

# Moscow's Quarantined Tracked By Facial Recognition Cameras

Santa Claus has stiff competition when it comes to nanny surveillance: "He sees you when you're sleeping; He knows when you're awake; He knows if you've been bad or good; So be good for goodness sake." □ TN Editor

A vast and contentious network of facial recognition cameras keeping watch over Moscow is now playing a key role in the battle against the spread of the coronavirus in Russia.

The city rolled out the technology just before the epidemic reached Russia, ignoring protests and legal complaints over sophisticated state surveillance.

Since last month, thousands of Muscovites have been confined to their homes for 14 days of compulsory quarantine after returning from virus-

hit countries, being in contact with those infected or diagnosed with mild symptoms.

Police have logged their details and warned them that sneaking out into the city of 16 million residents and daily visitors could lead to a five-year jail term or deportation for foreigners.

“We are constantly checking that this regulation is being observed, including through the use of automated facial recognition systems,” Mayor Sergei Sobyenin wrote in his blog in February.

The Russian capital already had a tight network of 170,000 security cameras, set up in streets and metro stations throughout the city over the past decade.

Around 100,000 have now been linked to artificial intelligence systems that can identify people being filmed. The remaining cameras are due to be connected soon.

Moscow police said last week that the cameras that are linked have allowed them to identify almost 200 people who broke quarantine rules.

As well as the cameras, Russia has said it is drawing on an array of technology to fight the virus, including telemedicine consultations, the real-time monitoring of supermarket shelves and identifying and removing false news stories from social media.

President Vladimir Putin last week toured a hi-tech centre set up to monitor the virus situation and Russia’s response.

The country, as of Monday, had reported 438 coronavirus infections, most of them in Moscow. One person who was infected has died but officials are not linking the death to the virus.

- 600 neighbours -

Moscow City Hall has boasted that the network of cameras is a particularly effective tool.

Sobyenin has said that the authorities have contacts and work addresses

for 95 percent of those quarantined after returning from high-risk countries.

“We’ve identified where they are,” said the mayor, who heads a working group on combatting the virus set up by Putin.

Last month on his blog he praised the efficiency of the facial recognition system with a story of a Chinese woman who tested positive soon after arrival and was hospitalised.

Her flatmate was quarantined but security cameras filmed her walking outside and meeting a male friend.

The mayor added that the authorities swiftly gathered contacts of more than 600 of the woman’s neighbours and even her taxi driver from the airport.

Facial recognition technology was first tested during the 2018 World Cup in Russia before going fully online in January, just before the pandemic hit.

“The probability of a mistake by our facial recognition algorithm is 1 in 15 million,” said Alexander Minin, CEO of NtechLab, the company that won the city’s tender to supply the technology.

The firm’s devices, which have been exported to China and Latin America, can identify someone from their silhouette alone “80 percent of the time,” he told AFP at the start of the year.

Russia alongside China lead the field globally with the most sophisticated technology, which they export to some 100 countries, Valentin Weber, a researcher in cybersecurity at the University of Oxford, wrote in a 2019 paper.

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# Mobile Phone Industry Considers Worldwide Tracking Of Users

A global tracking system for all inhabitants on earth? This would be a major building block for Technocracy's planned system of global social engineering, i.e., total control. □ TN Editor

The mobile phone industry has explored the creation of a global data-sharing system that could track individuals around the world, as part of an effort to curb the spread of Covid-19.

The Guardian has learned that a senior official at GSMA, an international standard-setting body for the mobile phone industry, held discussions with at least one company that is capable of tracking individuals globally through their mobile devices, and discussed the possible creation of a global data-sharing system.

Any move to create such a global tracking system would represent a major escalation in efforts to use mobile phone location data to help

stem the pandemic, and would be likely to raise concerns among privacy and security experts.

Until now the use of mobile phone tracking in the fight against Covid-19 has been restricted to national governments, which are either monitoring data within their borders or in discussions with mobile operators and technology companies about doing so.

They include the US, India, Iran, Poland, Singapore, Israel and South Korea. The British government is engaged in talks with BT, the owner of the UK mobile operator EE, about [using phone location and usage data](#) to determine the efficacy of isolation orders.

The concept of an international mobile tracing scheme would go further, enabling authorities to monitor movements and potentially track the spread of the disease across borders. The GSMA represents the interests of 750 mobile phone operators and vendors across the world and helps set international standards for companies.

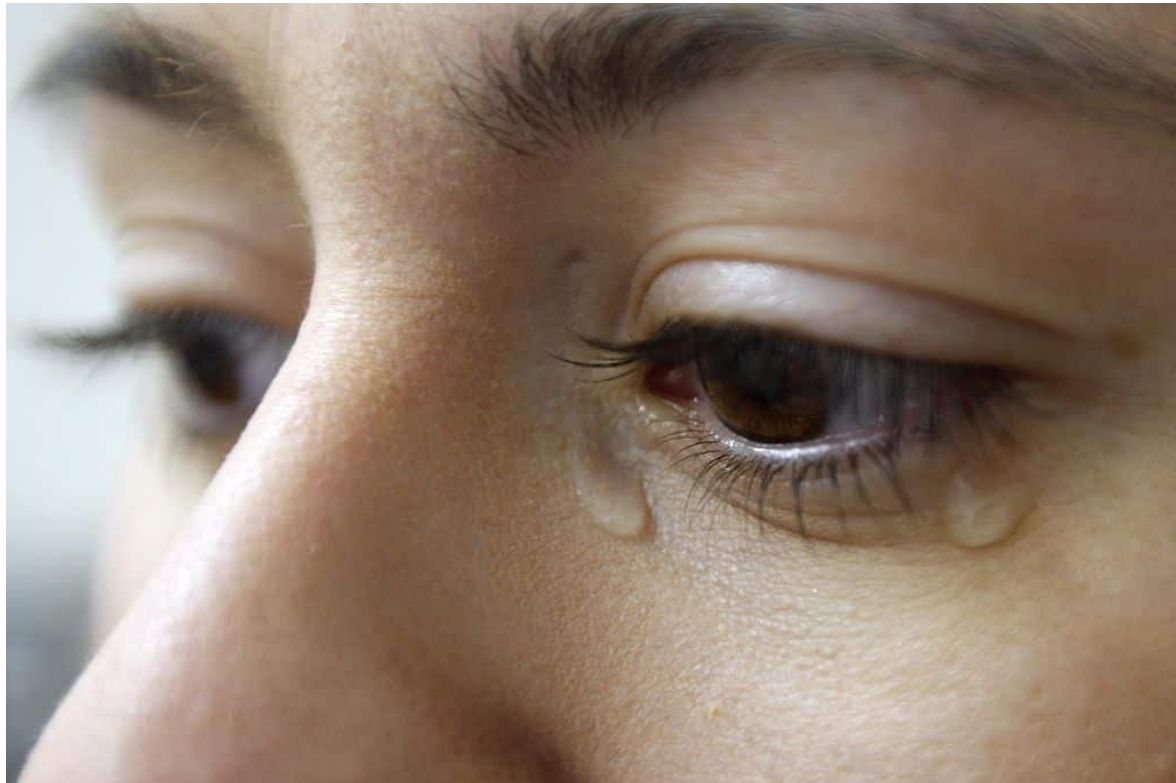
A person familiar with its exploratory talks said they were at an early stage and that decisions had not yet been made about whether to move ahead with the plan. The aim of such a global network would be to enact “contact tracing”, enabling authorities to use mobile location data to track who a person infected with Covid-19 may have come in contact with.

A spokesperson for GSMA strenuously denied it was currently involved in any project to create a global tracking system. “We are not involved in a project of this nature,” the GSMA spokesperson said. However the GSMA also said it would not comment on discussions that had taken place or ideas that were being explored.

“In this emergency situation, the GSMA and its members are doing everything they can to help the global fight against Covid-19,” Mats Granryd, the director of the GSMA, said in a statement emailed to the Guardian. “We are engaging with operators, policymakers and international organisations around the world to explore viable mobile big data and AI solutions to fight this pandemic while adhering to principles of privacy and ethics.”

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## **Frightened People Shed No Tears For Loss Of Freedom**

Humanity is eating itself. The more frightened people become, the more willing they are to accept any dictator who will protect them. Of course, no dictator will protect his subjects and that is the irony of the entire coronavirus stampede. □ TN Editor

The last days and weeks of the coronavirus epidemic give an interesting insight into the human psyche. Elementary liberties are restricted all over the world, such as the freedom of movement or private property. Yet most people accept these restrictions without blinking, as the state declares their indispensability.

A chronology of the events in Madrid: on Sunday, March 8, a large World Women's Day demonstration against the alleged rule of the Patriachate

was held. There were 120,000 participants, and members of the government took part in it, marching side by side in the first row.

They had called for strong participation. Just one day later it was announced that starting on Wednesday, March 11, kindergartens, schools, and universities in Madrid would be closed. Since Sunday, March 14, there a curfew has been in place, which is enforced by police and military force. Cyclists and joggers trying to keep fit in the fresh air have been fined heavily.

Spaniards are no longer even allowed to be in the private gardens of apartment blocks, even if families take turns using them. In short, we are no longer allowed to use our own gardens. They have been temporarily expropriated.

Most people are little bothered by the fact that the state is violating their freedom massively. They regard it as necessary and good. They do not question the state's authority to restrict our freedom at all. Rather, they denounce those who want to move freely and make use of their property rights. When two brothers were seen playing soccer in the garden of an acquaintance's apartment block, the police were called.

People denounce playing children, who are regarded as harmful to public health, and put up posters saying "Quédate en casa" (stay at home). This is a [block warden](#) mentality. The most worrying thing is the high number of willing state collaborators. The parallels with the past are unnoticed. No one seems to care, and it is not even discussed.

If people are just scared enough, they entrust themselves to a (temporary) dictatorship without grumbling. They give up their freedom in the hope of being saved by state leaders advised by wise experts. Fear makes people controllable. Instead of protesting against the violation of their property rights, they clap their hands every day at 8 p.m. in Spain. Initially, the applause was mainly to show support for doctors and nurses, but in the meantime cheers for the police have been mixed in.

The state leaders plan the violation of liberty centrally. They do not have the necessary information to give a rational answer to the coronacrisis. They take into account the benefits of the curfew and economic

shutdown but not the costs, because these are not quantifiable.

One of the immediate costs is the loss of a more rapid immunization of the population. But there are other health costs. Being confined to one's own four walls, with the corresponding lack of physical exercise, will lead to increased cardiovascular diseases, high blood pressure, strokes, and thromboses, among other things. The psychological burden of being locked up is especially immense. The psychological strain will cause some marriages and families to break up; trauma and depression will be created.

The economic collapse triggered by the political reaction to the coronavirus has its own health costs, such as entrepreneurs who suffer heart attacks and unemployed people who fall into depression or alcohol.

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