Russian Public Wi-Fi Provider to Supply Moscow's Facial Recognition System

Maxima Telecom will provide the servers for the capital's extensive network of cameras.

November 21, 2019

Sergei Savostyanov / TASS

The Russian company that provides free public Wi-Fi in Moscow and St. Petersburg will also supply the capital's facial recognition network, the Kommersant business daily has reported.

Maxima Telecom company won a 1.15 billion-ruble ($18 million) contract to provide the servers for Moscow's facial recognition system, which authorities have been establishing for the past two years, according to the report published Wednesday.

Related article: Russia Is Building One of the World's Largest Facial Recognition Networks

The Moscow government has said that a network of 160,000 cameras will be in place by the

end of 2019, up from 3,000 in 2017. Moscow Mayor Sergei Sobyanin said in May that the system would be one of the biggest in the world "competing maybe only with Chinese systems."

Maxima is responsible for a security breach last year that exposed the personal data of at least 12 million users of Moscow's citywide wireless internet network, allowing potential hackers to track movements, phone numbers and personal data in the public transportation system for almost a year.

In 2019 Moscow budgeted 7.5 billion rubles ($117 million) for the city's video surveillance system and 6 billion rubles ($93 million) for the creation of data–processing centers. Moscow police said in June that they had managed to arrest more than 100 wanted people over a two–year period using the facial recognition system.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2019/11/21/russian-public-wi-fi-provider-to-supply-moscows-facial-recognition-system-a68243