Technology Developments

India's COVID-19 Vaccination Drive to go 'Contactless' India (April 08, 2021)

The pilot project has already begun in Jharkhand where the government had been conducting 1,000 authentications through facial recognition daily. In its third phase, India is moving towards a contactless COVID-19 vaccine drive. It is preparing to add Aadhaar based facial recognition. The Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) has already started a pilot project to test its facial recognition algorithms based on a database of facial data obtained from the Aadhaar database.

The Global Trace-and-Track Regime International (March 30, 2021)

In March 2020, Singapore unleashed a Bluetooth app called "TraceTogether" on Google Play and the Apple Store to track people who tested positive for COVID-19 and notify others through their cell phones. For those who argue that participation is completely "voluntary," Singapore functions as a high-tech dictatorship where refusal to comply with stay-at-home orders and refusal to share GPS location data with health bureaucrats are criminal offenses subject to six months' imprisonment and/or a $10,000 fine.

Cybersecurity


The US government has said it will not introduce compulsory federal COVID-19 vaccine passports. The US government has said it will not introduce compulsory federal COVID-19 vaccine passports aim fears people's privacy would be compromised.
being set up around the world, the White House will not support American citizens "carrying a credential", according to its press secretary.

'Stop Covid-19' System Raises Privacy Concerns Cambodia (April 7, 2021)


The Israeli legislature enacted an amendment to the COVID-19 law to allow for technology-monitored home isolation of Israeli citizens returning from abroad. The law recognizes that those returning from abroad carry a higher risk of contracting COVID-19, particularly global variants of the virus, and thus should be given a choice of technology-monitored home isolation or a physically guarded motel-isolation.

Breach Prompts Review of Vaccine Booking Systems New Zealand (March 30, 2021)

The Ministry of Health has launched a sweeping review of COVID-19 vaccine booking systems after a data breach exposed the personal details of more than 700 people seeking the vaccine.

British Airways' Vaccine Passports: The Legal Implications U.K. (March 29, 2021)

Questions should be asked of British Airways and other airlines as to whether their cyber security follows best practice, and this interrogation should extend to third-party providers. As BA and other airlines begin to demand more personal data from customers, such as medical data, it is imperative that they remain vigilant in the face of data breaches.

Proposed Legislation


Oregon legislators could force the state's leading health agency to be more transparent by neutering a law that allows officials to conceal health information, including about the COVID-19 pandemic, that the public otherwise has a right to know.

Cybersecurity Bill Grabs Unanimous Approval in Second House Committee U.S. (April 2, 2021)

COVID-19 relief funds would be used to shore up the state's cybersecurity infrastructure under a new bill creating the Florida Digital Service, which would be responsible for cybersecurity at the state's various agencies.

Other Key Data Privacy Updates

Indian Travelers Open to 'Digital Health Passports', But Have Privacy Concerns India (April 8, 2021)

The message from Indian travelers is clear; digital health passports can be a vital tool in opening travel once again. A recent study found 79% of Indian travelers would be willing to store their travel health data electronically if it meant it would enable them to travel sooner. However, despite an overwhelming response to digital health passports, when queried further, there were concerns about security and privacy. 34% of respondents are worried about data security risks with their personal information being hacked, while 28%
of respondents are concerned about lack of transparency and control over how and where their data will be shared.

COVID-19 Has Changed the Cyber Threat Landscape. What to Expect in 2021? India (April 7, 2021)

The pandemic has brought on several unprecedented changes, the most prominent being the acceleration of digital transformation due to the proliferation of cashless transactions, zero contact communication, and other technology used to discourage physical contact. However, the digital ecosystem has many points of vulnerability increasing the attack surface, thereby giving rise to growing cybersecurity concerns.

We Should Ask These Questions Before Fully Implementing Vaccine Passports U.S. (April 6, 2021)

As New York state continues to roll out vaccines, a new question looms: how do we keep track of who is vaccinated? The state recently launched a voluntary "vaccine passport". The pass is a smartphone app that uses medical records to create a specialized QR code that can be scanned at events as proof that the person is vaccinated or recently had a negative COVID-19 test. To register, you must enter your name, birthday, and ZIP code. In theory, this is a great solution. It seems quick, accessible, and effective, and for the most part, it is, but it proposes a much larger issue: Is the app secure, or will businesses have access to your health information? State officials must address these questions.

Data Privacy Expected to Prove a Challenge for Digital Scheme U.K. (April 3, 2021)

While the Government has yet to confirm exactly what information digital vaccine passports will contain, data privacy experts have warned that the scheme could compromise the nation’s health data if mishandled. The digital documents are highly likely to require access to private and sensitive medical records but as individual’s health data is protected under the General Data Protection Regulation it must be monitored closely noting that there would be potentially undesirable outcomes if vaccine status was used to compound already disadvantaged characteristics, such as age or ethnicity.

COVID-19 Vaccine Passports Not Immune to Privacy Concerns New Zealand (April 1, 2021)

As countries race to roll out their vaccination programs, the conversation has shifted: the question now is, when can we get back to normal? In many countries, the re-opening of shops, bars, gyms, and national borders will require a system of verifying people's vaccinations. But this is where matters get difficult. How do we create a system of verification that is effective, minimizes fraud risks, allows for wide public participation and is privacy friendly?

Check-In Queensland COVID-19 App to be Mandatory from May Australia (April 1, 2021)

Queensland cafes, restaurants and pubs will soon have to use the state government's COVID-19 check-in app or face penalties. Just over a month after launching the check-in Queensland app, the government has now announced it will be mandatory for "most" hospitality venues from May 1, 2021 to streamline contact tracing ability. While it is a valuable tool for contact tracers, a civil libertarian has raised privacy concerns.

Vaccine Passports a 'Minefield of Privacy Concerns' International (March 30, 2021)

As vaccine rollouts continue to gather pace across the globe, vaccine passports are being touted to kickstart both domestic and international travel quickly and safely. The EU, China and Denmark are among the countries pushing ahead with some sort of certification system, whereas Israel is already using vaccine passports for internal travel. In Britain, Prime Minister Boris Johnson recently suggested UK pubs could operate on a "no jab, no
pint" policy once the vaccine becomes available to all demographics. A passport could also be reportedly built into the UK NHS app that lets you access your medical records. However, if little is done to address the privacy, security and numerous other concerns looming over these schemes, the perceived benefits may soon be outweighed by the costs.

Wide Review of Vaccine Booking After Data Breach New Zealand (March 30, 2021)

The Ministry of Health has launched a sweeping review of COVID-19 vaccine booking systems after a data breach exposed the personal details of more than 700 people seeking the vaccine. The data breach involved patients’ details, including name, date of birth, and National Health Index number being displayed within the public facing code of the website. The whistle-blower, who uncovered a privacy breach within the Canterbury District Health Board system, said the issue was not a "coding error" but incompetence.