

CHINA

First crew of space station recovering well

Shenzhou XII astronauts now under observation ahead of return to training

By ZHANG YANGFEI
zhangyangfei@chinadaily.com.cn

The three astronauts involved in the Shenzhou XII mission have recovered well after their 3-month spaceflight and will return to regular training once related health assessments are completed.

Major General Jing Haipeng, another astronaut, said on Tuesday the post-spaceflight recovery period has three phases: isolation, convalescence and observation.

The three Shenzhou XII astronauts — Major General Nie Haisheng, Major General Liu Boming and Senior Colonel Tang Hongbo — have completed the convalescence phase. They are emotionally stable and in good psychological condition. Their weight has been maintained at the level before the spaceflight and their muscle strength, endurance and cardiopulmonary level have recovered well and achieved expected results.

“At present, we are carrying out special medical examinations and experimental data collection according to plan,” Jing said, adding that the crew had entered the last recovery phase.

The Shenzhou XII crew, commanded by Nie, spent 92 days in space after the spacecraft was launched on June 17 on a Long March 2F carrier rocket, setting a new national record for the longest human spaceflight.

They performed two spacewalks during their stay in the Tiangong — Heavenly Palace — space station, as well as a number of scientific experiments and technological tests, before returning to Earth on Sept 17.

Nie and his crew members were

“At present, we are carrying out special medical examinations and experimental data collection according to plan.”

Jing Haipeng, Chinese astronaut

the first inhabitants of China's new space station.

They were followed by the three-astronaut crew of Shenzhou XIII, which was launched in October.

Shenzhou XII was China's seventh manned space mission.

The space station currently comprises the Tianhe core module, which was launched in April. Two more modules and two more manned missions are scheduled to dock with the Tiangong station next year.

Nie has flown in three manned missions and is the first Chinese astronaut to have stayed in space for more than 100 days.

He said each of the three missions brought him a new experience and he has experienced increasing comfort and reliability, more space for activities and a wider variety of food during each stay in space.

“This all thanks to the hard work of all space science and technology workers,” he said.

Nie said the three crew members had started to perform some technical recovery training to prepare for future missions and will continue to learn more about the space station in case they have the chance to visit it again.

Ningbo outbreak



Community workers deliver daily necessities for residents quarantined due to a COVID-19 outbreak in Ningbo, Zhejiang province, on Tuesday. The city reported one confirmed case and two asymptomatic carriers on Monday and another five people tested positive for the virus on Tuesday. HU XUEJUN / FOR CHINA DAILY

Milestone mission for private rocket

By ZHAO LEI
zhaolei@chinadaily.com.cn

Galactic Energy, a carrier rocket maker in Beijing, has become the first private enterprise in China to have conducted two orbital missions that placed satellites in outer space.

The company's CERES 1 Y2 rocket, the second of its kind, blasted off at 12:12 pm Tuesday at the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center in Northwest China's Gobi Desert and flew for about 14 minutes before deploying five small satellites into sun-synchronous orbits about 500 kilometers above the Earth, the private startup said in a statement.

The payloads lifted by the rocket are two scientific experimental satellites, two remote-sensing satellites and an infrared Earth-observation satellite.

The mission marked the first time a privately built Chinese rocket has successfully completed two orbital launches. The SQX 1 rocket developed by i-Space, another Beijing-based private rocket company, previously failed in its second orbital launch attempt.

Tuesday's launch was also the first successful launch by the country's private space sector this year.

An orbital mission is a spaceflight by a carrier rocket that deploys payloads into an orbit in outer space. In addition to i-Space and Galactic Energy, other Chinese private enterprises have also attempted orbital missions, a threshold for any serious newcomer in the global space sector that was first crossed by the United States' SpaceX.

CERES 1 made its debut flight in November last year from the Jiuquan center, becoming the second privately developed Chinese carrier rocket to successfully realize an orbital mission, after i-Space's SQX 1.

A CERES 1 is about 20 meters tall, has a diameter of 1.4 meters and is mainly propelled by solid propellant. With a liftoff weight of 33 metric tons, it is capable of sending a 300-kilogram satellite, or several satellites with a combined weight of 300 kg, to a 500-km sun synchronous orbit, or 350-kg payloads to a low-Earth orbit at an altitude of 200 km.

The rocket is ideal for domestic and foreign clients seeking a small, cost-efficient launch vehicle to deploy mini satellites, designers said.

Galactic Energy was established in February 2018 by some engineers from State-owned space conglomerates.

Its engineers are now designing the Pallas 1, a larger, liquid-propellant rocket model that can be reused, Xia Dongkun, a vice-president of Galactic Energy, said.

He said design of the new rocket's engine has been finalized and ground tests will soon start.

“We plan to complete the development of Pallas 1 and perform its maiden flight in the first half of 2023,” he said at the company's Beijing headquarters after Tuesday's launch.

“In 2022, we will strive to carry out five to six commercial launches of the CERES 1.”

Wu Peixin, an industry observer in Beijing, said Tuesday's successful launch will inject momentum and confidence into China's private space sector and will see private space companies attract more attention and resources.

Briefly

BEIJING

Murder suspect to be sent back to Taiwan

A murder suspect who fled to the Chinese mainland after allegedly gunning down a man in Taiwan will be sent back to the island after finishing quarantine at a mainland hotel, a mainland spokesman said on Tuesday. The suspect, a Taiwan resident surnamed Huang, allegedly shot a man dead in New Taipei City on the island on Nov 22. He took a flight from Taiwan to Xiamen, Fujian province, that day and is now staying in a quarantine hotel, Taiwan media reported. Ma Xiaoguang, a spokesman for the Taiwan Affairs Office of the State Council, said police in Xiamen had launched an investigation and the suspect had confessed to the shooting. To crack down on violent crimes, safeguard the lives and property of people on both sides of the Taiwan Straits and maintain cross-Straits relations, Xiamen police decided to send the suspect back to Taiwan, he said.

ZHEJIANG

Hangzhou reports two new COVID-19 cases

Hangzhou, the capital of East China's Zhejiang province, reported two new locally transmitted confirmed cases of COVID-19 on Tuesday, local authorities said. One was a close contact of a previously reported COVID-19 patient outside the city. It is the first batch of confirmed cases registered in Hangzhou since autumn amid a resurgence of the novel coronavirus. One of the city's patients visited other cities on Dec 1 and Dec 2 and the other patient was living with that patient in Hangzhou. Both of them tested positive for the virus on Tuesday afternoon and were diagnosed as mild cases.

SHANGHAI

Measures to support female sci-tech talent

Shanghai has rolled out a series of measures to support female talent in playing a greater role in scientific and technological innovation. Launched by 17 local departments, the measures include recommending female talent to work in international sci-tech organizations, raising their retirement age and allowing them to have deadline delays during pregnancy and nursing periods. The measures particularly support female scientists to make achievements in the fields of integrated circuits, biomedicine and artificial intelligence.

CHINA DAILY — XINHUA

Bridge goes boom



A bridge in Chongqing's Banan district is demolished by an explosion on Tuesday to make way for a new urban railway line. A new, lower bridge will be built at the site. CHEN CHAO / CHINA NEWS SERVICE

PATH TO GLORY | RURAL VITALIZATION

Training boosts incomes of Zhijin county 'seamstresses'

By LUO WANGSHU
luowangshu@chinadaily.com.cn

More than 1,000 women from Zhijin county in southwestern China's Guizhou province who are proficient in embroidery and batik making have received training to better promote the local arts and earn more income since 2012.

Local women often learn embroidery and batik making, the traditional handicrafts of the Miao ethnic group, when they are young.

Miao embroidery and batik are important parts of Chinese intangible cultural heritage, but many of the women making the delicate handicrafts lived in poverty because they did not know how to sell their work at a good price.

The training, supported by the All-China Federation of Industry

and Commerce, is part of a campaign it launched to support the county's rural vitalization.

Zhijin county, which has a population of 1.25 million, was lifted out of poverty last year, but the assistance relationship has continued.

By August, 318 enterprises had established paired assistance relationships with 332 villages in Zhijin.

Companies stepped in to help promote the handicrafts, with “seamstresses in Zhijin county” becoming a calling card that has helped increase local incomes. Many women from Zhijin have begun selling their works on livestreamed social platforms.

Guizhou's rural vitalization commission said since a paired assistance relationship was established between the federation and Zhijin 27 years ago, 175 million yuan (\$27 mil-

lion) has been invested in the county. More than 60 projects have been carried out to reduce poverty, benefiting over 50,000 local residents.

A poverty alleviation program carried out by the federation from the end of 2018 donated an acacia tree, a pig and a cow to each poor family and also helped the family dig a well and renovate their house if needed. The 53 million yuan program helped build 1,890 cisterns to assist 1,890 households, with over 8,000 residents gaining access to clean drinking water.

Some villagers previously had to carry water from remote areas, with a round trip taking an entire morning. Villagers from Tianba village in Zhijin gained access to tap water thanks to the program.

In a letter they wrote to the federation in 2019, they said: “According

to an old Chinese saying, ‘people who drink water should never forget who dug the well’ ... we are very grateful and will make a better life out of it.”

A total of 679 houses have been renovated, benefiting more than 2,900 residents.

The program also made donations to help build village sewers and install street lamps, as well as buying medicine and down jackets for people in need. Students in high schools and vocational schools also received financial assistance from it.

Fifteen training projects have been carried out since 2012 for grassroots village officials and business operators. The federation has also collaborated with big technology firms to carry out e-commerce training to help villagers open and operate online stores to sell local products.

Hong Kong's new electoral system expected to better serve residents' interests

By CHEN SHUMAN in Hong Kong
shumanchen@chinadailyhk.com

Hong Kong's democracy under the revamped electoral system will better serve residents' interests, as more talented patriots committed to improving people's livelihoods are expected in the new Legislative Council, political heavyweights and representatives from various sectors said on Tuesday.

Their remarks came after Xia Baolong, director of the Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office of the State Council, said at a local event on Monday that blind pursuit of Western-style democracy had brought more harm than benefits to Hong Kong.

Xia also said that the revamped electoral system in Hong Kong is expected to bring diversity and balanced participation to the Legislative Council.

Speaking ahead of the weekly Executive Council meeting, Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Chief Executive Carrie Lam Cheng Yuet-ngor agreed with Xia, saying that there is no one-size-fits-all democracy.

“What's the point of having the so-called democracy if people are suffering?” Lam said.

Lam said Hong Kong's democracy must follow what is provided for in the Basic Law, which was promulgated by the National People's Congress,

China's top legislature. She said that Hong Kong operates under the principle of “one country, two systems”, and will continue to abide by it.

She vowed that the Legislative Council election, which will be held on Dec 19, will be “fair and open”.

Lam said she fully agreed with Xia's remarks on the improvements in the electoral system, which emphasize the principles of “patriots administering Hong Kong”, respecting diversity and having more candidates with different backgrounds.

Lam said she expects the new Legislative Council to be more rational and prepared to cooperate with the executive branch to further

the interests of Hong Kong.

Maria Tam Wai-chu, deputy director of the Hong Kong SAR Basic Law Committee of the National People's Congress Standing Committee, said that Hong Kong's pursuit of Western-style democracy in the past resulted in social rifts and antagonism, for which the city had paid a great price.

Now it's necessary to concentrate on the implementation of “patriots administering Hong Kong” to ensure that the city's governance will center on the interests of its people, Tam said.

Daryl Ng Win-kong, chairman of the Greater Bay Area Homeland Youth Community Foundation, said

the new electoral system has helped realize a true modern democracy that conforms to the common interests of the vast majority in Hong Kong.

Noting that the system has brought more diversified, professional and peaceful political participation in the city, Ng said he is glad to see that candidates have put forward practical political platforms that can truly contribute to the well-being of Hong Kong people.

The election will see a record 4.5 million registered voters return 90 legislators in three different constituencies: geographical, functional and Election Committee.

Over 50,000 Hong Kong SAR gov-

ernment staff members have been mobilized to help out on election day — the most ever — with over 38,000 volunteering to serve at polling stations and during vote-counting and another 12,630 support staff members from departments such as the police and the Independent Commission Against Corruption.

For the first time, Hong Kong voters living on the Chinese mainland have registered to vote, with 18,215 having done so by 6 pm on Monday.

They will be able to vote at temporary polling stations at Lo Wu, Lok Ma Chau and Heung Yuen Wai — the city's three border checkpoints.