

Taiwan names small astral body

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Astronomers in Taiwan have named a small astral body they discovered between Mars and Jupiter Chiayi after the county where their observatory is located.

The International Committee on Small Body Nomenclature approved Lulin Observatory's application to give the 1.5-mile diameter chunk of rock a formal name Sept. 26, The China Post reported Tuesday. It takes Chiayi about 3.62 years to revolve around the sun.

It marks the first time a celestial body has been named after a city or county in Taiwan, the newspaper said.

Lin Hung-ching, director of the observatory, said more than 450 planets have been charted by the observatory so far. Six of the mini planets have been confirmed by the International Minor Planet Center and National Central University owns the right to name four of the newly discovered bodies.

The observatory, which is affiliated with National Central University, is located in Yushan National Park.

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