



Risky journey

Recent deaths expose medical inadequacies at US border

WORLD, PAGE 11

Regulator vows more oversight of insurance

BUSINESS, PAGE 13

Cultural bond

Festival gathers ASEAN musicians, Guangxi ethnic performers LIFE, PAGE 16



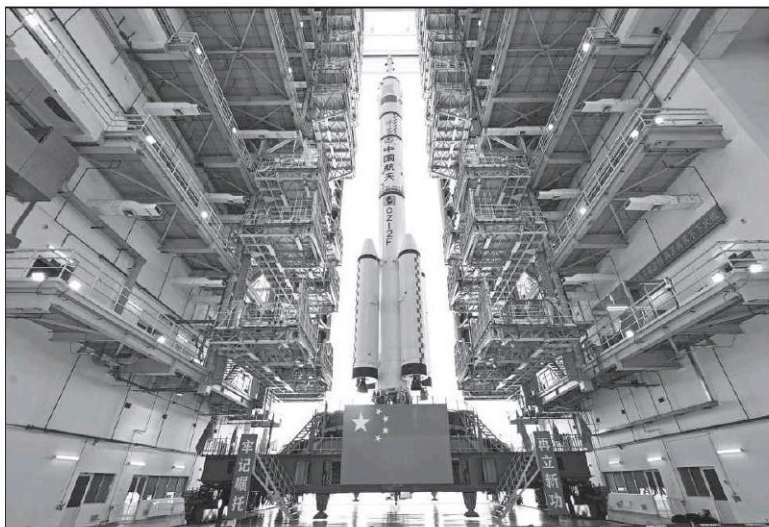
香港版
HONG KONG

CHINA DAILY

中國日報

TUESDAY, May 23, 2023

www.chinadailyhk.com HK \$10



The Shenzhou XVI spacecraft and its carrier, a Long March 2F rocket, are moved to their launch site at the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center in northwestern China's Gobi Desert on Monday. WANG JIANGBO / FOR CHINA DAILY

Shenzhou XVI mission to launch in days

By ZHAO LEI
zhaolei@chinadaily.com.cn

China's next manned mission, the Shenzhou XVI, is scheduled to be launched in the coming days to transport three astronauts to the Tiangong space station, according to the China Manned Space Agency.

The Shenzhou XVI crewed spacecraft and its carrier, a Long March 2F rocket, were moved to the service tower on Monday at the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center in northwestern China's Gobi Desert, the agency said in a news release, adding that the spacecraft and the rocket will undergo final checks in the next several days.

The Shenzhou XVI will become the first crewed mission to visit

Tiangong this year and the first to arrive since its construction was completed by the Shenzhou XIV and XV crews.

The crew members, whose names have yet to be disclosed, will take over the massive orbital outpost from their peers in the Shenzhou XV — mission commander Major General Fei Junlong, Senior Colonel Deng Qingming and Senior Colonel Zhang Lu — who arrived on Nov 30.

By the end of May, Fei's team will have stayed in orbit for six months. Pang Zhifan, an expert on space exploration technology and a renowned writer on spaceflight, predicts that the Shenzhou XVI crew will include new faces — the country's third generation of astronauts. "I think there will be a scientist or

an engineer on the crew, and this means the Shenzhou XVI will be the first time for Chinese civilians to travel into space," he said.

Yang Liwei, the first Chinese person in space and now a deputy chief planner of the country's manned spaceflights, has said that the third-generation astronauts are expected to be in space in 2023.

As of now, all of the Chinese astronauts who have been on spaceflights are members of the People's Liberation Army. They are in the first two generations of astronauts who were selected from experienced Air Force aviators.

The third generation of astronauts have civilians recruited from researchers and engineers.

There are 17 men and one woman

in this generation in three groups: seven spacecraft pilots, another seven as spacecraft engineers and the last four as payload specialists.

Earlier this month, the Tiangong 6 robotic cargo spaceship set out from the Wenchang Space Launch Center in Hainan province to transport materials for the next manned missions, becoming the first spacecraft to visit the Tiangong space station this year.

Orbiting about 400 kilometers above the ground, the Tiangong currently consists of three major components, the Tianhe core module and Wentian and Mengtian science lab modules, and is connected with two visiting craft, the Shenzhou XV crew ship and the Tiangzhou 6 cargo ship.