

China's satellite launch city aims to be global wind power giant

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The northwest Chinese city of Jiuquan, famous as the nation's satellite launch center, has been busy with a new mission to exploit its rich wind energy resources in the hopes of becoming a global giant in the field of renewable energy.

Altogether 28 new wind farms, with a combined installed capacity of 10.65 million kilowatts, will be built around Jiuquan, a far-flung Gobi desert city by the year 2015.

Wang Jianxin, chief of the development and reform commission of Jiuquan City, said the city's plan to construct a wind power base of more than 10 million kw had just passed scrutiny by China Hydropower and Water Resource Designing Institute.

"We hope to accomplish a new Three Gorges Project on land," said Wang, "for long-term development, the Jiuquan wind power base could be expanded to have a combined installed capacity of 35.65 million kw."

Jiuquan is a region rich in potential wind energy resources. Latest statistics given by the meteorological departments show wind energy reserve in Jiuquan is placed at 150 million kw, of which, 40 million kw is exploitable. And the applicable land covers nearly 10,000 sq km.

Liu Shengping, deputy chief with the energy affairs office of the development and reform commission of Jiuquan City, estimated that the massive wind power development would need a budget of some 120 billion yuan (\$17.14 billion).

"More than 20 large Chinese enterprises have made investments or sent representatives to make inspection tours," said Liu, who declined to give an exact amount of investment his city had attracted for the wind power development.

To ensure a stable operation of the local power grid, the city will have to construct new thermal power projects, with the generating capacity totalling 13.6 million kw, by the year 2020 in tandem with the wind power base's generating capacity, according to Wang.

Jiuquan city began to build wind farms for catching energy in 1996, but the progress has been slow. It is now home to five large wind power farms, with an installed capacity totalling 410,000 kw.

http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/bizchina/2008-05/06/content_6664106.htm