

China satellite navigation starts services to Asia

December 27 2012

(AP)—A Chinese satellite navigation network created to eventually compete with America's Global Positioning System has started offering services to Asian users outside the country.

The network's spokesman, Ran Chengqi, said in a press briefing that the Beidou system is offering from Thursday services including positioning, navigation, time and text messaging to users in the Asia-Pacific region.

China expects Beidou to generate a 400 billion yuan (\$63 billion) annual market for services to the transport, meteorology and telecommunications sectors.

China, and especially its military, have long been wary of relying on the United States' dominant [GPS network](#), fearing that Washington might take the system offline in a conflict or an emergency.

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Citation: China satellite navigation starts services to Asia (2012, December 27) retrieved 3 May 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2012-12-china-satellite-asia.html>

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