

China receives data from first X-ray space telescope



A Long March-4B rocket carrying X-ray space telescope to observe black holes, pulsars and gamma-ray bursts blasts off from Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center in northwest China's Gobi Desert, June 15, 2017. [Photo/Xinhua]

China Friday received the first package of data from its x-ray space telescope launched Thursday, according to the Institute of Remote Sensing and Digital Earth of the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS).

The package of high quality data with a total size of 2.1 gigabytes was received by the remote sensing satellite station in northwest China's Kashgar, before being transferred to the CAS National Space Science Center.

The ground stations in Beijing's Miyun District and south China's Sanya also tracked the signals from the telescope.

Weighing 2.5 tonnes, the Hard X-ray Modulation Telescope, dubbed Insight, was launched via a Long March-4B rocket from Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center in northwest China's Gobi Desert at 11 a.m. Thursday.

In the following five days, other components of Insight will start working in succession.

After five months of in-orbit tests and calibrations, the telescope will be officially put into use to conduct broadband x-ray space observations. Its main tasks are to observe black holes, pulsars and gamma-ray bursts.

Kicking off in March 2011, the Insight project was jointly carried out by the State Administration of Science, Technology and Industry for National Defence and the CAS, and is a crucial part of China's high-energy astrophysics space research.