

China names asteroids after astronauts

March 19 2007

Authorities at the Purple Mountain Observatory under the Chinese Academy of Sciences have named two asteroids after Chinese astronauts.

The state-run Xinhua news agency said that the honored astronauts -- Fei Junlong and Nie Haisheng -- are known for being aboard China's second manned space mission in 2005.

Yang Jiexing, secretary of the asteroids naming committee in the observatory, told Xinhua that the naming decision has been approved by the International Astronomical Union.

China's first manned spacecraft, the Shenzhou V, lifted off in October 2003.

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