First Deep-sea Research Institute Opens in Sanya

After five years of preparation, China's first deep-sea research institute passed acceptance inspection on May 10, 2016 and was officially opened in Sanya, South China's Hainan Province, which will hopefully boost the nation's deep-sea research and naval technology as well as marine resources exploitation.

The Institute of Deep-Sea Science and Engineering (IDSSE), jointly sponsored by the Hainan Provincial Government, Sanya Municipality and the Chinese Academy of Sciences, will take advantage of its unique geological location to build up a national strategic base for deep sea research and development, and an interdisciplinary and cross-institutional experimental platform by combining science, engineering and technology to serve China's deep sea research community.

"The deep sea has a wealth of resources including mineral, biotic and petroleum resources, and there are more than 40 billion tons of petroleum in the South China Sea alone," Said GAO Shu, director of the School of Geographic and Oceanographic Sciences at Nanjing University. "It is of great necessary to enhance scientific research capabilities there."

According to WANG Xiaopeng, a researcher from the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, "China is a big country both in land and in sea. However, in the past, China has put more emphasis on the development on land. The opening of this institute shows that the exploitation of ocean resources has come to a new stage for China."

Since 2012, scientists from CAS have launched several research projects related to the South China Sea, including scientific voyages in the area.

On May 5, the mother ship for a new deep-sea submersible was delivered to CAS in Guangzhou, South China's Guangdong Province. To be operated and managed by IDSSE, the 94-meter Tansuo 1 (Exploration 1) has a fully loaded displacement of 6,250 tons and can reach down to a depth of 4,500 meters under the sea. It is expected to dive to the Mariana Trench for a research mission in the near future.