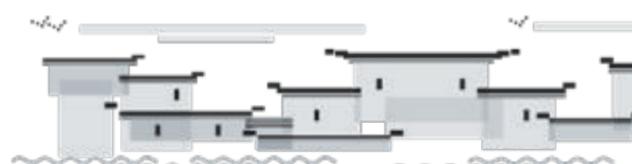


WORLD INTERNET CONFERENCE



Opening ceremony



Attendees gather for the opening ceremony of the sixth World Internet Conference in Wuzhen, Zhejiang province on Sunday.

ZHU XINGXIN / CHINA DAILY

Pilot areas launched to support digital economy

By FAN FEIFEI
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National digital economy innovation development pilot areas have been set up in Zhejiang, Hebei (Xiongan New Area), Fujian, Guangdong and Sichuan provinces and Chongqing municipality during the ongoing World Internet Conference, in Wuzhen, Zhejiang province.

Each pilot area will explore the circulation mechanism of digital economy elements, new types of production relations, allocation of resources and industrial agglomeration development models by combining its own advantages and characteristics, according to the National Development and Reform Commission and the Cyberspace Administration of China.

By following the guidance of Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era, especially building the nation into a strong cyberpower, the pilot areas will grasp opportunities to become a benchmark for the innovative development of China's digital economy, being a powerful support of high-quality growth.

Yang Xiaowei, vice-minister of the Cyberspace Administration of China said at the WIC that more efforts are needed to develop the core technologies in network information, strengthen the construction of key internet infrastructure and improve the network governance system.

"We should nurture and expand the teams of new entrepreneurs, as well as promote innovation and entrepreneurship, in a bid to constantly unleash the vitality of the digital economy," Yang said.

Ren Zhiwu, deputy secretary-general of the National Development and Reform Commission said the launch of digital economy innovation development pilot areas is of great significance.

He said the integration of the digital economy and the real economy is gaining momentum, adding there is also a need to speed up the digital transformation of government.

A booming digital economy is reshaping China's economic landscape as technologies such as artificial intelligence, big data and cloud computing are reviving traditional industries and promoting high-quality development.

In 2018, China's digital economy reached 31.3 trillion yuan (\$4.4 trillion), accounting for 34.8 percent of the country's GDP, according to the China Academy of Information and Communications Technology.

As a spearhead of China's reform and opening-up, the coastal province of Zhejiang is leading the nation in terms of digital economic growth. Gao Xingfu, vice-governor of Zhejiang, said the provincial digital economy reached 2.33 trillion yuan last year, taking up 41.54 percent of its total regional GDP.

Gao emphasized that the province will boost the deep convergence of the internet, big data and artificial intelligence with the real economy, establish a batch of industrial internet platforms and intelligent factories, and bolster the upgrading and transformation of traditional industries.

Robin Li, co-founder, chairman and CEO of internet search giant Baidu Inc said the digital economy has entered into a new stage of intelligent economy, with AI as the core driving force.

China gains internet success

Country sees rise in innovation capacity, industry development and applications

By CHENG YU
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China has taken a top spot among 48 economies in internet development, with an apparent rise in innovation capacity, internet applications and industrial development, according to new reports released on Sunday.

In the newly published index, which gauges six aspects including infrastructure level, innovation capacity and cyberspace governance, China's internet development ranked second, behind the United States. The other economies in the top five were South Korea, the United Kingdom and France.

The country has also witnessed growth of some key internet resources, including 5G and IPv6, the most recent IP system. The nation now has 130 million active IPv6 users and is expected to have the highest number globally by 2025.

The findings are part of the World Internet Development Report 2019 and the China Internet Development Report 2019, which were published during this year's World Internet Conference. The event officially kicked off on Sunday in Wuzhen, Zhejiang province.

The reports come at a time when



The latest reports about internet development are published during the sixth World Internet Conference. ZHU XINGXIN / CHINA DAILY

the global internet has been developing for more than 50 years and China is gaining new momentum in internet development, said Yang Shuzhen, head of the Chinese Academy of Cyberspace Studies.

"Countries around the world have taken cyberspace development as a critical factor to achieving a beachhead ... China, as an internet power, has also made significant contributions," Yang said.

In terms of innovation capacity, the US, China and Japan took the top three places. The country's rise of innovative ability globally can be seen by its rising number of patents in information technologies, the report said.

In 5G in particular, China has contributed 34 percent of patents essential to 5G standards in the world by March, according to Ger-

man patent data company IPLYtics.

The country granted commercial 5G licenses earlier this year and leading local telecom carriers are working to build a sound network infrastructure to accelerate the commercialization.

Ke Ruiwen, chairman of China Telecom, the country's major telecom carrier, said at the conference that the company will drive the deep promotion of 5G and other forefront technologies to make everything connected intelligently.

"With the deep integration of 5G, cloud computing, big data and artificial intelligence, we aim to speed up the digitalization of different industries for more new growth engines," Ke said.

China Telecom said earlier it will work with key smartphone vendors to unveil 5G handsets priced under

2,000 yuan (\$282) in the first half of next year, far earlier than predictions made by experts.

The carrier has cooperated with home appliances suppliers including Xiaomi Corp to develop applications enabled by the superfast 5G, Ke disclosed on Sunday.

Its rival China Mobile, the world's leading mobile operator, said the company plans to cover 50 cities across China with 5G signals by the end of this year, which will involve deploying 50,000 5G base stations across the country.

The company has also raised 7 billion yuan as the first phase of a 5G fundraising to promote the development of key technologies. The planned total size of the funding is 30 billion yuan.

While China has made breakthroughs in internet development, the report also pointed out that China still lags behind in some sectors such as cybersecurity.

"It is necessary for China to beef up input on cybersecurity," said Yang Yuyan, deputy director-general at the cybersecurity administration bureau of the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology.

"The current online threats are real and multifaceted. Cyberattacks and risks have become increasingly rampant, and they break the boundaries between the physical world and the virtual network," she explained.

More efforts are expected from the government, companies and institutes to help foster breakthroughs in key technologies and build a good ecosystem in the sector, she added.

Experts call for stronger global data security

By ZOU SHUO
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Governments and industries around the world need to better protect data security and personal information and ensure the rule of law in cyberspace, senior officials and information technology industry experts said on Sunday.

Liu Liehong, vice-minister of the Cyberspace Administration of China, said data has become an important national resource that can drive the development of the economy and society.

Big data, cloud computing and artificial intelligence have become the new and inevitable technological trends and people are paying more attention to the security, management and collection of data, especially the data security of children, he said at a sub-forum during the ongoing sixth World Internet Conference in Wuzhen, Zhejiang province.

To better protect data security, countries around the world should intensify cooperation in strengthening rule of law, risk management and global governance of data protection, he said.

Zhao Dacheng, vice-minister of the Ministry of Justice, said there are about 4.5 billion internet users around the world and they have generated a large amount of data, which is valuable.

However, the development of big data also faces many risks and challenges, and the prevention of data breaches and misuse has become a common concern facing humanity, Zhao said.

More than 100 countries worldwide have introduced guidelines and laws on personal data protection, and China has also issued relevant laws and regulations on cyberspace security and personal data protection, he said.

"We should legalize data protection to ensure the flow and sharing

of data under the rule of law. We should also improve the legal framework on data protection so that the development of big data can bring more benefits to all people."

David Alfred, chief counsel of Singapore's Personal Data Protection Commission, said as people spend more time online, there is a proliferation of collection, use and transfer of personal data and organizations have been allowed to collect an unprecedented amount of data.

While big data delivers undeniable benefits to organizations and consumers, it also raises concerns among consumers and they may feel they have lost control over personal data in an increasingly interconnected and complex world, he said.

As companies optimize the benefits of technology, consumers need to be able to have more control over their data and trust the companies

that are making use of them, he added.

Liang Zhixiang, vice-president of Chinese tech giant Baidu, said AI has evolved from just a concept several years ago to something highly intertwined with people's lives.

AI has enabled personalized products and services, including targeted content recommendation, intelligent retail, precision medicine and big data credit, he said.

"However, people are concerned that improved personalization also means the death of privacy, coerced consent when using mobile applications and manipulation of users."

To address these concerns, society as a whole should establish a healthy data privacy ecosystem, work together to establish legal norms and compliance guidelines that can be easily implemented, push for technological innovation and strengthen data security technology research and development.



Steve Hoffman, founder and CEO of Founders Space, gives a speech at the Business Leaders Dialogue of WIC in Wuzhen on Sunday. GAO ERJIANG / CHINA DAILY

Nation on fast track in booming tech sector

By LIU YUKUN and CHENG YU

China is on the fast track transforming itself into an innovative country driven by the rapid development of its digital economy which is reshaping the country's traditional industries, experts said.

Xu Lejiang, deputy head of The United Front Work Department of CPC Central Committee, said at the ongoing World Internet Conference that the "digital economy has steered China's rapid development in traditional industries like manufacturing and agriculture."

Xu said: "Tech adaptation in these areas has certainly enhanced production efficiency, provided a more accurate demand-supply evaluation, and has contributed to green production processes."

He also remarked that the digital economy is creating new growth points for China's GDP.

"It increased employment in emerging markets. China's market of digital economy had exceeded 30 trillion yuan (\$4.2 trillion) by 2018 and accounted for about one third of China's total GDP," Xu explained.

Data from the China Academy of Information and Communications Technology showed China's market for the digital economy has hit 31.3 trillion yuan, up 15.1 percent year-on-year and accounting for 34.8 percent of China's GDP by 2018.

"Going ahead, China needs more concentrated efforts in developing high-end chips and integrated circuit. The country's traditional industries will also see increasing tech adaptations," Xu said. "The future of the digital economy is in the hands of all countries and the global community should step up

communications and cooperation for a shared future."

Cyberspace Administration of China Minister Zhuang Rongwen shared a similar view at the conference.

"Now the development of a digital economy is essential to the booming world economy and industries' sustainable development, and has facilitated the development of emerging markets like cross-border e-commerce," the minister said.

During this process, the superfast 5G technology has definitely become a key accelerator, said Xiaomi Corp founder and CEO Lei Jun.

"Chinese consumers have shown huge enthusiasm for 5G smartphones, which has outpaced our expectations," he said. "To tap into this demand, Xiaomi plans to launch over 10 types of 5G smartphones next year."

According to the Global System for Mobile Communications Association, which represents the interests of mobile operators worldwide, China will become the world's largest 5G market by 2025.

With an expected 460 million users of the next-generation, superfast network, user numbers will surpass those in Europe (205 million) and the United States (187 million) combined, the association's report said.

Rupert Hoogewerf, chairman of Hurun Report Inc, said China's development of advanced technologies has made it a most popular destination for unicorn companies.

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