

COMPANIES

Alibaba opens new Hangzhou campus to be its global HQ

Massive complex, with nearly 1 million square metres of floor area, is the tech giant's largest

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Alibaba Group Holding has opened a sprawling campus in Hangzhou, its third in the Xixi area of the capital of eastern Zhejiang province, in a sign of the Chinese e-commerce giant's commitment to its home city as it grapples with fierce competition and a business restructuring.

The new complex, comprising seven buildings spanning nearly 1 million square metres of floor area, has enough office space to accommodate 30,000 employees, according to local media reports. It is the largest campus of Alibaba, owner of the Post.

30,000

Number of employees who can be accommodated in Alibaba's giant new complex in Hangzhou. It will serve as the company's global HQ

On Thursday, a day before Alibaba's annual family and employee celebration known as AliDay, the company republished on the online forum of its flagship e-commerce platform, Taobao, a post written by co-founder Jack Ma in 2004.

"The biggest beneficiaries of a true, great and outstanding e-commerce website should be its users, and its biggest builders should also be its users," Ma wrote, drawing many new comments after Alibaba revived the forum recently.

Alibaba's top executives were

not seen at the new office launch, which coincided with AliDay, when families of employees are invited to visit the company. The event comes days before the firm releases results for its financial year ended March 31.

The campus, which contains smart and green features, a football pitch and other sports facilities, will serve as Alibaba's global headquarters.

The existing Xixi Area A campus will turn into the headquarters of Taobao, Tmall and other domestic e-commerce businesses, while Xixi Area B will transform into an "open park" for Alibaba's business partners, the company said.

Yesterday, Alibaba also unveiled a new campus in Beijing's Chaoyang district, which is expected to house nearly 19,000 employees, according to the official Beijing Daily newspaper.

In China, shiny office buildings of Big Tech companies often become landmarks in the cities where they exist.

Tencent Holdings, for instance, is building a new campus in Shenzhen that is nicknamed Penguin City.

The headquarters of Sohu, operator of one of the country's earliest web portals, has drawn artificial intelligence start-ups to Zhongguancun, a Beijing district known as China's Silicon Valley.

Alibaba has long played an important role in the economy of Hangzhou, where Ma originally hails from.

The new headquarters, based on a concept of "green, technological and sustainable", features smart office systems with cutting-edge technologies, such as Internet of Things and artificial intelligence, according to Alibaba.