

China's 1st deep underground lab now operational for dark matter



China's first deep underground lab put into service for dark matter on Dec. 12.
(Photo by Chinanews.com)

China's first deep underground laboratory was formally put into service in Jinpin hydropower station in Sichuan Province on Dec. 12, which means China now possesses an independent cutting-edge underground scientific research and experimental platform in physics.

Cheng Jianping, director of the project, said the lab is currently the deepest underground lab in the world with vertical rock coverage of 2,400 meters.

Experts from the project said the deep underground laboratory is of great importance for research of major leading basic research topics, including dark matter, particle physics, nuclear physics, neutrino physics, astrophysics and cosmology, and is a sound environment for research of rock mechanics, earth structure, ecology, low-level radioactive materials and nuclear radiation detection for environmental protection.

Experts from the China Institute of Atomic Energy, Tsinghua University, Sichuan University and the Ertan Hydropower Development Company formed a cooperation group to conduct dark matter detection experiments using a germanium detector made by germanium crystal material with the highest purity in the world. The lab's first research on dark matter is expected to be completed in 2011.

By Li Mu, People's Daily Online

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A germanium detector made by germanium crystal material with the highest purity in the world. (Photo by Chinanews.com)

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