The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Moscow Metro to Implement 'FacePay' Fare Payment System

March 03, 2021



The FacePay system will be able to recognize passengers even if they're wearing face masks. **Sergei Savostyanov / TASS**

The Moscow metro plans to implement contactless fare payment using facial recognition technology at all metro stations by the end of the year, Interfax reported Tuesday, citing metro security service head Andrei Kichigin.

To use the FacePay system, passengers must have a Russian bank account that has their biometric data on file, according to Kichigin. After passengers approach one of the cameras installed at the turnstiles or ticket booths, the fare is automatically debited from their account and the turnstiles will open.

Related article: Moscow To Expand Metro Facial Recognition Network

Authorities have been testing the FacePay system since December. Test participants have successfully passed through the turnstiles 2,000 times so far, Kichigin said.

Moscow Deputy Mayor Maxim Liksutov has said that the FacePay system works even if passengers are wearing face masks.

Authorities in Moscow have already deployed facial recognition technology across a vast network of surveillance cameras to identify criminal suspects, sparking concerns from activists. Last year, the Russian capital deployed its "Safe City" facial recognition surveillance program to track potential carriers of the coronavirus and enforce their quarantines.

In February, the city reportedly allocated more than $10 million to expand the facial-recognition network within its sprawling metro system.

The Moscow metro's facial-recognition cameras have helped police detain more than 900 suspected criminals in the past six months, Kichigin said Tuesday.

According to The Village news website, several people who took part in recent mass protests in support of jailed opposition figure Alexei Navalny were detained at metro stations after being recognized by the facial recognition cameras.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2021/03/03/moscow-metro-to-implement-facepay-fare-payment-system-a73125