 land, sea and air border points across the UAE.

"The iris detection network, which was introduced in 2003, requires cooperation from the surveillance subjects and is therefore used to verify limited numbers of people, but the face recognition system will eventually cover all visitors and residents in the country," Maj Dr Fawwaz said.

He said the iris recognition system has blocked more than 250,000 deportees who attempted to return to the country with forged documents.

Designed to operate in today's fast-paced, high-risk environments, officials from the Canadian supplier Cryptometrics said the face recognition system being deployed in the UAE is the finest capture system in the world.

"The system, installed in cooperation with BioDentity [the local partner of Cryptometrics], will be deployed across the UAE within six to seven months from the date of approval by the higher authorities," said Joel F. Shaw, chief strategy officer of the company.

He added the system takes just two seconds from the time of capturing the picture to the time of giving responses. "It takes 1.5 seconds to compare an image with three million matches."

On whether the system can be fooled, Shaw said the system has a 0.5 per cent error margin, which means one out of 200 persons can be wrongly identified.

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