Jiangxi pulls out all the stops in AI drive

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It's no longer a novelty coming across artificial intelligence-featured robots serving in China's restaurants.

The AI industry has grown by leaps and bounds in recent years in the world's second-largest economy with the full backing of the authorities.

As one of the frontrunners in the field, Jiangxi province, in the southeast of the country, unveiled its plan last year to speed up the AI development process.

According to the measures announced by the provincial government, the province will build 10 industrial bases featuring AI and intelligent manufacturing to attract talents, nurture top-tier enterprises, promote intelligent equipment and provide fiscal and tax financial support.

In an attempt to support AI development, Jiangxi plans to construct 1,000 intelligent workshops by 2020, and select some key industries for promoting the application of more than 2,000 sets of AI products and intelligent manufacturing equipment.

The province aims to roll out products and equipment featuring AI and intelligent manufacturing, including intelligent robots, smart vehicles, IoT infrastructure devices, 3D printing and smart grid.

At the same time, human labor will be gradually replaced with machines in the fields of biomedicine, textiles and clothing, electronic information and automobiles, and the integration of AI with the agriculture, tourism, logistics and finance sectors will be encouraged.

Each year during the 13th five-year plan, Jiangxi province would select a number of major projects in AI and intelligent manufacturing, with priority to be given to the key project construction plans. Priority is also given to reserving new construction land plans to ensure reasonable land use requirements. The province also plans to expand

Visitors experience VR esport at 2018 World Conference on VR Industry in Nanchang, Jiangxi province.
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the scale of provincial-level "Made in China 2025" special funds and increase support for AI and intelligent manufacturing.

For enterprises to purchase AI products and intelligent manufacturing equipment that have reached the international advanced level, or apply AI technology, numerical control technology, the provincial finance authority will grant a subsidy of 5 percent of the total purchase price or project investment, with the maximum amount to be granted to individual enterprises not exceeding 3 million yuan.

Also, enterprises purchasing the equipment listed in the province's guidance catalogue shall be subsidized at 10 percent of the actual purchase price for up to a maximum of 2 million yuan.

To further fuel AI development, educational institutions and aviation corporations in Jiangxi have made contributions.

The Jiangxi College of Application Science and Technology has teamed up with iFlytek -- a Chinese information technology company -- to jointly set up an AI college, and train talents. The institute offers undergraduate courses majoring in Internet of Things, software engineering, and electronic information engineering, as well as specialized courses like computer application technology (3D printing direction), software technology (cloud computing and big data direction), software technology (AI direction).

Besides, the crawling drill rivet robot and ring welding robot independently developed by Jiangxi's Hongdu Aviation Industry Group -- a Chinese aircraft manufacturer -- have been maturely applied on C919 large aircraft and new advanced trainer aircraft.

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Industrial internet development stepped up

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Jiangxi Province has been on the fast track in intelligent manufacturing and promoting the deep integration of informationization and industrialization since early this year, during which the industrial internet has become an important player.

The southeastern province had earlier issued a document entitled "Implementation Opinions on Deepening the Development of Industrial Internet by Internet + Advanced Manufacturing".

According to the document, Jiangxi aims to initially build up a low-latency, high-reliability, wide-coverage industrial internet network infrastructure, a fiber-optic broadband and a narrowband Internet of Things (NB-IoT), enhanced machine-type communication (eMTC), and 4G/5G and other mobile Internet of Things across the province to basically realize a full coverage network and initially construct a logo analysis

system.

What's more, the province plans to foster two to three industrial internet platforms and more than 20 industrial internet service providers, and guide 20,000 enterprises to hop onto the cloud platform, with the number of industrial equipment connections reaching more than one million.

Besides, it will promote more than 2,000 industrial enterprises to apply indepth new technologies and new models of industrial internet, implement digitalization, network and intelligent upgrade, and to initially establish a relatively complete and reliable industrial internet security system.

Jack Ma, founder of Alibaba Group, told the 2018 World Conference on VR Industry held recently in Jiangxi that although the province's technology is relatively weak at present, the weakest places are the easiest to develop in the internet era.

The industrial internet platform, as the hub of the industrial total factor, whole industry chain

and full value chain connection, is the core of industrial resource allocation in the process of digitalization, networking and intelligentization of the manufacturing industry.

It is a new industrial ecosystem against the backdrop of deep integration of informationization and industrialization, which supports the ubiquitous connection, flexible supply and efficient allocation of industrial resources.

The Jiangxi document pointed out that the province would speed up the construction of the platform, bring into play the resource aggregation role of the Jiangxi Industrial Internet Industry Alliance, cultivate and introduce industrial Internet platforms across industries like non-ferrous metals, aviation manufacturing, petrochemicals and traditional Chinese medicine, support the construction of developer communities, and build basic principles and processes.

In addition, the province plans to perfect the functions of the platform by promoting industrial

internet platform open development tools, knowledge components, algorithm components and other toolkits (SDK) and application programming interfaces (API), building an industrial app development ecosystem, and achieving multi-platform connectivity and collaborative development.

Besides, Jiangxi would call for more motions to hop onto cloud platforms by encouraging enterprises to develop and implement informatization planning and improve basic data architecture.

For the development of the industrial internet, industrial support is crucial. In terms of industrial support, Jiangxi would cut through three major areas -- technological breakthroughs, product supply, and industrial demonstrations.

For technology breakthroughs, the province would speed up the exploration and discovery of the applications of artificial intelligence, augmented reality, virtual reality and blockchain on the industrial internet, forging a group of core technologies with independent intellectual property rights.

On the product supply side, the province would implement industrial technology software initiatives to enhance the level of integrated innovation in industrial software and industrial knowledge, mechanisms, and experience, and form a batch of industrial internet solutions that are closely integrated with the industry, as well as promote the collaborative development of the desktop and software of the industrial app to meet the needs of small and micro businesses that have no information base with mobile work requirements.

As for the industrial demonstrations, the province would choose a basic and conditional industrial cluster, guide and promote the local government to integrate platform and service provider resources, and implement the linkage of provincial, municipal and county levels to jointly build an industrial Internet industry demonstration base.

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