Thematic Snapshot: Party-state Activities

The first ASPI ICPC report corresponding with our "Mapping China's Technology Giants" project noted that Chinese tech firms are intertwined with the Chinese Communist Party at the highest levels. Most, if not all, of China's technology giants have a party committee, party branches and party secretaries. Party activity includes reviewing corporate decisions, addressing personnel issues, approving the strategic direction of a firm, and carrying out 'corporate social responsibility' tasks, which can often be political. Some CEOs are delegates to the National People's Congress or the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, involving them in the party's efforts to govern China and mobilise party outsiders to act in ways that further the party's interests and ambitions.

For governments and organisations doing business with any Chinese entity, this distinct feature illustrates the political risk of doing business with a China-based company. It creates a more direct pressure point -- even if company employees themselves were to resent this party activity. In our new 2021 ASPI ICPC Report Mapping China's Technology Giants: Supply Chains and the Global Data Ecosystem, we highlight the ways in which the Party-state is embedding itself and its interests across all organisations, including the companies in this report. This occurs through expectation and agenda-setting in laws and policy documents, and through actions like the mobilisation of state resources around objectives like technological standardisation. Through these standards, policies and laws the party-state is refining its capacity to exert control over company activities to ensure it can derive strategic value and benefit from their global operations.

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Alibaba	Soon after its founding in 1999, a Chinese Communist Party (CCP) branch was established inside Alibaba; the branch was upgraded to a party committee in 2008. In total, there are almost 200 party branches and more than 7,000 party members at Alibaba and Ant Group, and around 600 new party members join the company every year. In March 2021, following the Chinese authorities' crackdown on Alibaba, the company opened a second party committee at its Beijing headquarters. At the founding ceremony for the committee, its secretary, Wang Hao, said that 'Alibaba should adhere to correct political directions and maintain political integrity.' Unlike the CEOs who head the other two companies in the BAT troika (Baidu and Tencent), Alibaba's former head, Jack Ma, is a member of the CCP—a fact that was only very recently revealed in the Chinese press. But, unlike Baidu's Robin Li and Tencent's Pony Ma, Jack Ma has never been appointed as a delegate to the National People's Congress. He was, however, a member of the 10th Zhejiang Provincial Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, from 2008 to 2012. Ma, alongside Baidu's Robin Li, was part of Xi Jinping's entourage when Xi became the first CCP General Secretary to attend the World Economic Forum in Davos in 2017. According to a 2018 *Reuters* article, an Alibaba special projects team 'Y Projects Business Unit', which covers 'development projects outside the company', was responsible for developing the Party's *Xuexi Qiangguo ('Study to make China strong')* mobile application. The CCP's Central Propaganda Department released the app, which was built using Alibaba's messaging app DingTalk. The ASPI ICPC report *Engineering Global Consent* found that Alibaba Cloud had a strategic cooperation agreement with the company Global Tone Communications Technology (GTCOM), which is the subsidiary of a state-owned enterprise directly controlled by the Central Propaganda Department. Alibaba is also one of several companies GTCOM claims it has

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	collaborated with in the development of its technology, and GTCOM's US-based company also claimed to have [reached](#) strategic cooperation with Alibaba. Alibaba's technology is also used across China for government projects, for instance in [smart cities projects](#). These projects [typically involve](#) the use of Alibaba's '[city brain](#)' technology.
ANT GROUP	Ant Group's chairman and CEO, Eric Jing, is a [member](#) of Zhejiang Provincial Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference. He stated in a speech that Ant is '[a state enterprise](#)' that hopes to create a glorious Chinese brand with all companies. Regarding the 'Opinions of the CPC Central Committee and the State Council on Creating a Sound Entrepreneur Growth Environment, Advocating Excellent Entrepreneurship and Better Using Entrepreneurs' Role' published in September 2017, which stated that '[talent administered by the party](#) shall be adhered to', Jing stated that the opinion 'clearly affirmed the status and value of entrepreneurship' and that he was fully confident about playing the entrepreneur role. Ant Financial [established](#) its party committee in November 2015. As of 2016, it had more than 2,000 party members. According to the deputy secretary of the party committee at Ant Financial Beijing, Ant Financial has been '[taking its party building work seriously](#)' and 'actively carrying out all kinds of party organization activities'. Ant Financial is part of the [Qiantang River Financial Harbor Party Building Alliance](#), which is led by [Hangzhou Municipal Financial Office](#). In July 2018, Ant Financial [was thanked](#) by a local united front head for its strong support of the united front work in a new social stratum.
Baidu百度	Soon after its founding in 2000, Baidu established an internal general party branch, [according to Chinese media reports](#). In 2011, on the eve of the 90th anniversary of the founding of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), the [company received approval](#) to establish a party committee. [A December 2020 article](#) published on a government website identified Baidu Senior Vice President Liang Zhixiang ('Victor Liang') as the party secretary of the company's Party Committee. Although not a party member himself, Baidu CEO Robin Li is a member of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, which is the country's primary [united front body](#). Li, alongside Alibaba's Jack Ma, was part of Xi Jinping's entourage when Xi became the first Chinese President to attend the World Economic Forum in Davos in 2017. In recent years, Beijing has increased pressure on internet companies in China, including Baidu, to [strengthen their 'party building' efforts](#) in order to shore up their loyalty to the CCP. According to a Yicai Global article citing data from [the Cyberspace Administration of China](#), as of October 2016, Baidu had 3,600 registered CCP members out of a total of around 40,000 employees. Another [article](#) published by *People's Daily* earlier in June 2016, said Baidu had 3,210 registered CCP members and had 11 party branches.
BeiDou	The BeiDou system involves government departments, research institutions and companies that have close links to PRC authorities. When foreign universities and companies sign BeiDou-related agreements, Chinese Government representatives [are often involved](#). BeiDou is used by the Chinese military in live-fire [military exercises](#) held in Tibet and Xinjiang, and it [boosts](#) the People's Liberation Army's capabilities in weapons targeting, guidance and other services. [As

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reported by *The Diplomat*, Yang Changfeng, who is the chief designer of the BDS and a member of the 13th National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (China's top political advisory body), said that 'the BDS services are used in various fields including transportation, agriculture, fishing, disaster reduction and relief.'

The BDS has been described as being part of the Information Silk Road, Digital Silk Road and Space Silk Road, which are linked to the Belt and Road Initiative. It allows China to extend its international influence in the space domain through BeiDou's space system, which relies on the BDS. Despite the government's efforts to promote BeiDou as a primarily commercial and scientific program, the direction is overtly military, as the People's Liberation Army is in charge of its most senior management organisations.

In August 2020, China's Ministry of Commerce and Ministry of Science and Technology published an amendment to the *Catalogue of technologies prohibited and restricted from export* to include the BDS.

BGI executive vice president Du Yutao is the head scientist and party secretary of BGI's Shenzhen Huada Gene Research Institute and became a party member in 1996. Du served as a delegate to the 19th National People's Congress in October 2017. Although her biographical data is listed in the management team section of BGI's Chinese-language website, it's omitted from the English-language US and global websites.

According to a People's Daily article, BGI's Party Committee was established in 2008 and as of 2017 had 25 party branches under its jurisdiction and 782 registered party members. The article quoted Du Yutao, who said that the Party Committee is highly selective in their admission of new party members. Du was also quoted saying that party members are expected to lead by example within the company.

A Xinhua article published in 2018 quoted Du Yutao describing BGI's role in assisting China implement 'Healthy China 2030,' China's healthcare plan and vision under Xi Jinping. According to the article, BGI has cooperated with the several local governments to discuss and develop a regional implementation model for 'Healthy China 2030.' Du said that as part of this plan, BGI hopes to make genetic testing a universal health service.

Links have been found between BGI and the PLA's National University of Defense Technology (NUDT). BGI's bioinformatics research has previously used Tianhe supercomputers to process genetic information, and BGI researchers have collaborated with NUDT researchers on several academic publications.

ByteDance has had an established party branch since 2014 and established a party committee in 2017.

In October 2018, ByteDance CEO Zhang Yiming was listed in the '100 outstanding private entrepreneurs at the 40th anniversary of reform and opening up', according to state media reports cited by *Week In China*. The United Front Work Department of the CCP was reportedly heavily involved in the selection process for the list. which is published by the All-China Federation of Industry and Commerce. Businesspeople chosen to feature on the list are chosen for being 'emblematic of the country's private economic development', while also being people

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who 'resolutely uphold the Party's leadership, unswervingly go along the path of socialism with Chinese characteristics and champion the reform and opening-up policies'.

But ByteDance hasn't always been in the good graces of the CCP. The company has drawn the ire of the censors on more than one occasion. In April 2018, China's top media regulator ordered ByteDance to shut down its popular parody and meme app Neihan Duanzi. Vulgar content on the app had 'caused strong dislike among internet users', according to the State Administration of Radio and Television.

That prompted ByteDance CEO Zhang Yiming to pledge to publicly apologise for 'publishing a product that collided with core socialist values' and to increase his team of censors from 6,000 to 10,000—the job ads for which noted that candidates with 'strong political sensitivity' would be preferred.

Despite the occasional reprimand from the censors, ByteDance appears to have been protected by Lu Wei, China's former internet czar, when its business rivals complained that the company was stealing their content. According to sources cited by the *New York Times*, one of Lu's top lieutenants told them that he was a fan and that they should stop complaining and work with the company. Had Lu cracked down on the company for its early questionable business practices, it might not have continued as a viable business.

ByteDance has supported and partnered with several cities and provinces to provide them with guidance to make better use of platforms such as Douyin and Toutiao to promote propaganda. That includes a cooperation agreement between ByteDance and Siping city in Jilin Province, Shanxi Province, Heilongjiang Province, and Rizhao city in Shandong Province. The cooperation agreement between ByteDance and the Rizhao government focused on facilitating 'Political Rizhao, Positive Energy' using ByteDance's Toutiao and Douyin platforms.

As a state-owned defence company, CETC works closely with the People's Liberation Army (PLA) and the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). Its chairman, Chen Zhaoxiong, is also the company's party secretary, and its general manager holds the position of deputy party secretary. Before taking on his role at CETC in May 2020, Chen was the Deputy Minister of Industry and Information Technology.

CETC Chairman Chen Zhaoxiong was a delegate to the 19th CCP Congress in 2017 and has strongly emphasised the importance of party building (efforts to improve the quality and strength of party members and organisations). In December 2020, Chen published an article titled 'Uphold the party's overall leadership, accelerate the construction of a world-class enterprise'. He stated that CETC will 'adhere to the guidance of Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics in the New Era', 'effectively transform the party's political advantages into enterprise development advantages', and lead the development of the company 'with high-quality party building'. He said that CETC will 'explore the unified approach of strengthening the party's leadership and improving the corporate governance, and comprehensively consolidate the system foundation of the party's overall leadership in the company.'

Like many state-owned enterprises, CETC engages in united front work (efforts to build the CCP's control and influence over groups outside the party). In 2017, CETC's deputy party secretary said that 'CETC's party organisations have always highly emphasised united front work, actively developing united front work according to the needs of the party Central Committee, United

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	Front Work Department and the State Administration of State-Owned Assets.' Internally, CETC maintains a 'Party Masses Work Department' with functions including united front work. CETC's united front work appears to focus on members of minor parties, non-party intellectuals and ethnic minorities.
China Mobile	China Mobile is a state-owned enterprise in an industry that the Chinese Government has placed on its 'negative list', which means that foreign investment into the industry is prohibited. Consequently, the party-state maintains significant levels of influence and control over the company. Its extensive coverage and level of subscriptions within China mean that China Mobile is able to dominate the domestic telecommunications market. The members of the leadership team of China Mobile are all Chinese Communist Party (CCP) members. On 4 March 2019, during the 'two sessions' (China's largest annual political event), the Central Organisation Department announced the decision of the Chinese Government to transfer Yang Jie—at that time the chairman of China Telecom—to the position of China Mobile chairman. China Mobile has an education department called China Mobile University, which is a training centre that seeks to nurture talented individuals in middle and senior management and in technical and business fields within the company. The university also performs innovation research. The curriculum includes the country's major policies, communications trends and development plans, as well as business management. Instructors include members of the State Council and the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology, managers of China Mobile Group and experts from universities such as the Central Party School and Tsinghua University. The China Mobile Party School was established at the China Mobile University in 2012 and as an online party school education platform in late 2013. After gaining approval from the Central Party School and other authorities, the school established Central Party School department-level and bureau-level courses.
China Telecom	As stated in a report on China Telecom's 2019 Annual Work Conference, a state-owned enterprise must 'be proactive in carrying out its responsibilities as a state-owned enterprise to a high standard [and] adhere to the command to build the Party in order to promote high quality development through high quality Party building'. According to the company's CCP web page, 'party building' occurs at all levels of the organisation, from its headquarters down to its local branches. In 2012, the China Telecom Party School was established within the company's training centre in Shanghai. In 2016, the party school was officially incorporated into the Central Party School in Beijing. All members of the China Telecom leadership are members of the CCP. The board structure replicates the party structure; for example, the party secretary concurrently holds the position of China Telecom chairman. In 2019, it was announced that China Telecom's chairman, Yang Jie, would take up the position of chairman of China Mobile. Because both companies are state-owned enterprises, staff movements are decided by the state.

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China Unicom is a central SOE under SASAC and the responsibility of the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology (MIIT). Its annual work meetings and significant events are attended by higher level leaders or representatives of the MIIT. The company actively participates in party building. Carrying out party work comes first and foremost and is central to the company culture. As explained in its [company handbook](#), 'China Unicom has always insisted on taking the building of the Party and using that to guide the building of the company culture.' All members of the [China Unicom leadership](#) are members of the CCP, and the chairman also holds the position of party secretary. [The party-building web page](#) has a prominent position on the official Chinese-language China Unicom website. That link is absent on China Unicom's English-language website.

A major role of SOEs is to guide and implement the major decision-making arrangements of the CCP Central Committee and the State Council and to assist with the requirements of higher-level departments. As stated by Unicom chairman and party secretary Wang Xiaochu [at the 2018 annual working conference](#), the company 'will continue to be guided by the thinking of Mr Xi Jinping on socialism with Chinese characteristics for a new era in 2018, fully implement the spirits of [the] 19th National Congress of the Party [and] proactively implement the related strategic deployments of the State'. Similar statements are echoed in the working conferences of the other two telecommunications operators and are common party rhetoric.

At Unicom, employees are encouraged to believe that [high-quality company development will follow high-quality party building](#). At all levels of the company, they are encouraged to put political development above everything else. However, there have been incidents in the past when China Unicom hasn't met the CCP's expectations. In 2015, the company was reprimanded by the Inspection Leading Group of the CCP because it had been '[heavy on business and light on Party building](#)', among other things. This was obviously a minor blemish in China Unicom history, as it proudly [announced in 2017](#) its implementation of the SOE mixed-ownership reforms.

China Unicom has a [graduate program](#) called 'U Growth' designed for 'U talents'. [Recruitment advertisements](#) on the SASAC website call equally for undergraduate and postgraduate students, as well as Chinese students who have studied overseas. A requirement by China's Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security is that the names of returning overseas students who wish to study in Beijing must be publicised.

As a state-backed AI start-up, CloudWalk is inextricably linked with the party-state.

CloudWalk regularly receives visits from CCP officials who assess its performance and dole out praise for adhering to the party's precepts. On 20 March 2019, [Chongqing party secretary Chen Min'er](#) visited CloudWalk and urged the company to persist with the state's 'one enterprise, one policy' method of assessing the quality and efficiency of state-owned enterprises. On 9 April 2019, Gao Yunlong, vice chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, [paid a visit to CloudWalk](#) and urged the company to further develop core technologies for the country. The next week, on 16 April, [Guangdong provincial party secretary Li Xi visited CloudWalk](#) and praised the company's business activity for being in accordance with the 'the spirit of the 19th CPC National Congress' and implementing Xi Jinping's instruction to 'aim for the frontline of global science and technology, lead the development

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	direction of science and technology, and seize the opportunity to build a scientific and technological superpower'.

CloudWalk has developed big-data platforms for collecting and recognising airline passengers and their ticket information, and its face-scanning technology is operational in more than 60 airports across China. It also operates a facial-recognition platform that connects with public security databases, and its facial-recognition system is in use in police departments in 29 provinces. The company's technology is able to judge whether a person using an ATM is under duress through their body movements and eyes, CloudWalk general manager of science and technology Lin Ming told Chinese media. 'In this case, the system can also call the police automatically when you withdraw money from the ATM.' |
| **alhua** TECHNOLOGY | Dahua maintains a close relationship with the Chinese Government. In the first three quarters of 2019, the company received government subsidies of ¥138,966,306 (US$19.9 million).

A 2019 article said Dahua has a Party committee and branches. The same article identified Dahua Chairman and CEO Fu Liqian as secretary of the company's Party Committee. It also identified Zuo Pengfei and Wang Jiejun as political representatives of Dahua's 'domestic Party branch'.

Another article said the company developed equipment and solutions for the party in the form of tools to digitise CCP meetings at various levels across the country.

In addition, Dahua also owns some national projects that receive direct funding from the Chinese Government. For example, the company has four National Torch Program projects and two national projects on 'core electronic devices, high-end general-purpose chips and fundamental software'.

Fu Liquan, Dahua's founder and chair, reportedly said that at Dahua, 'minds are armed with Xi Jinping thoughts and new-era socialism with Chinese characteristics' and that Dahua owes its success to the party. |
| **dji** | Frank Wang, the founder of DJI, is a member of the Shenzhen Political Consultative Conference.

China Chengtong Holdings Group Ltd, a state-owned enterprise, described DJI as China's leading company that 'adheres to the standard of Xi Jinping's socialism with Chinese characteristics in the new era, and strives to build a world-class high-tech manufacturing enterprise with the standard of "walking in the forefront and setting an example"'.

According to the Guangdong Organization Work website, DJI had 'thoroughly studied and implemented the spirit of the 19th Party Congress'. DJI's public relations director, Xie Tiandi, stated that, in the future, DJI would 'bear in mind the Party and the country's entrustment' when developing its new technologies.

DJI seems to have a party committee. In April 2020, it was reported that the 'DJI Party Committee' initiated the 'DJI Army to Fight Epidemic' project, using drones to disinfect areas over 400 million square metres in China. |

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HIKVISION	Hikvision is state-controlled, and its chairman, Chen Zongnian, is also secretary of the CETHIK Group party committee. Hikvision itself has a party branch, which was headed by the company's deputy general manager in 2015. In 2015, Chen told Hikvision employees that 'every party member must consciously accept the party's leadership, and powerfully strengthen the party's leadership and the party's energy, abiding by party discipline and national law … all party members should unite of one mind to struggle for their Individual Dream, the Hikvision Dream and the China Dream!' Xi Jinping visited Hikvision in 2015, urging the company to contribute to the Chinese Dream. CETC's report on the visit stated that Hikvision's profits witnessed an annual profit gain rate of 50% from 2010-2015 'thanks to the government's support and accurate strategy'. The report also quoted Chen referring to Hikvision as a 'state-owned company'. An IPVM report published in May 2021 said Hikvision was designated as a 'Tier 1 supplier' for the People's Liberation Army's (PLA) procurement department until 2015, though Hikvision's sister company Hiklife, which is also a CETHIK subsidiary, remains listed as a supplier on the PLA procurement website. According to the same IPVM report, the PLA has certified nine Hikvision products and the two parties collaborated on a study that examined the role of Hikvision's 'video surveillance technology' in improving the performance and 'lethality' of PLA surface-to-air missiles, artillery and tanks.
HUAWEI	A 2017 Chinese media report claimed that by 2007 Huawei had established more than 300 Chinese Communist Party (CCP) branches and counted 12,000 CCP members among its employees. The company is also believed to run numerous Communist Youth League organisations. A report from a Huawei publication states that on 1 September 2000 the company's party committee organised a self-criticism and reflection meeting for R&D personnel, attended by more than 6,000 employees. At the time, Huawei had more than 1,800 CCP members and 38 CCP branches. The then party secretary, Chen Zhufang, told the audience, 'Under the leadership of the party and the government, and through ten years of arduous and outstanding entrepreneurship, Huawei has continually maintained fast growth and momentum, attaining a series of achievements. But the better our position, the more we need to maintain level headedness.' CEO Ren Zhengfei also spoke at the meeting. Huawei's party committee is currently run by Zhou Daiqi. Zhou also serves as an executive member of Huawei's supervisory board, chief ethics and compliance officer and director of the Corporate Committee of Ethics and Compliance. Neither his English nor his Chinese biography on Huawei's website mentions his role as party committee secretary, but numerous Chinese media reports and articles in Huawei's internal newspaper have described him as such. The activities of Huawei's Corporate Committee of Ethics and Compliance appear to have significant overlap with party activities. In 2017, among the 171 employees selected as candidates for the committee were seven foreign nationals. Other members of Huawei's leadership have substantial ties to the CCP: • Huawei founder and CEO Ren Zhengfei is a CCP member and was an engineer in the People's Liberation Army (PLA). While serving in the PLA, he attended the National Party Congress in 1982.

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- Citing a Chinese state media article, a 2011 [CIA Open Source Center report](#) claimed that Sun Yafang, chairwoman of Huawei from 1999 to 2018, worked for the Ministry of State Security (MSS)—China's civilian intelligence agency—before joining Huawei. The report also states that a Chinese media article claimed that Sun used her connections at the MSS to help Huawei through financial problems in its early days. When asked by a reporter about Sun's ties to the MSS, CEO Ren Zhengfei replied that her CV is openly available on the company's website. However, [Huawei's website](#) doesn't mention her time at the MSS. Sun also worked in Chinese Government research institutes.

- Huawei chief financial officer Meng Wanzhou holds at least eight different passports, including a [public affairs passport](#) normally awarded to Chinese Government employees. According to [an article](#) published by China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, public affairs passports are issued to diplomatic staff and those working in foreign affairs offices, state-owned enterprises and financial institutions where the state has a controlling interest or is a shareholder.

A [December 2020 article published](#) on iFlytek's website named Zhang Yunfei as the deputy secretary of the company's Party Committee. The article discussed the establishment of iFlytek's European and North American Overseas Educated Scholars Association of the iFlytek Overseas Educated Scholars Association. The Overseas Educated Scholars Association/ Western Returned Scholar Association is a [United Front Work Department-administered](#) association. It has also established the [China Overseas-Educated Scholars Development Foundation](#), which is registered under the Ministry of Civil Affairs and under the administration of the Central United Front Work Department.

iFlytek Chairman Liu Qingfeng is a member of the National People's Congress, China's rubber-stamp parliament. reads, 'Many party and state leaders, including Xi Jinping, Li Keqiang, Zhang Dejiang, Yu Zhengsheng, Liu Yunshan, and Zhang Gaoli, have inspected iFlytek and praised the company's innovative work'.

iFlytek has a close collaborative relationship with the Chinese Government and the Chinese Communist Party, and has helped the Ministry of Public Security to [build a national voice pattern database](#), according to Human Rights Watch. In 2017, the Shenzhen-listed company was given a significant boost when it was hand-picked by the Chinese Government to spearhead the country's development in voice-recognition technological applications. The company [also set up](#) an industry alliance with the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology to support AI-related start-ups.

iFlytek became a partly state-owned company after China Mobile struck a ¥1.36 billion (US$214.85 million) deal to become the company's largest shareholder with a 15% stake in Anhui UTC iFlytek in 2012. The deal saw China Mobile place an executive on iFlytek's strategic committee to assist with the development of strategy and investment decisions. In July 2019, the company [received a further injection of funds](#) from several state-backed and state-controlled funds. The ¥2.8 billion (US$407 million) funding boost came from a state-backed industry fund and several provincial government funds.

The company's technology has been used in 'criminal investigations, indictments and trials through work with more than 400 courts and 200 prosecutor's offices around China', [according](#)

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to Chinese media. Government procurement databases *accessed by Reuters* reveal that the company was the supplier of voiceprint-related products or services to 25 police departments in China and the Ministry of Public Security between 2014 and 2018. Eight of those police departments confirmed to *Reuters* their use of iFlytek products.

An archived page from its website says the company is working 'under the guidance of the Ministry of Public Security' to provide 'a new experience for public safety and forensic identification'.

In November 2018, iFlytek was found to be censoring politically sensitive terms such as 'Tiananmen massacre' and 'Taiwan independence' from its systems.

The former CEO of Inspur, Sun Pishu, served as deputy in the 10th, 11th, 12th and 13th National People's Congress. Because of Sun's work with Inspur, he's known as the 'Father of Server of China'. Following Sun's departure from the company in January 2021, the director and party secretary of the Shandong Provincial State-owned Assets Supervision and Administration Commission, Zhang Bin, visited Inspur and met with newly appointed Inspur Group director and party secretary Zou Qingzhong. Zhang Bin referred to Inspur as a state-owned enterprise (SOE), emphasising that adhering to CCP leadership is a unique advantage of SOEs.

A 2016 issue of *New Media* (a publication by the Chinese Culture Institute of Internet Communication) cited Inspur's involvement in a public-security project with the Jinan Public Security Bureau, in which Inspur helped the bureau to build a big-data platform. The issue also cited Inspur's involvement in upgrading the Beijing Municipal People's Government call centre by providing services from cloud servers to facilitate requests for help and appeals. Inspur was involved in another public-security project that began in 2012, in which the company was responsible for building and developing a subway's public-security surveillance and computer network.

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One of Inspur's subsidiaries, Inspur Huaguang, boasts three government support platforms for its semiconductor R&D: the Key Laboratory of Semiconductor Laser Technology Enterprise of Shandong Province, the Shandong Province High Power Semiconductor Laser Engineering Laboratory, and the Shandong Province Opto Electronics Engineering Technology Research Center. According to the company's website, Inspur Huaguang seeks employees who have participated in China's talent recruitment programs, including the Changjiang Scholars program, the '863' Expert program, the State Council Special Allowance Experts program and the Taishan Scholars program, among others.

Another Inspur subsidiary, Shandong Chaoyue Digital Control Electronics Co. Ltd, focuses on developing, producing and selling military computer products. The company primarily provides six products, including rugged laptops, rugged rackmount computers, rugged portable computers, rugged embedded computers, rugged peripheral equipment and security computers. The subsidiary is listed as a company under the national defence military industry stocks.

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MEGVII 旷视	Megvii Vice President Jiang Yan was identified on a [Datong municipal government website](#) in May 2021 and in [Chinese media](#) in January 2021 as being the company's Party Secretary. A January 2019 [article](#) (from Sohu.com, naming Megvii as its [source](#)) said Megvii held an inaugural meeting of its Party Committee on 15 January 2019. The article quoted Megvii Chairman Fu Yingbo as saying the establishment of Megvii's Party Committee was an important milestone in the company's development.

Megvii's Face++ is built into its 'SkyEye' ([天眼系统](#)) product, which includes facial recognition and vehicle recognition. Face++ [provides the ability to](#) recognise the age, gender and height of an individual, perform identity comparisons based on a known picture, create crowd heat maps, and produce the time and location of a match.

According to [PitchBook data](#) (provided to ASPI's International Cyber Policy Centre with data last updated on 8 September 2018), Megvii's current active investors include China's State-owned Assets Supervision and Administration Commission and the China Construction Bank.

A [2016 article](#) by the China Security Products Industry Association (which is supported by the Ministry of Public Security's Science and Technology Bureau) said that the primary application of Megvii's SkyEye system was to form the foundation of Safe Cities. The article reported that SkyEye was being [used by local public security bureaus](#) in Wuxi, Suzhou, Hefei and Urumqi.

In August 2019, Megvii was added to [China's 'AI national team',](#) which is a group of companies championing AI for China. Megvii has been tasked with covering image perception.

Megvii provides services to China's state-owned telecommunications providers. [The company works with China Unicom](#)'s Software Research Institute to bring customised real-person authentication into China Unicom's business processes on a selection of mobile and non-mobile platforms. For [China Telecom's Near Field Communication payment app, Best Pay (翼支付)](#), Megvii has provided its FaceID internet verification service (based on Face++ technology).

Meiya Pico 美亚柏科

In 2007, Meiya Pico established a party organisation that currently has [24 grassroots branches and 488 party members](#).

There's significant CCP interest in Meiya Pico, indicated by the visits of various party leaders to the company that are listed on its website under the heading '[Leadership concern](#)'. The company claims to have had visits from more than 30 leaders, including Hu Jintao, Wen Jiabao and Jia Qinglin. In its [own words](#), 'Meiya Pico actively embraces the new economy and carries out research and industrialisation of artificial intelligence, big data and other technologies. At the same time, it vigorously practices the national strategy of Belt and Road Initiative and military–civil fusion'.

Meiya Pico's primary customers are domestic law enforcement. Since at least 2007, the company has trained 50,000 law enforcement officers and received the title of 'National Cyber Police Training Center' from the Ministry of Public Security. Meiya Pico has trained overseas law enforcement officers not just as part of its 'global reaching out', but following the [direction of the Ministry of Public Security](#) to train countries along the Belt and Road. [It's suspected](#) that this is part of establishing a 'safety corridor' between China and Europe.

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In the first nine months of 2019, Meiya Pico received a total of ¥60,659,900 in government subsidies for various local government technology projects.

In 2017, the company's party committee and its members won various regional party awards, and its chairman, Teng Da, was re-elected as a standing committee member of the 13th Xiamen Municipal Committee of the CPPCC.

In December 2016, Meiya Pico and its wholly owned subsidiary, Xindexi (新德汇), respectively obtained Grade B and Grade A qualification certificates for confidential information systems issued by the National Administration of State Secrets Protection.

Nuctech's president, Chen Zhiqiang, is simultaneously the company's CCP party secretary. CCP members in Nuctech regularly conduct party-building activities with party members from other entities. In 2018, Li Zhijun, senior vice president of Nuctech and deputy party secretary of the company, suggested using party-building activities to advance the business.

Nuctech has close ties to China's top leadership and state-owned companies in China's defence sector. A former PRC president's son, Hu Haifeng, once served as the company's president. Nuctech's parent company, Tsinghua Tongfang, has been involved in the public safety industry, including by supplying security systems and defence products.

FoundMacro, a Nuctech subsidiary, was created in 2016 to serve the defence market. Its 'counterterrorism' products include a vehicle-mounted microwave denial system that 'assists secret arrest', an AI-enabled predictive warning surveillance system aided by sentiment analysis technology jointly developed with Russia, and nuclear radiation detection facilities and devices.

Nuctech's relationship with Tsinghua University remains close. According to information on the website of Tsinghua Holdings, 'Nuctech has been implementing an industry–academia–university model of cooperation with Tsinghua University, serving as a bridge to inject the university's state-of-the-art scientific and technological findings into products.' Some senior members of Nuctech also appear to be current staff members of Tsinghua University. In 2016, multiple sources referred to Nuctech's president, Chen Zhiqiang, as the director of the Institute of Nuclear Technology and Application and deputy director of Key Laboratory of High Energy Radiation Imaging Fundamental Science for National Defence. Both entities are based at Tsinghua. In 2018, the National Engineering Laboratory for Dangerous Articles and Explosives Detection Technologies was unveiled. According to information on the Tsinghua University website, the laboratory was jointly built by Tsinghua University and Nuctech and supervised by China's Ministry of Public Security. Nuctech president Chen Zhiqiang was appointed director of the laboratory. Nuctech's senior vice president is also deputy director of the Tsinghua-based Institute of Nuclear Technology and Application.

Ping An Technology is described on the company's website as "the core technology arm" of Ping An Group. A March 2021 article published on a Shenzhen government website (where Ping An Group is headquartered) said Ping An Group's Party Committee held a mobilisation event on the subject of the 100th anniversary of the CCP's founding. Ma Mingzhe has been identified as the leader of Ping An Group's Party Building Leading Group and as recently as 2020 as the Chairman of Ping An Group's Party committee. Ma is a co-founder of Ping An Insurance and

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chairman of the company. Chen Kexiang, also deputy general manager of Ping An Group, has been identified as Secretary of Ping An Group's Party Committee. Chen was quoted in *The Paper* on 28 May 2021 as saying that Ping An Group has 30,000 party members among its employees and nearly 1,700 party organisations. It said that, among other things, Ping An Group's party work involves integrating party building with corporate governance, business development, and risk management. According to Chen, integrating the party committee into Ping An's corporate governance structure ensures that the party committee can politically lead the company. Another 2020 article said the Party committee is involved in fulfilling the company's [corporate] social responsibilities. Multiple articles published in 2020 named Du Peng as the deputy director of Ping An Group's Party Committee and simultaneously the deputy director of Ping An group's Smart City Development Committee.

Ping An Insurance, the parent company of Ping An Technology, reportedly has financial ties to the family of former Premier Wen Jiabao. In 2004, after the State Council exempted Ping An Insurance and other companies from rules that limited their scope, Ping An went on to raise US$1.8 billion in an initial public offering of stock. In 2012, the *New York Times* alleged that partnerships controlled by relatives, friends and colleagues of Wen Jiabao had made fortunes by investing in the company before the public offering. In 2017, Wen's mother was estimated to hold US$120 million in stock through a holding company registered in Tianjin, the premier's home town.

The Zhongguancun Science Park Party Building website (a technology hub in Beijing, China's so-called 'Silicon Valley') published an article on 30 November 2020, which said Sensetime had established a Party Committee and held an inaugural ceremony.

Sensetime has also been linked to government work. In 2018, SenseTime was added to China's 'AI national team', which is a group of companies tasked with championing AI development for China. SenseTime's focus is on intelligent vision.

The company's success has been largely reliant on the largesse of the party-state, particularly its investment in Skynet and Sharp Eyes—two government projects linked to public-security surveillance and the surveillance state in Xinjiang that have benefited from an estimated US$7.2 billion worth of investment in the past two years. The funding made SenseTime one of the world's most valuable start-ups in 2018.

SenseTime CEO Xu Li claims that only 30% of SenseTime's clients are 'government-related', but experts and partners of the company told *Quartz* that the true figure is likely to be much higher.

SenseTime founder Tang Xiao'ou has talked about the importance of strengthening 'the partnership between state-owned and private companies when exploring the application of AI', adding that 'technology is not an independent industry.'

In 2020, this partnership was deepened in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, as the Chinese Government pushed for digital currency projects. For example, SenseTime partnered with the People's Bank of China's Digital Currency Research Institute, providing AI expertise for the bank's digital currency trials.

COMPANY	PARTY-STATE ACTIVITIES
腾讯 *Tencent*	Tencent's founder, chairman and CEO Pony Ma (Ma Huateng) is a member of the National People's Congress and has even given a keynote speech at book club sessions organised by the Party School of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). He's 'widely assumed' to be a supporter of the party. Tencent established a party organisation as early as 2005, followed in 2011 by a party committee in which senior vice president Guo Kaitian served as party secretary. By 2013, the company was one of the few Chinese tech firms to have publicly disclosed in English the existence of a party committee in the company. As of early 2017, the company boasted nine general branches, 89 party branches and 3,386 party members. Internally, Tencent has built an automated system within its human resources department for identifying CCP members. The company has led the way in 'party building' among internet companies. In 2016, it became the first internet company to have a nationally recognised party committee. It was the first internet company to create a party propaganda magazine (*Tengxian*), and also has a WeChat public account called 'Tencent Party Members' Home' to publicise its internal party-building efforts. A November 2017 *Wall Street Journal* report said Tencent has participated in the Party-state's censorship efforts. Users of the app running large group chats say that they've received automated warnings about politically sensitive content. Some political activists say that their WeChat accounts have been suspended or closed for posts critical of the government. It has been reported in *Foreign Policy* that the US Central Intelligence Agency believed that Tencent received funding from the Ministry of State Security early on in its foundation and regularly provides assistance to China's security services when asked to do so. Tencent denies those allegations. Tencent has also reportedly collaborated with the CCP to develop 'patriotic' video games. In one game, developed in partnership with the *People's Daily*, 'players simulate building a city while alleviating poverty and executing tax breaks'. Such actions are meant to echo real-life policies in China. Other political buzzwords such as President Xi Jinping's Belt and Road Initiative also feature.
uniview	Uniview has links to the Chinese Government and the Public Security Bureau and follows Chinese Communist Party (CCP) initiatives such as the Sharp Eyes project and the Belt and Road Initiative. In 2018, Uniview signed a strategic cooperation agreement with Tongxiang City in Jiaxing, Zhejiang, to build a new manufacturing base in the city, aiming to make 10 million video surveillance devices every year. Uniview will assist the Tongxiang government in smart city projects, policing and surveillance technologies. According to the company, around 1,400 of its cameras cover 400 police stations in Angola. It also claims that Uniview products are also available in 'more than 40 other countries' in Africa.

COMPANY	PARTY-STATE ACTIVITIES
WuXi AppTec	According to a 2013 report, WuXi chairman and CEO Li Ge has personally [commended](#) Chinese Communist Party (CCP) branch work in the company and has called on party branches and members to play an active role in the company. The same [report](#) claimed that 1,000 of 7,000 company employees were CCP members. The first party branch at WuXi was established in 2005, and 20 others were established by 2013. WuXi's party committees' work appears to be wrapped into a '[corporate social responsibility](#)' framework. Party activities also include the promotion of responsibility to the company, such as by reinforcing the responsibility of party members to be at the front line of the implementation of [corporate safety](#). Their activities include [helping other party members](#) in the company and doing volunteer work. Explicit links are made between those types of activities and the implementation of CCP mythology and ideology, such as [organising](#) work around the 'spirit of Lei Feng'. Student party members also seem to receive preferential treatment at the company. For example, in November 2019, student party members from Wuhan Donghu University [attended](#) educational activities organised by WuXi.
YITU	In 2015, YITU built the [Guizhou Provincial Public Security Department Traffic Police Real-time Operational Cloud Platform](#) in cooperation with Alibaba Cloud. In the same year, [YITU was awarded](#) the Ministry of Public Security Science and Technology Progress Award for its [Dragonfly Eye System](#). By 2016, the company had deployed its products to more than 20 provinces and served eight provincial public security departments, [according to YITU's co-founder, Lin Chenxi](#). In 2019, YITU continued to collaborate with entities under the Ministry of Public Security, despite the removal of links to the Ministry of Public Security on its official websites. One of those entities was the [Ministry of Public Security Third Research Institute](#), which is a collaboration that involved R&D in the areas of video-image protection/defence and security inspection and big-data services. YITU's smart security work extends beyond the Ministry of Public Security to include China's Customs and Immigration departments. [Within China, YITU's work](#) isn't limited to collaboration with public security units but also includes banks, hospitals and telecommunications operators. The company's '[ecosystem partners](#)' include two of China's state-owned telecom operators: China Unicom and China Mobile. In July 2019, YITU [signed an agreement](#) with China Telecom's Shanghai branch for collaboration on the public-security-focused Sharp Eyes project and the Skynet project. In August 2019, YITU was [added](#) to China's 'AI national team', which is a group of companies tasked to focus on different developing areas of AI and priorities for China. As part of the team, YITU has been tasked with covering image computing. YITU began developing chips in 2017 with its [investment in AI chip start-up Thinkforce](#). Thinkforce's development has been greatly assisted by YITU's AI algorithms. In turn, [Thinkforce has contributed significantly](#) to YITU's development of Questcore, which can be used for 'system on a chip' applications.
ZTE	Since May 2018, Tian Dongfang has served as ZTE's [party secretary](#). The appointment was [reportedly made](#) by the government of Shenzhen, where ZTE is based. Tian has been a non-executive director of the company since November 2015. Before then, [he was](#) the director of the Xi'an Microelectronics (771 Institute) and the [chief economist](#) of CASC's subsidiary, the China Academy of Aerospace

COMPANY	PARTY-STATE ACTIVITIES
	Electronics Technology. Work units within ZTE, such as the [ZTE ICT University](#) and [ZTE Foundation](#), also have party branches. Through its several party branches and [student party branches](#), the company [conducts](#) party-building activities on a regular basis.