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Astronauts (from right) Deng Qingming, Fei Junlong and Zhang Lu receive astronaut dolls from reporters at a press meet on Shenzhou XV manned mission in Beijing on Monday. XU BU / FOR CHINA DAILY

## Space crew share memorable moments

By **WANG JIANFEN**  
[wangj@chinadaily.com.cn](mailto:wangj@chinadaily.com.cn)

The three astronauts from China's Shenzhou XV manned mission met with the press on Monday, in their first public appearance since returning to Earth 57 days ago.

Mission commander Major General Fei Junlong, Senior Colonel Deng Qingming and Senior Colonel Zhang Lu have completed quarantine and recuperation, the first two stages in their period of recovery after landing, and are currently in good physical and mental condition, according to a news conference held at the Astronaut Center of China in Beijing.

They have now moved to the observation stage, the final leg of the recovery process, and will resume regular training after completing health assessments.

As the fourth group of astronauts to be stationed aboard the Tiangong space station, Fei and his teammates took off from the Jiuquan Satellite

Launch Center in northwestern China at 11:08 pm on Nov 29 and returned at 6:33 am on June 4.

During their 188-day stay in space, they observed the completion of the in-orbit assembly of Tiangong.

"It was a great honor for me to witness the historic completion of the space station," 58-year-old mission commander Fei said. He also participated in China's second manned space mission in October 2005.

When asked about the mission's most memorable moments, Fei mentioned the two in-orbit handovers between crews, the first of which raised the number of crew aboard the station to six for the first time. They made the second handover before they returned to the Earth.

Team member Deng trained for 25 years before he finally got an opportunity to travel to space. "Twenty-five is a number that makes me feel extremely happy," the 57-year-old said.

Coincidentally, the distance from

their living quarters to the location of the see-off ceremony on the day of launch was 25 meters, according to Deng, who is the last serving member among the 14 first-generation Chinese astronauts to have visited space.

"Fulfilling my dream does not spell the end of my efforts, but is a new starting point for me," Deng said.

He said that the crew conducted four spacewalks, completed the installation and testing of 15 scientific cabins, and carried out some 40 experiments and verifications in fields such as aerospace medicine.

Zhang, 46, said that he was eager to return to his hometown for the first time in six years. "From the space station, 400 kilometers above the Earth, the three of us often gazed at the planet, searching for our motherland and hometowns."

Zhang was the only member of the seven second-generation astronauts without space experience prior to the mission.