



Rapid response

Shenzhou XXII deployment
averted potential emergency

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VISUAL



Left: Technicians clean gas pipe valves at the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center on Nov 9. LI MINGTANG / XINHUA **Below:** A Long March 2F Y22 rocket is moved into position for the launch test on Nov 8. LI MINGTANG / FOR CHINA DAILY **Right:** Firefighters inspect a water pump station at the launch site on Nov 13. YANG JUNJIE / XINHUA



Left: The Shenzhou XXII spacecraft is readied to be hoisted onto a road transport vehicle at the factory on Nov 12. SONG YINGAO / XINHUA **Right:** The launch escape tower is transported to the launch site on Nov 18. PAN ZHAOQI / XINHUA

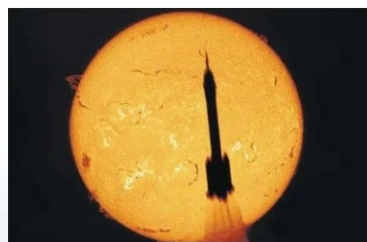


MOMENT OF TRUTH

Quick deployment of Shenzhou XXII averts potential emergency in orbit



Real-time footage of the rendezvous and docking process between the Shenzhou XXII spacecraft and the space station complex, taken at the Beijing Aerospace Control Center on Nov 25. WANG CHUNTAO / XINHUA



The Long March-2F Y22 rocket carrying the Shenzhou XXII is silhouetted with the sun behind on Nov 25. OPTIC MEASUREMENT TEAM OF THE JIUQUAN SATELLITE LAUNCH CENTER / FOR CHINA DAILY

By CHINA DAILY

At 12:11 pm (Beijing time) on Nov 25, a Long March 2F Y22 rocket blasted off from the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center in Northwest China. It carried the Shenzhou XXII spacecraft, embarking on a mission that marked a significant milestone in China's manned spaceflight program. Some 10 minutes after launch, the spacecraft successfully separated from the rocket and entered its designated orbit, marking the triumphant completion of China's first emergency launch mission.

The need for this unprecedented mission arose on Nov 5, when the Shenzhou XX spacecraft encountered an unex-

pected delay in its return. It was suspected to have been struck by a small piece of space debris and was deemed unfit to fly after tiny cracks were discovered on the viewport window of its return capsule.

In response, the mission command center swiftly activated its contingency plans. Engineers and scientists across the program worked seamlessly together, demonstrating remarkable composure and scientific acumen. Within a span of just 20 days, they conducted a thorough risk analysis and evaluation, deliberated on and decided upon the best course of action, coordinated the movement of personnel and materials, and facilitated the crew's transfer to a new spacecraft for their return.



A Long March 2F Y22 rocket carrying the Shenzhou XXII spacecraft is launched from the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center on Nov 25. LI MINGTANG / FOR CHINA DAILY