

## 50,000 CCTVs to keep eye on security in Mumbai

In the aftermath of the 26/11 terror attacks in Mumbai, the Indian Merchants Chamber (IMC) plans to install 50,000 'electronic eyes' to monitor the city as part of a unique security blanket for the country's commercial capital, an official said here Saturday.

A preliminary report on the proposed Rs.5 billion project has already been prepared and submitted to Maharashtra Chief Minister Ashok S. Chavan Friday, according to IMC Chief Adviser P.N. Mogre.

'The chief minister was highly impressed by the project and has called for implementing it on war-footing. We are hopeful that the project should get underway after monsoon, or by Diwali,' Mogre told IANS.

To begin with, the plan envisages installing 5,000 closed circuit television cameras (CCTVs) all over Mumbai, comprising nearly 2,250 km of roads.

The remaining about 45,000 CCTV cameras would be installed at strategic locations in various phases, he said.

Apart from keeping an eye on the city round the clock, the project would have multiple advantages for other concerned agencies like the police and civic bodies, Mogre said.

Chavan, who watched a presentation on the proposal along with Home Minister Jayant Patil, top civil and police officials, immediately set up an eight-member committee to fine-tune the project, examine its financial viability and related issues.

He has asked the committee to submit its report within a fortnight, according to Mogre.

The meeting agreed that the proposal would not only help minimise the recurrence of events like 26/11 terror attacks, but they could also be used to enhance the efficiency of traffic flow throughout the city, keep track of criminal activities or major emergencies.

'If select video feed from such cameras were shared with the city's public on a subscription basis, it could be used over time to recover the huge infrastructure costs of the project,' Mogre added.

Explaining the features of the project, he said that initially up to 5,000 cameras would be installed on street light poles or other suitable mounts around the city.

These would be connected to a Central Data Centre with fibre-optic cables for receiving the video feeds round the clock.

Besides, independent agencies would have their own command and control centres, which would be funded as part of the main project and continuously monitor their requirements.

In order to recover costs, the IMC plans to sell video feeds with the citizens as subscribers (mainly traffic-related feeds), insurance companies, TV channels, other concerned agencies to generate revenue and reduce dependence on capital infusion, estimated at Rs.1 billion, every few years.

On its part, the official authorities could help by using these traffic feeds to impose fines on people for traffic violations, the proceeds of which could be shared with IMC, Mogre said.

He said that among the aspects that the committee could examine would be placing similar cameras on the entire fleet of BEST public buses, the 300 trains that ply on the [Mumbai](#) suburban railway network, and the 100 railway stations in the city.

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