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Father of psychedelic drug celebrates 100th birthday

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GENEVA, Jan. 11 (Xinhuanet) -- Albert Hofmann, the Swiss scientist who discovered the psychedelic drug LSD (lysergic acid diethylamide), turns 100 years old on Wednesday.

Swiss President Moritz Leuenberger congratulated Hofmann on his birthday and saluted him as a "great researcher of the human consciousness".

To mark Hofmann's centenary, an international symposium on LSD will be held in Basel from January 13-15. Hofmann, who is in excellent health, and more than 80 other experts are expected to attend the event.

Hofmann discovered LSD in 1938 while working for the Basel-based pharmaceutical company, Sandoz (which later merged with Ciba-Geigy to become Novartis).

LSD, one of the most potent hallucinogenic substances, where the senses, perceptions and moods are intensified and distorted, was once a well-respected treatment for a variety of psychiatric disorders.

Hofmann continued his research and Sandoz produced and sold the first LSD tablets in 1947, mainly as a treatment for alcoholism and other psychological disorders.

LSD later became popular as a recreational drug, especially in the United States. Its widespread use caused an outcry, which eventually led to a worldwide ban at the end of the 1960s. It also gradually fell out of favor in the medical world and Sandoz stopped producing it in 1966. Enditem

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