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AI Taiwan

Cabinet plans to develop the nation's AI industry

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The four-year “Taiwan AI Action Plan” is part of the Cabinet’s goal to develop “smart” technology and use Taiwan’s prominent information technology and semiconductor industries to develop AI technologies and facilitate industrial transformation, Lai said.

Microsoft Corp on Wednesday last week announced plans for an AI research and development center in Taiwan, suggesting international recognition of the nation’s industrial environment, Lai said, adding that the government would bolster efforts to attract international talent and firms to turn the nation into an AI innovation hub.

The plan outlines five initiatives: cultivating talent, developing Taiwan’s niche AI, incubating local AI start-ups, reconciling laws for AI development and introducing AI technologies to industries, Executive Yuan Office of Science and Technology Executive Secretary Tsai Zse-hong (蔡志宏) said.

The office said it plans to train 1,000 advanced research and development personnel and 5,000 AI professionals by 2021.

The office is to identify AI fields in which Taiwan can develop a niche market, and build a research and development network, it said, adding that it would combine government funds with private capital to develop 100 local AI start-ups.

Bills on building a financial technology sandbox, easing employment restrictions on foreign skilled workers, developing government information security and governing uncrewed aerial vehicles have been submitted for

legislative approval, which would allow more flexibility for AI development, the office said.

It added that more than 100 AI technology solutions would be created to facilitate development of the “five plus two” innovative industries: an “Asian Silicon Valley,” “smart” machinery, “green” energy, biotechnology and national defense, as well as establishing a new agricultural business model and a circular economy.

An annual budget of up to NT\$10 billion is to be sourced from the general science and technology sector and from Forward-looking Infrastructure Development Program budgets, Tsai said.

Taiwan has the world’s leading semiconductor and information and communications technology industries, and one of the most open digital cultures under the government’s “open data” policy, giving it a competitive edge in developing machine learning and vision, natural language processing and other key AI fields, the office said.

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