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## Moving day



China's space station lab module Wentian sits atop a Long March-5B Y3 carrier rocket in Wenchang, Hainan province, on Monday. The module and rocket were later moved to the launch area, the China Manned Space Agency said, adding that Wentian will soon be put into orbit. [TU HAICHAO / FOR CHINA DAILY](#) [See story, page 5](#)

## Research lab prepares launch to space

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China's Wentian space laboratory and its carrier — a Long March 5B rocket — were moved to a service tower on Monday morning to undergo final tests before their planned flight in the coming days, according to the China Manned Space Agency.

The agency said in a brief statement that prelaunch preparations will begin at the Wenchang Space Launch Center in the southernmost island province of Hainan. No other details were provided.

The agency also unveiled the mission's logo on Monday.

Wentian, or "Quest for the Heavens", will be the Tiangong space station's first lab component. The craft weighs more than 20 metric tons and is about six stories tall.



Logo for the Wentian mission

It mainly will be used to perform biological and life science tasks and will support research on the growth, aging and genetic traits of plants, animals and microbes in space, said Lin Xiqiang, deputy head of the China Manned Space Agency.

To prepare for Wentian's arrival, the Tianzhou 3 cargo spacecraft detached from Tiangong on Sunday morning so its docking hatch can receive the lab. Tianzhou, which was launched in September 2021 and had remained connected to

Tiangong since, will be guided back to Earth by ground controllers.

Currently, Tiangong consists of the Tianhe core module, the Tianzhou 4 and the Shenzhou XIV spacecraft. Its current occupants — three astronauts who are part of the Shenzhou XIV mission — arrived in the station in mid-June and are scheduled to remain at the station until year's end.

A second lab named Mengjian, or "Dreaming of the Heavens", will be sent in October.

After both labs are connected with the Tiangong, the station will form a T-shaped structure, and astronauts will have as much as 110 cubic meters in their usable space.

After the labs, the Tianzhou 5 cargo craft and the Shenzhou XV crew are scheduled to arrive at the massive orbiting outpost around the end of the year.