

# Countries compete for next supercomputer

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The United States, Japan and China are competing to reach the next milestone in supercomputer performance.

While the new supercomputers are not expected to be in operation before the end of the decade they are being viewed as crucial investments for progress in science, advanced technologies and national security, The New York Times reported Friday.

China has 19 supercomputers ranked among the 500 fastest machines, it's becoming an issue of national pride, according to Steve Wallach, a supercomputer designer who is a vice president at Chiaro Networks, a technology provider for high-performance computing.

At the moment, the world's fastest computer is at the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory -- it has reached more than 136 trillion operations a second.

However, on the horizon is the petaflop that can perform 1 quadrillion mathematical operations a second, or eight times the speed of today's fastest computer.

Japanese and U.S. experts estimate a petaflop will cost nearly \$1 billion for each machine.

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