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Role of CCTVS in Solving Criminal Cases with Reference Recent Crimes in Tamil Nadu

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Abstract:

Systems in public settings were the least effective, with just a 7% decrease in crimes overall. When sorted by country, however, systems in India accounted for the majority of the decrease; the drop in other areas was insignificant. The use of camera systems must be justified empirically, ideally by an independent authority. Objectives and intended outcomes must be defined. Despite the popularity of closed circuit television (CCTV), evidence of its crime prevention capabilities is inconclusive. The present study attempts to review the role of CCTV cameras in tracking recent crimes in Tamil Nadu, India.

Keywords: CCTV, crimes, criminal cases, TN, security

1. Introduction

In the past decade, camera companies have made incredible developments. Today, DSLR cameras are much more affordable. There are also many smaller point-and-shoot digital cameras for people who simply want to shoot quick snapshots without worrying about high prices and technical details. Today it is very common to find cameras with additional features like automatic red-eye removal, in-camera effects, and features to upload or transfer images to other devices or users. Apart from still cameras, we also have cell phones, smart phones, and computers with built-in cameras. Closed-circuit television (CCTV), also known as video surveillance, is the use of video cameras to transmit a signal to a specific place, on a limited set of monitors. It differs from broadcast television in that the signal is not openly transmitted, though it may employ point to point (P2P), point to multipoint, or mesh wireless links. Though almost all video cameras fit this definition, the term is most often applied to those used for surveillance in areas that may need monitoring such as banks, casinos, airports, military installations, and convenience stores. Video telephony is seldom called "CCTV" but the use of video in distance education, where it is an important tool, is often so called.

In industrial plants, CCTV equipment may be used to observe parts of a process from a central control room, for example when the environment is not suitable for humans. CCTV systems may operate continuously or only as required to monitor a particular event. A more advanced form of CCTV, utilizing digital video recorders (DVRs), provides recording for possibly many years, with a variety of quality and performance options and extra features (such as motion detection and email alerts). More recently, decentralized IP cameras, some equipped with megapixel sensors, support recording directly to network-attached storage devices, or internal flash for completely stand-alone operation. Surveillance of the public using CCTV is particularly common in many areas around the world. In recent years, the use of body worn video cameras has been introduced as a new form of surveillance.

A 2010 document from the European Forum for Urban Security, "Charter for a Democratic Use of Video-Surveillance," provides a useful overview of the issues at stake as well as a set of principles and tools to ensure that citizens' rights are respected with CCTV systems. These include:

Necessity: The use of camera systems must be justified empirically, ideally by an independent authority. Objectives and intended outcomes must be defined.

Proportionality: CCTV equipment must be appropriate for the problem, it is intended to address. Technology should "respond to the established objectives, without going further." Data should be protected and the length of time it is retained be clearly defined.

Transparency: Citizens should know what the objectives of a CCTV system are, what its installation and operational costs are, the areas being surveyed, and what the results are. Reports should occur regularly so citizens can make informed decisions.

Accountability: Those in charge of public CCTV systems should be clearly identified and accountable to the public, whether the systems are run by the government or private firms.

Independent oversight: An external body should be charged with ensuring that systems respect the public's rights and are achieving their stated objectives. Ideally, citizens would have a voice in the oversight process.

The demand for CCTV cameras seems to be on the rise in the city, especially in south and central Chennai, a recent online study reveals.

The study, conducted by Sulekha.com, found that they are mainly being used to monitor children, pets, aged parents and commercial establishments in the city. The Electronic Security Association of India (ESAI) and the police have approved the findings of the survey.

“People prefer CCTV cameras that are connected to the internet to monitor their loved ones and even animals. They are able to do this even while in other States or countries”, said Satya Prabhakar, founder and CEO, Sulekha.com.

The study analysed over 2.7 million searches, made by residents of the top metros, on the portal in the last one year. With 25 per cent, New Delhi has the highest demand for the cameras, followed by 16 percent from Bangalore and 13 percent from Chennai, Mumbai and Hyderabad.

“In Chennai, the highest demand is from commercial establishments. Nearly 2 percent is for the purposes of monitoring children, pets and parents. Most of the demand is from places like Anna Nagar, Adyar, Anna Salai and surrounding areas,” added Mr. Prabhakar.

T. Sridhar Kumar, general secretary, ESAI, said many playschools have now started installing CCTV cameras. “Parents are given credentials to log in, and they are able to monitor their children from their mobile phones,” he said, adding that the trend has also caught up in some schools in Tiruvannamalai District.

Stating that the usage was only growing in Chennai, he said, “Some people are now using sensor-based CCTV cameras to monitor their pets.”

2. Demand Zooms Ahead

- There has been a 60% increase in demand from NRIs, who want to talk to and ensure the security of their elderly parents in India.
- Demand from gated communities has increased by 63%.
- Over the last two years, there has been a 118% increase in demand for CCTV surveillance in locations such as IT parks, banks, malls, public places like parks and from gated communities and residential corridors.
- Across the country, maximum online searches for CCTV cameras are made in tier-I cities (76%), followed by 22% in tier-II and 2% in tier-III cities.
- 42% of the online searches are made by educational institutions like schools and colleges.

3. Exposing Crime, Solving Cases

- JAN 2015: Tea shop owner’s wife murdered. Suspect an employee of the shop, using the CCTV camera installed at victim’s house.
- Dec 2014: A college girl was sexually assaulted. CCTV grabs from the cameras at a lodge and an apartment complex near the OMR exit toll plaza in Shplinganallur help identify the suspect.
- Nov 2014: Home maker Manju Devi found murdered at her house in Choolai. A CCTV grab from a school opposite the victim’s residence nailed the crime on her husband.
- Nov 2014: A Cardiologist’s residence burgled in Anna Nagar. CCTV footage recorded at a lodge in Anna Nagar helped in identifying the suspects.
- Sep2014: Subbiah, a Doctor, murdered in broad daylight in RA Puram. Three people involved in the crime were identified using CCTV footage.
- Feb2014

A TCS employee, Uma Maheshwari murdered at ECR in Chennai. The CCTV footage from an ATM provided a vital clue to the Police in nabbing the criminals. Increasingly now, CCTV cameras seem to be playing a critical role in checking crime in the city.

The cameras do not just serve to deter criminals; they have also helped in cracking a number of murders and burglaries in recent months.

The most recent use of CCTV footage in making a breakthrough in a crime case was in Ambattur when a woman was murdered and her two children injured on January 12.

“The owner of the house had installed CCTV cameras and it proved helpful as the suspect was seen walking into the victim’s residence”, said a police officer.

In the case of sexual assault of a college girl in December, a CCTV grab aided the investigators in nailing the suspect, who was a man posing as a policeman. “The victim’s friend identified the suspect in the footage obtained from a lodge and an apartment complex,” the officer added.

Another major case in which CCTV footage played a role in its solving was the murder of Dr. Subbiah in September last year.

Images of the brutal attack, captured on CCTV cameras installed at a nearby apartment complex, were widely circulated in the media and the three suspects were identified.

“We have made the cameras compulsory in places like ATMs, schools and parking lots of IT companies. We have also been encouraging residents to install them,” said an officer.

Residents said the cameras were helpful, particularly in areas where there are many senior citizens living alone. “Our elderly neighbor has installed one and it gives a sense of security. It can also be used to monitor movement on roads,” said I. George, a resident of Teachers’ Colony, Kolathur.

4. Conclusion

The cameras do not just serve to deter criminals; they have also helped in cracking a number of murders and burglaries in recent months. Cameras have had effects on crime, even more consistent effects on disorder, and that the visibility of cameras is associated with its impact on crime and disorder. People claim to feel safer in the city centre after dark after the cameras were introduced.

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