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Facial recognition for Aadhaar authentication

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Why is in news? Aadhaar based face authentication transactions cross all time high of 10.6 million in May

Aadhaar based face authentication transactions for service delivery are gaining robust momentum with monthly transactions in **May touching an all time high of 10.6 million, since its launch in October 2021.**

This is the second consecutive month to register more than 10 million face authentication transactions. The number of face authentication transactions is on an upward trajectory and the monthly numbers clocked in May is an increase of 38 per cent, compared with such transactions reported in January 2023, indicative of its growing usage.

The **AI/ML based face authentication solution** developed in-house by the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI), is now being used by 47 entities, including state government departments, ministries in the central government and some banks.

Among many usages, it's being **used for registering beneficiaries** under **Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana**; for authentication of beneficiaries in the **PM Kisan scheme** and for **generating digital life certificates** at home by pensioners.

It's being used for **marking staff attendance** at several government departments and for opening bank accounts at a few leading banks via their business correspondents.

Among several states, the **government of Andhra Pradesh is using Aadhaar based face authentication** for **Jagananna Vidya Deevena Scheme** for fee reimbursement to eligible higher education students and under **EBC Nestham** scheme for welfare delivery to women from economically backward segments.

The **Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI)** has made **facial scanning and recognition for Aadhaar-based authentication mandatory.**

This will **accompany the fingerprint- and iris-based scanning procedures** already in place. This added feature is being **piloted for just telecom subscriptions** at the moment.

Benefits:

Face authentication provide features like **ease of usage, faster authentication** and it is **preferred as an additional modality** to strengthen the authentication success rate along with fingerprint and OTP authentications.

It captures **live images for authentication.** It is safe against any video replay attacks and static photo authentication attempts by anti-social elements.

Face authentication is also working as a **robust alternative and helping senior citizens** and all those who have issues with the quality of their fingerprints due to several reasons including manual work or health issues.

Aadhaar e-KYC service continues to play a **key role in the banking and non-banking financial services sectors** by providing transparent & improved customer experience and helping in ease of doing business. More than 254 million e-KYC transactions were carried out in May alone.

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Continued adoption of e-KYC is **significantly reducing customer acquisition cost of entities** like financial institutions, telecom service providers among others.

Whether it is AePS for last mile banking, e-KYC for identity verification, Aadhaar enabled DBT for direct fund transfer or authentications, Aadhaar, the foundation of India's digital public infrastructure and a tool of good governance, is playing a stellar role in improving Ease of Living for residents.

The feature makes **Aadhaar more inclusive**, with fine-tuning **detection of identity-faking**.

Those who are unable to provide a clean fingerprint due to the nature of their work will get benefitted.

Usually, a labourer is unable to provide fingerprint due to clay and micro-grit getting embedded in the lines of the fingers.

Many kinds of work also cause an **erasure of finger-prints**.

This applies to people in brick-laying to those working with corrosive chemicals such as lime, in the absence of protective gear.

Even constant paper-handling could erase finger-prints either temporarily or permanently.

So those who are **deprived of services and government benefits** because of this systemic issue will now be benefitted.

Also, the feature will help **people affected by certain disabilities and diseases**.

Facial recognition will also serve as a **safeguard to prevent scams** such as those involving forging finger-print records.