China's big data regulation to boost healthcare, security

China is to issue its first regulation on how the big data from the health sector is collected, stored and used.

Jin Xiaotao, vice-minister of the National Health and Family Planning Commission, said the regulation will be issued soon, as the nation aims to safeguard public security.

Big data for the health industry includes patients' basic information and conditions, disease control and prevention, food safety, lifestyles and even genomes.

"This data concerns public health and national biological security," Jin said. "The new regulation is necessary, especially given that China seeks to develop healthcare data as an asset."

He said an independent management committee will be set up to ensure data security and that the regulation will define the basic rules on ownership, collection and usage.

The move comes after the State Council issued a multidepartment guideline in June to promote and regulate the use of big data in healthcare.

The guideline states that a centralized, uniform big data platform for healthcare is expected to be established by 2020 to standardize data collection, storage, reporting and security management.

"A central goal of the guideline is to improve people's health," said Jin, whose commission was among the departments that produced the document.

The guideline is also expected to play an important role in building a new economic pillar for China involving the application of big data.

Jin said the state-level strategy includes setting up a national healthcare big data center and seven regional centers as well as data research and innovation centers, which will be established with partner institutions from home and abroad.

Submersible Jiaolong completes 4th

dive in S. China Sea

Chinese submersible Jiaolong completed four dives in the South China Sea within five days. [Photo/Xinhua]

Jiaolong, China's manned submersible, conducted its fourth dive Sunday around the Zhenbei Seamount in the South China Sea.

Jiaolong stayed underwater for eight hours in its fourth dive in the second stage of China's 38th ocean scientific expedition, which will last until May 13, authorities said Monday.

The maximum depth of the dive was 1,101 meters beneath the sea surface, where it retrieved a number of basalt samples.

In the meantime, it collected a 0.7-kilogram sample of foraminifer grit at the depth of 630 meters, and brought back samples of sediments and seawater near the seabed as well as high-definition photos and video footages.

"We have also caught sight of corals, sea lilies, anemones, and large fishes like sharks above 420 meters," said Yang Gang, a senior engineer on board the submersible. Yang said that the new discoveries could shed new light on the study of the South China Sea's formation and evolution, biodiversity, and the cause of the seamount chain in the area.

Instead of using trawling as a sampling method, Jiaolong is able to conduct refined sampling mission and obtain ample samples, said Shi Xuefa, a researcher with the State Oceanic Administration.

Jiaolong has completed four dives in the South China Sea within five days.

The submersible has went through full maintenance on Monday, including its propelling and electrical systems.

"The 38th ocean scientific expedition will be the furthest and longest voyage for Jiaolong in terms of distance and time," said Wu Changbin, general commander of the second stage of the expedition. "Jiaolong will also complete the largest number of tasks since its operation."

The 38th oceanic scientific expedition started on Feb. 6. Jiaolong completed a dive in the northwestern Indian Ocean earlier this year in the mission's first stage. It will also conduct surveys in the Yap Trench and the Mariana Trench in the third stage.

Named after a mythical dragon, Jiaolong reached its deepest depth of 7,062 meters in the Mariana Trench in June 2012.

Drones will help Xinjiang fight terror

Border guards in the Xinjiang Uygur antonomous region direct a drone to patrol border areas in the region recently.

The Xinjiang Uygur autonomous region plans to deploy drones to patrol its borders as it further tightens security this year, a senior official said.

"Xinjiang will deploy drones, set up barbed wire and install surveillance cameras along the border to prevent people crossing the border illegally," Jerla Isamudin, deputy chairman of the region, said in an interview. Xinjiang needs to further enhance cooperation in exchanging terrorism-related

intelligence with neighboring countries, he said.

The region has been working on connecting People's Liberation Army border control units to the power grids since 2014 to provide an efficient electrical supply to high-tech equipment. In 2017, 29 more frontier defense companies in Xinjiang will have electricity and will not have to rely on unstable solar energy and diesel generators, PLA Daily reported in March.

Northwest China's Xinjiang neighbors eight countries, including Pakistan and Afghanistan, and it has a border of more than 5,600 kilometers. It has been China's main battleground in the fight against terrorism.

Many terrorists who carried out attacks in the region in recent years received training abroad and then entered illegally, and some also fled across the border, according to the regional police authority. Chinese authorities believe the penetration of religious extremism from abroad has prompted people to carry out violent attacks in Xinjiang and other parts of the country in recent years.

Shohrat Zakir, the region's chairman, said in January that Xinjiang would impose tighter entry-exit measures in 2017.

In 2016, the regional legislature passed a regulation on border control, which took effect in December. The regulation requires people living along border areas to report strangers to public security authorities within 24 hours. Also, those who damage surveillance equipment along the borders will be punished in accordance with the regulation.

Nayim Yassen, director of the Xinjiang People's Congress Standing Committee, the regional legislature, said the committee will examine the works on border control and give suggestions for improvements later this year. Xinjiang sees keeping the region stable as a priority.

Chen Quanguo, the region's Party chief, has said the local security situation is an important index in evaluating officials.

China's first autonomous region marks 70th birthday

Worshippers pray for good fortune during a grand memorial ritual for the 13th-century great conqueror Genghis Khan at the mausoleum of Genghis Khan in Ordos, north China's Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, April 17, 2017. The annual spring ceremony for Genghis Khan has been practiced for nearly 800 years. Worshippers stepped into the shrine, offering hada, a ceremonial silk scarf, and tea bricks, among other offerings. Genghis Khan's relics are enshrined at the site. [Xinhua]

Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, the first province-level autonomous region established in China, celebrated its 70th birthday with a gala Monday.

More than 1,000 people dressed in traditional Mongolian costumes performed dances and Mongolian music on a square in Ulanhot city in the east of the region, where the regional autonomous government was founded on May 1, 1947.

Inner Mongolia covers an area of 1.18 million sq km, about 12 percent of the country's land area. The Mongolian population is 4.6 million, nearly one-fifth of the region's total.

Over the past 70 years, the region's economy has expanded from 537 million yuan (78 million U.S. dollars) to 1.86 trillion yuan (270 billion dollars), ranking first among the country's five autonomous regions. Its foreign trade volume increased from 11 million dollars to 11.7 billion dollars over the same period.

Fire breaks out near holiday village in NE Beijing

A fire breaks out in northeast Beijing on Monday. [Photo: CCTV]

A fire broke out near the Xiedao Holiday Village in northeast Beijing on Monday.

According to footage filmed by eyewitnesses, there was thick smoke at the scene and "continuous thuds" could be heard.

Several fire trucks have been dispatched to the site, while people in the area are being evacuated.