

China satellite navigation starts services to Asia

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(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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