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IoT Based Railway Track Faults Detection and Localization using Acoustic Analysis and Signalling

Likhith Chandra[1] and Harsha V[2]
Department of Information Science and Engineering[1,2]
Global Academy of Technology, Bengaluru, India
likhithha.7@gmail.com

Abstract*: Ensuring the safety and efficiency of rail transportation is paramount, necessitating timely inspection of railway tracks to prevent potential hazards. This research introduces an innovative approach by implementing an Internet of Things (IoT)-based autonomous railway track fault detection system. Various track components, such as rail surface defects, broken sleepers, missing fasteners, and irregular ballast levels, can lead to hazardous situations if not properly monitored. This master's thesis proposes an efficient method for classifying track components using image processing techniques and deep learning algorithms. Specifically, it focuses on detecting missing fasteners by analyzing images captured by a line camera. Experimental results demonstrate the method's effectiveness and robustness in complex environments. Future work aims to develop a comprehensive model capable of classifying all track components simultaneously. Image processing is utilized to extract individual components such as fasteners, rail, ballast, and sleepers, with the model trained to classify fastener states. This research contributes to advancing railway inspection methods, mitigating operational costs, preventing accidents, and enhancing passenger experience.*

Keywords: Railway track inspection, Internet of Things (IoT), Autonomous fault detection, Image processing, Deep learning, Missing fasteners

I. INTRODUCTION

This study proposes an IoT-based approach for detecting railway track faults, addressing safety concerns by leveraging advanced technology for timely fault identification and prevention. The first part focuses on the study that introduces an IoT-based approach for railway track fault detection and localization, leveraging acoustic analysis. Overcoming the limitations of manual inspections, it addresses six track faults on Pakistani railways. Machine learning methods, including MLP, achieve high accuracy, marking a significant advancement in real-time and automated rail safety.

The second part focuses on the location-based notification system is a crucial part of our system. It allows us to communicate with local law enforcement and emergency services, sharing real-time information about the user's location and the nature of the perceived threat. This enables a swift and targeted response to incidents, optimizing the efficiency of emergency services. And to ensure a timely response to potential threats, by the intelligent alert and notification system in place. Once a distress situation is confirmed, it automatically notify Railways play a vital role in transportation and economic development, especially in developing nations. With its remarkable energy efficiency and low environmental impact, rail transportation is crucial for sustainable mobility. However, ensuring safe and reliable railway operations is paramount for passenger and freight transportation.

Regular track inspections are essential to prevent accidents due to wear and tear. By maintaining fault-free tracks, both passenger and freight safety can be ensured, contributing to the continuous functioning of railway systems and the smooth operation of supply chains. Regular inspections mitigate the risk of train derailments, safeguarding the well-being of passengers and maintaining the integrity of freight transportation.

II. LITERATURE SURVEY

In [1], the author proposes an IoT-based autonomous railway track fault detection system to enhance traditional manual inspection methods. Acoustic analysis is used for fault identification and classification, with machine learning algorithms employed for analysis. Results indicate successful discrimination and localization of track defects in real time, with the MLP achieving the highest accuracy.

In et.al [2], the author focuses on automatic detection of railway track fastener defects using deep learning technology. It reviews relevant research on rail inspection and proposes a system architecture incorporating high-speed video cameras and Yolo v3 deep learning model for fastener inspection. Various related works in the field of railway track inspection are discussed, highlighting methods such as infrared sensors, GPS-based systems, and computer vision for fault detection and classification.

In [3] the author explores the challenges faced by railway companies in maintaining productivity amidst increasing maintenance costs and safety concerns. It highlights the importance of automated inspection methods, particularly machine vision-based approaches, to enhance efficiency and safety while reducing delays and costs. However, existing methods still face challenges such as adverse environmental conditions and the need for optimal illumination. The proposed thesis aims to address these challenges by developing a model capable of simultaneously detecting faults in railway tracks and their components, potentially revolutionizing maintenance procedures.

In [4], the authors discusses the importance of railway track line safety and maintenance, highlighting the need for automated detection systems to identify defects such as broken or missing fasteners and rail corrugation. It reviews existing methods for defect detection, focusing on image processing and deep learning-based approaches. The proposed approach includes image preprocessing, track and fastener positioning, feature extraction using Dense-SIFT and Bag-of-Visual-Word model, and classification with Support Vector Machine (SVM). Experimental results demonstrate the effectiveness of the proposed method compared to traditional feature extraction methods like HOG and LBP. Finally, the paper introduces an improved YOLOv3-based model for multi-target defect identification, aiming to simplify the detection process and improve accuracy.

In et al. [5] the authors proposed design aims to automate the detection of faults in railway tracks using IoT technology. By integrating components like a Raspberry Pi, stepper motor, ultrasonic sensor, LCD display, and cloud server, the system can efficiently detect track faults and relay information to railway control rooms, thereby preventing accidents. This project represents a significant advancement in railway track fault detection systems, leveraging IoT for enhanced efficiency and safety.

In [6], the authors proposed method, Multi-Stage Pipeline for Defect Detection (MPDD), addresses the need for automatic defect detection in Electric Multiple Units (EMU) key components. MPDD utilizes deep learning techniques, including modified Faster R-CNN and super-resolution strategies, to achieve accurate detection and classification. Evaluation on various datasets demonstrates significant performance improvements compared to traditional methods.

In [7], the authors discusses the importance of maintenance strategies in optimizing production facilities, particularly in the railway industry. It explores various maintenance approaches, including traditional and Industry 4.0 methods, and emphasizes the need for effective maintenance to ensure reliability and minimize costs.

In [8], the authors proposed article discusses the importance of maintenance strategies in optimizing production facilities, particularly in the railway industry. It explores various maintenance approaches, including traditional and Industry 4.0 methods, and emphasizes the need for effective maintenance to ensure reliability and minimize costs.

In [9], authors proposed he research proposes a nondestructive acoustic emission (AE) scheme for detecting and localizing cracks in steel rails under loads. AE signals are captured by a single AE sensor, converted into digital data, denoised to remove noise, and then processed and classified using a deep learning algorithm. Pencil lead break AE signals from various parts of the steel rail were used to train and test the algorithm. The classification accuracy was compared between different groupings of AE signals, with accuracies of 86.6% and 96.6% achieved. Onsite experiments resulted in an accuracy of 77.33%. This approach stands out for its use of a single AE sensor and deep learning algorithm, offering efficient crack detection and localization without the need for multiple sensors or human interpretation.

In[10], The research paper proposes a system for detecting and preventing railway track cracks to enhance safety in railway transportation. The system utilizes crack detection sensors placed in train engines to identify cracks in tracks and automatically slow or stop the train while notifying the control room of the crack's location. Additionally, the system incorporates anti-collision devices using Bluetooth technology to prevent accidents caused by trains on the same track. The paper highlights the limitations of current rail maintenance practices and the need for more efficient crack detection methods. It discusses the advantages of using robotics for daily track monitoring and emphasizes the simplicity and portability of the proposed system.

In [11], The paper addresses the critical issue of crack detection in the Indian railway network, emphasizing its economic significance and the potential impact on the nation's economy. It highlights the inadequacies in current safety measures and the high frequency of accidents, particularly due to derailments and crack-related problems. Despite the extensive railway network, manual monitoring and maintenance are irregular, leading to unnoticed cracks and accidents. To address this challenge, the paper proposes an automated crack detection system that utilizes cost-effective components like GPS modules, PCs, and IR-photo diode assemblies. It discusses various existing crack detection techniques, such as image processing, microwave antennas, infrared sensing, and ultrasonics, noting their limitations in terms of accuracy and cost.

In [12], the authors addresses the crucial task of detecting surface defects on railway tracks, which is essential for ensuring the safety and integrity of railway transportation systems. Existing methods face challenges in accurately detecting edge defects and handling multi-scale variations between different types of defects. To overcome these challenges, the paper introduces a novel rail surface defect detection network, YOLOv5s-VF. This network incorporates a sharpening functional attention mechanism (V-CBAM) and a microscale adaptive spatial feature fusion (M-ASFF) to enhance defect detection accuracy and speed. V-CBAM includes adaptive channel attention and sharpened spatial attention components to improve attention to edge position defects. M-ASFF enhances the details of tiny defects while preventing semantic conflicts caused by feature fusion at different scales. The paper also presents experimental results demonstrating the superior performance of YOLOv5s-VF compared to existing detection methods, achieving a detection accuracy of 93.5% and a detection speed of 114.9 fps.

In [13], The paper introduces a novel system for detecting railway track faults and avoiding collisions using infrared (IR) rays and sensors. The system aims to address the significant challenges in maintaining railway infrastructure, such as detecting cracks in tracks and preventing service failures. The proposed solution employs IR sensors placed in train wheels to transmit rays onto the track, enabling detection of defects. If two trains are on the same track, the colliding rays trigger an alarm or LED blink, prompting the drivers to stop. The detection of cracks is facilitated by IR transmitters and receivers connected to signal lamps and a Controller Area Network (CAN) controller. The IR rays have wavelengths between 0.7 and 300 micrometers, enabling efficient detection. Signal lamps provide visual indications to train drivers, conveying information about track conditions ahead. The positioning of signals has evolved over time to accommodate increased traffic density and improve safety.

In [14], the authors provides a comprehensive survey of Deep Learning (DL) applications in railway maintenance, focusing on defect detection using audio and video data. DL has shown remarkable performance in image and audio processing, particularly in defect and anomaly detection, potentially revolutionizing predictive maintenance in the railway sector. The separation of DL applications from safety-critical functions is crucial for improving system dependability without compromising safety certification. Drawing from advancements in DL in other transportation domains, such as automotive and avionics, the paper exploresknowledge transfer opportunities and underscores DL's potential in railways.

In [15], Railway accidents often result from derailments caused by loose fishplates, necessitating effective monitoring systems for rail alignment and fishplate bolt positions. This paper proposes an IoT-based real-time railway fishplate monitoring system to address this issue. The system continuously monitors the position of every bolt of each fishplate and alerts the central railway monitoring center, nearby stations, and train drivers if any bolt becomes loose. It utilizes GSM communication and operates in areas with at least 2G cellular network coverage. An embedded system detects bolt rotation using a mechanical gear and issues warnings promptly upon detection of any loosening. The proposed system is cost-effective and demonstrates high accuracy in simulation-based warning tests, indicating its effectiveness in reducing accident probabilities and frequencies.

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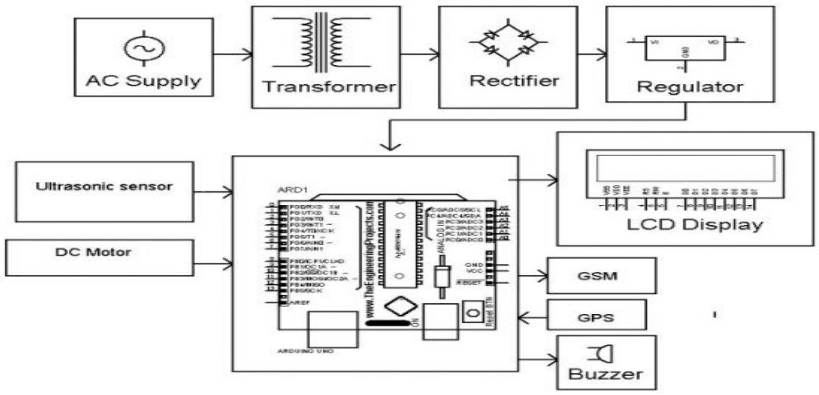

Fig.1 Architecture for IOT Railway Trak fault

III. CONCLUSION

The literature survey highlights various innovative approaches to railway track fault detection, including IoT-based systems, deep learning models, and sensor technologies. These methods aim to enhance safety, efficiency, and reliability in railway transportation by automating fault detection processes and improving maintenance practices

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