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Astronauts encourage nation's youth

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The three Chinese astronauts on board the Tiangong space station encouraged youth on Monday to be more creative, inquisitive, and driven to learn and pursue their dreams of exploring the universe.

Nie Haisheng, Liu Boming and Tang Hongbo made the call in a video message for the opening of a new exhibition on the Chinese space station at the China Science and Technology Museum in Beijing. They were sent into space aboard the Shenzhou XII spacecraft on June 17 for their three-month mission.

Addressing hundreds of elementary school students at the exhibition, Nie said many young Chinese dream of becoming an astronaut and exploring the cosmos.

"We hope everyone can stay true to their aspiration, be innovative and inquisitive," he said. "Let's learn scientific knowledge and sail together into the stars, thus contributing to humanity's peaceful development and use of space."

The astronauts also unveiled three proposed research topics that will be spearheaded by China's youth. The selected experiments will be sent to the Chinese space station and be carried out by future astronauts.

The topics include evaluating the effects of the space environment on human life, exploring new designs and configurations for future space stations, and figuring out how to process and package more Chinese deli-



Yang Liwei (second left), China's first astronaut in outer space, is given a painting of a spacewalk by students attending the opening ceremony of an exhibition on the Chinese space station in Beijing on Monday. **WEI XIAOHAO / CHINA DAILY**

cacies into space food for astronauts.

"We hope our teenagers can exercise their creativity and curiosity when tackling these topics," Nie said.

Yang Liwei, the first astronaut from China to venture into outer space, said that the nation's teenagers should pursue their dreams with hope and actions, and contribute to transforming China into a global powerhouse of space exploration.

Zhang Yuzhuo, secretary of the Leading Party Members Group of the China Association for Science and Technology, said the passion displayed by the nation's youth for becoming astronauts is also a passion for exploring the unknown.

"Passion is the fire that kindles dreams," he said. The space station is

the frontier outpost of humanity's space exploration, he said, adding the exhibition will give teenagers a fascinating and close look at China's space technologies, thus instilling in them a love for science and a drive to be innovative and explore.

The centerpiece of the exhibition is a life-size prototype of the Tianhe core module of the Chinese space station, where astronauts will live and conduct experiments in space. The event will also feature a team of renowned Chinese space experts and explorers as science communicators, headed by astronaut Wang Yaping.

The exhibition has been organized by the China Manned Space Agency and the China Science and Technology Museum.