

## **ASIEN 80 (Juli 2001)**

Abstract

### **China's "Government Online" and Attempts to Gain Technical Legitimacy**

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China's "Government Online Project", launched in 1999, illustrates the ambition of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) to set up an e-government. However, the real motivation behind this project is much more than just the sole establishment of service-oriented government websites. The CCP also hopes to gain technical legitimacy in the process. By highlighting the development of this project, which has not been widely publicised, and by revealing the problems the CCP encountered with it, the author attempts to prove that the CCP's endorsement of a new digital world is an attempt to gain technical legitimacy. Through such an analysis, the author also shows that because the CCP plays an increasingly proactive role as well as a reactive one, a contradiction between the need to achieve technical legitimacy and Chinese utilitarianism exists.