

# China is making preparations for manned lunar landing

China is making preliminary preparations for a manned lunar landing mission, said Yang Liwei, deputy director general of China Manned Space Agency, on Tuesday.

Yang Liwei, China's first astronaut and deputy director of China's manned space program office, makes a speech during the 2017 Global Space Exploration Conference in Beijing, capital of China, June 6, 2017.  
[Photo/Xinhua]

It will not take long for the project to get official approval and funding, Yang said during a group interview at the Global Space Exploration Conference (GLEX 2017).

When asked whether he has any plan to step onto the Moon, Yang, China's first astronaut, showed great excitement. "If I am given the opportunity, no problem!" he said.

Wu Yansheng, president of China Aerospace Science and Technology Corporation (CASC), also said that China is working on a manned lunar landing plan.

The mission will consist of a manned spaceship, a propulsion vehicle and a lunar lander. The manned spaceship and the lunar lander will be sent into circumlunar orbit separately, according to Wu.

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## 9.4 mln students to sit China's college entrance exam

A total of 9.4 million Chinese high school students will sit the 2017 national college entrance examination, known as the Gaokao, due to kick off Wednesday, the Ministry of Education said.

Some 3.72 million of these students are expected to enroll in undergraduate degrees following the examination, an increase of nearly 10,000 compared to 2016, according to the 2017 enrollment plan issued by the ministry.

The ministry has instructed local education departments to prepare for the upcoming exam, which generally lasts for two days, with some highly competitive regions adding a third day.

Emergency plans should be in place for extreme weather conditions, natural

disasters and disease outbreaks that could occur during the exams, the ministry said.

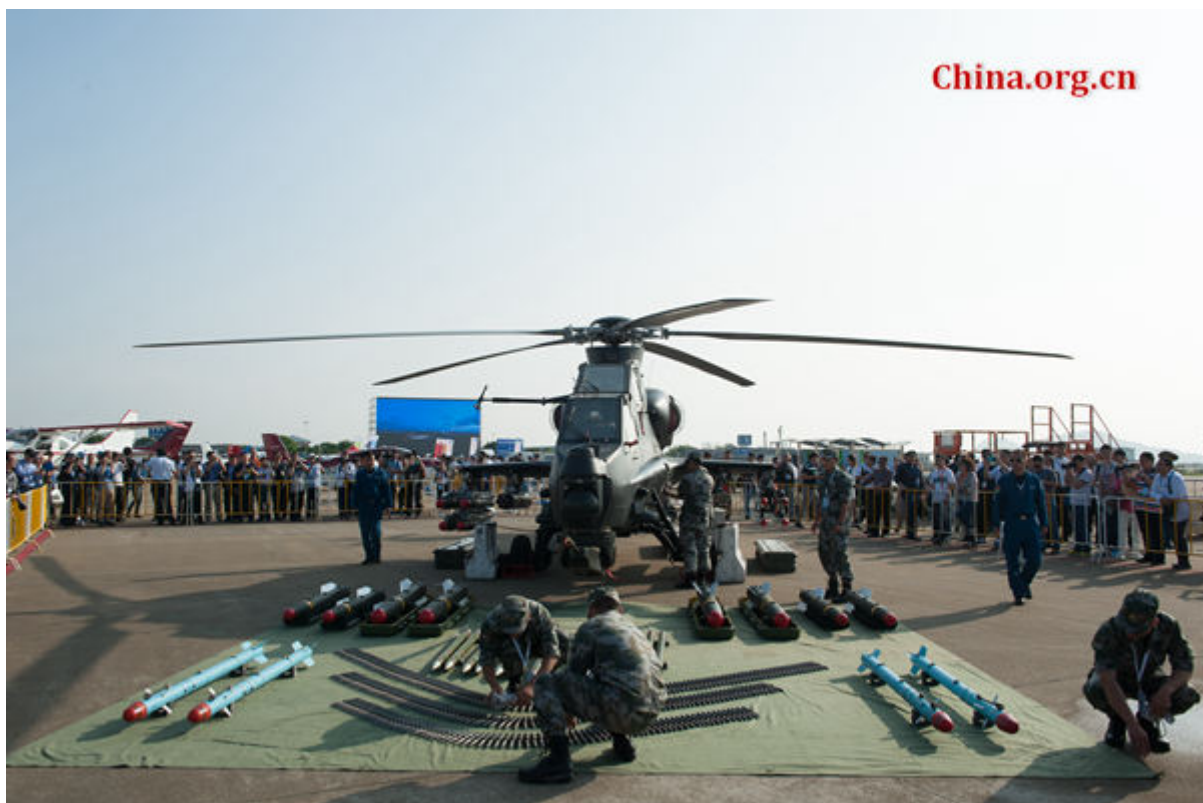
Other measures include heat control and noise abatement in and around examination venues to create an optimal environment for students.

A report released by China Education Online, [www.eol.cn](http://www.eol.cn), showed that the number of students taking the exam has declined from its peak of 10.5 million in 2008, and has remained stable at around 9.4 million since 2014.

The number is expected to remain steady or drop slightly in the future, due to various factors including a decrease in the school-aged population, the report said.

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## [PLA denies violating Indian airspace](#)



PLA attack helicopter [File photo by Chen Boyuan/China.org.cn]

The Chinese Ministry of National Defense (MOD) denied late on June 5 that one People's Liberation Army (PLA) helicopter violated Indian airspace.

The MOD made the statement in response to Indian media allegations. A report on the Hindu dated June 3 read that "a Chinese helicopter has violated Indian air space in the Barahoti area of Chamoli district along the India-China border in Uttarakhand on Sunday."

But the MOD clarified, saying that the report was "inconsistent with the

facts,” adding that Chinese troops were conducting training on the Chinese side of the Line of Actual Control along the China-India border.

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## China to select 10 new astronauts this year



Chinese astronauts Yang Liwei (first from right) and Liu Yang (second from right) at an Aerospace Objects Exhibition at the National Museum of China in Beijing on April 24, 2017. [Photo/China Daily]

China will select the third batch of astronauts this year for its manned space exploration plan, according to Yang Liwei, deputy director of the China Manned Space Engineering Office and China's first astronaut to go into space.

"The new batch will have 10 to 12 astronauts, including around two females," Yang said on May 16 in an interview with China Youth Daily.

China has already completed the first two steps in the three-step process: sending manned spacecraft into space; carrying out extravehicular activities and docking moves and establishing space labs. The third step is to establish long-term manned space station.

After Tianzhou 1 cargo spacecraft docked with Tiangong II space lab, refueling and resupplying it in April, China completed the experiments and

tests on the manned space lab missions, Yang said.

During the third step to build the space station, more scientific experiments will be carried out, requiring astronauts to have more expertise, Yang said.

“Astronauts in the first batch were required to have bachelor’s degrees and pilots’ license. But now, new astronauts will focus on the engineering side. They should have master’s degrees to work as engineers and researchers,” Yang said.

New astronauts might face lower physical standards set for past astronauts in selection and training, but they should have more stable mental endurance, allowing them to work in a small place with heavy work for a long period, Yang said. The checks on chronic disease will be stricter.

“People who have suffered fractures have no chance. The appendicitis surgery might be tolerable, but any surgery on the chest is unacceptable. The nearsighted people also have no chance because the extreme pressure while entering the space will easily cause retinal detachment,” Yang said.

Yang added that according to an initial plan, China might choose new astronauts every four years depending on the missions and training situations.

China will launch Long March 5B carrier rocket into space in 2019, and after that, the rocket will help carry the core module of China’s space station into space. Shenzhou XII and Shenzhou XIII spacecrafts will be launched soon after that.

But the crew of Shenzhou XII will consist of astronauts from the first and second batches, Yang said.

China has selected astronauts in two batches, 14 in 1990s and seven in 2010.

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**IMD: China’s world competitiveness is rising**





A bird's eye view of Beijing's CBD. [Photo/China.org.cn]

The Chinese mainland's world competitiveness rating has risen seven notches from last year's 25th position to 18th this year, according to the latest yearbook issued by the Lausanne Institute for Management Development (IMD) in Switzerland.

The report uses four key indices, namely, economic performance, government efficiency, business efficiency and infrastructure, in its evaluation.

With its outstanding economic performance index which ranked second among the economies surveyed, the Chinese mainland also outperformed other economies in scores for the domestic economy and employment, contributing much to its ranking improvement.

According to IMD's analysis, the rise of Chinese competitiveness primarily attributes to deepened integration into global trade, which helped ameliorate its economic performance and government and business efficiency.

Among the 63 economies analyzed, China's Hong Kong has continued as the world's most competitive region, while, Switzerland retained the runner-up spot from last time. Singapore overtook the United States to gain the third place, while the latter fell to the fourth.

According to Arturo Bris, director of the IMD World Competitiveness Center and Professor of Finance, the top economies are displaying a more open and business-friendly environment as competitiveness is heavily weighted by governmental and enterprise efficiency.

The decline by one place in American competitiveness indicates the economic uncertainties as the top executives contributing to the rating gave low marks

to its governmental and business efficiency, as a result of capricious politics and rising protectionism that weighed down the country's achievements in employment and inflation control.

Initiated in 1989, IMD's World Competitiveness Yearbook produces its annual ranking based on 260 indices, two-thirds of which are "hard" indices, including employment and trade statistics. The additional figures are based on the surveys of 6,250 top executives working for global conglomerates. The list incorporates 63 economies with the full score reaching 100 points.