

[China to build integrated big data center](#)

China plans to build an integrated national big data center as the country seeks to tap the value of massive data resources in a more efficient and safer way, an official said on Wednesday.

The center aims to promote better sharing of public data for wider application, especially for data in sectors such as credit, transportation, health and employment, said Zhang Feng, chief engineer of the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology (MIIT).

China will also study the formulation of a development roadmap for industrial data to push the integration of big data and manufacturing.

China will strengthen security protection in the collection, storing, application and sharing of big data.

Zhang shared the information at an MIIT conference to mark World Telecommunication and Information Society Day on May 17, with "Big Data for Big Impact" as this year's theme.

China's data volume is projected to expand at an annualized rate of over 50 percent and account for 21 percent of worldwide data by 2020.

[Statement by Federica Mogherini and Commissioner Johannes Hahn on the mandate given to Zoran Zaev to form the government of the](#)

We welcome the decision of President Ivanov to give the mandate to form a government to Mr. Zaev as an important step in the process of government formation. We hope that this constructive spirit will continue to prevail so that the country can finally come out of the political crisis. We expect now a swift formation of the government committed to implementing all parts of the Przino agreement and the Urgent Reform Priorities.

We call on all parliamentary parties to put their divisions aside and work jointly on a common reform agenda, to bring the country back on its Euro-Atlantic integration path. This is what the people want and deserve.

We stand ready to support the new government in its reform efforts.

[These figures bring home the Tories' total failure to improve the living standards of working families – John McDonnell](#)

John

McDonnell, Labour's Shadow Chancellor, commenting on today's ONS labour market statistics, said:

"These figures bring home the Tories' total failure to improve the living standards of working families.

"Real wages are lower than they were in 2010 and, after seven years of the Tories, they are now falling again.

"The choice at this election couldn't be clearer: either a Tory party presiding over a crisis in living standards or a Labour government that will build a Britain for the many, not the few."

[Sturgeon must spell out what she knew of Ahmed-Sheikh scandal](#)

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17 May 2017



Nicola Sturgeon must end her silence over allegations of financial impropriety involving a senior SNP candidate – and spell out what she knew of the growing scandal.

The Scottish Conservatives are calling on the First Minister to come clean

today after it emerged that the party's candidate for Ochil and South Perthshire, Tasmina Ahmed-Sheikh, is facing an official probe by the Law Society of Scotland.

It has been reported that the SNP knew about the probe by the Law Society before it was revealed in the press last week.

It also emerged that the SNP ignored a request for information on the allegations last week , and only replied once the deadline for nomination papers for candidates had passed.

By that point, Mrs Ahmed-Sheikh had been confirmed as the SNP candidate for Ochil and South Perthshire.

Scottish Conservative MSP Murdo Fraser said:

“This whole episode stinks.

“It’s quite clear that the SNP should withdraw all support from Mrs Ahmed-Sheikh in this election.

“However, there are now growing questions over the way Nicola Sturgeon handled this matter.

“Was the First Minister told about the investigation facing Mrs Ahmed-Sheikh? If so, why did she allow her to carry on as a candidate?

“And why did the SNP try to hide the facts of this matter last week when there was still time to replace Mrs Ahmed-Sheikh with another candidate?

“Everything here points to an official SNP cover-up going straight to Nicola Sturgeon’s door. She thought she could brush this affair under the carpet.

“The SNP must now come clean. A failure to do so will demonstrate once again that they are trying to take the voters of Scotland for a ride.”

[Beijing sees decrease in PM2.5 density in April](#)



Beijing witnessed a 22.1-percent year-on-year drop in PM2.5 density, an indicator of air pollution, in April. [Photo by Chen Boyuan/China.org.cn]

Beijing witnessed a 22.1-percent year-on-year drop in PM2.5 density, an indicator of air pollution, in April, the capital city's environment authority said Wednesday.

The average density of PM2.5, airborne particles smaller than 2.5 microns in diameter, was 53 micrograms per cubic meters in April, the lowest level during the same period over the past five years, according to the Beijing Municipal Environment Protection Bureau.

Beijing recorded 22 days with good air quality in April.

The bureau attributed the improvement to air pollution control measures and favorable weather conditions.

In April, the bureau issued fines totalling more than 10 million yuan (1.45 million U.S. dollars) on air pollution violations such as open fires, outdoor barbecues and construction dust.