

CE congratulates national astronauts on successful completion of space mission

The Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, today (September 17), on behalf of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR), extended wholehearted congratulations and expressed admiration for the three astronauts of the Shenzhou-12 spacecraft, namely Mr Nie Haisheng, Mr Liu Boming and Mr Tang Hongbo, who have successfully completed their spaceflight mission and returned to Earth smoothly.

"The three astronauts returned to Earth safely after a three-month-long stay in space, successfully completing the first crewed mission for space station construction of the country's manned space programme. On behalf of the HKSAR, I would like to express my heartfelt congratulations to the three astronauts and all the personnel participating in the mission. The success of this historic mission demonstrates the continuous efforts of the country in breaking new ground in aerospace technology, consolidating its leading position in the global aerospace arena and making Chinese people all over the world proud.

"Hong Kong people were privileged to have taken part in the activity series 'The Spirit of the Times Shines upon Hong Kong' to deepen their understanding of this space mission. Early this month, several scientific researchers and students had an invaluable opportunity to have a real-time online chat with the three astronauts while they were in space. The astronauts cordially answered the questions raised by the students at the activity venue. The event received an overwhelming response from the community. I am grateful to the Liaison Office of the Central People's Government in the HKSAR and the China Manned Space Agency as well as various organisations and relevant units for their efforts in organising the activity. I also express admiration for the three astronauts, who introduced difficult content in a simple and interesting way.

"An aerospace technology delegation, including a number of eminent scientists, was also arranged by the country to visit Hong Kong in June this year. During their stay in the city, they visited a number of schools to speak with students on the development journey and the latest situation of the country's astronautical endeavours. They also brought with them lunar soil samples collected from the moon by the country last year for public display in Hong Kong for the first time, allowing Hong Kong people to share the country's distinguished aerospace achievements.

"These invaluable activities are testimony to the care and support of the country for Hong Kong, and they have inspired many Hong Kong students in aerospace and other scientific fields. I hope that the Central Authorities will continue to arrange activities in Hong Kong to showcase the latest

developments of the country. They would strengthen the sense of belonging of Hong Kong compatriots to the motherland and are conducive to the nurturing of talents who are passionate about science, persevering and innovative. In fact, Hong Kong's scientific research capability is outstanding and university research teams have been participating in the nation's space exploration programme. The HKSAR Government will press ahead with the city's innovation and technology development and support the participation of various institutions in the national projects on aerospace and other technology, making contributions to the development of our country as a science and technology power," Mrs Lam said.