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## Astronauts honored for Shenzhou XII mission

By ZHAO LEI  
zhaolei@chinadaily.com.cn

The three crew members of the Shenzhou XII mission were awarded medals on Tuesday to honor their contributions.

The Communist Party of China Central Committee, the State Council and the Central Military Commission issued a joint statement on Tuesday saying that the top authorities had conferred a First-class Space Service Medal on Major General Nie Haisheng, a Second-class Space Service Medal on Major General Liu Boming and a Third-class Space Service Medal on Senior Colonel Tang Hongbo. Tang was also named a "Heroic Astronaut," an honorary title Nie and Liu have already received.

Nie was commander of the Shenzhou XII mission while Liu and Tang were crew members. They are members of the People's

Liberation Army Astronaut Division, which is headquartered in northwestern Beijing.

The Shenzhou XII was launched on June 17 by a Long March 2F rocket from the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center in northwestern China's Gobi Desert. It was the first manned flight to visit the country's permanent space station, named Tiangong, or Heavenly Palace.

As its first inhabitants, the crew flew for 90 days in the space station and made two spacewalks, using a large robotic arm and other equipment to install and adjust devices outside the station. They also performed a number of scientific experiments and technological tests, and made video calls with President Xi Jinping and hundreds of researchers, teachers and students in Hong Kong.

Their work laid a solid foundation for the next steps in the Tiangong program, which aims to build



Artist Hu Shiyue (left) displays her paintings of Chinese astronauts on Tuesday at a venue in Taiyuan, Shanxi province.

WEI LIANG / CHINA NEWS SERVICE

a multisection space station by 2022, space experts said.

They returned to Earth on Sept 17 as their reentry capsule touched down at the Dongfeng Landing Site in the Inner Mongolia autonomous region.

The statement called the astronauts outstanding representatives of Chinese science and technology

professionals, space industry workers and PLA service members, who used their wisdom and devotion to make Shenzhou XII a complete success.

The CPC Central Committee urged the Chinese people to learn from their spirit and contributions in order to work harder for the Party and the country.

## Satellite launched to assist in ocean surveillance

By ZHAO LEI  
zhaolei@chinadaily.com.cn

China launched a high-resolution Earth-observation satellite from the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center in Northwest China on Tuesday to improve its ocean surveillance capability.

The Gaofen 3-02 satellite was launched by a Long March 4C carrier rocket at 7:45 am and entered a sun-synchronous orbit at an altitude of 755 kilometers, the China National Space Administration said.

The satellite carries a C-band synthetic aperture radar, which has a 1-meter imaging resolution, and is tasked with working with its predecessor — Gaofen 3-01 — to form a land-sea radar satellite network.

Gaofen 3-01 was launched in August 2016.

Gaofen 3-02's service is expected to strengthen capabilities in monitoring ship movements, emergencies at sea and the land-sea environment. It will help protect China's marine interests, prevent and mitigate marine disasters, enable researchers to better study the dynamic marine environment, and will also serve other fields such as environmental protection, water conservancy, agriculture and meteorology, the administration said in a statement.

Developed by the China Academy of Space Technology, a subsidiary of State-owned conglomerate China Aerospace Science and Technology Corp, Gaofen 3-02 has better imaging and target-tracking capabilities than Gaofen 3-01. It also has a device its predecessor does not — an automatic identification system that can receive identification signals sent by a moving ship, including position, course and speed data.

China launched the Gaofen program in May 2010 and listed it as one of 16 nationally important projects in science and technology. The program has established a massive space-based, high-resolution Earth observation network with more than 20 satellites in service.

Images and data from the Gaofen satellites have been widely used in more than 20 industries across China and have helped reduce the country's dependence on foreign remote-sensing products. More than 80 percent of satellite images that China needed to buy from foreign countries have been replaced by Gaofen products, said Tong Xudong, chief designer of the Gaofen program at the China National Space Administration.