

# Taikonauts set Chinese space record

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China's Shenzhou 6 spacecraft was in its second day in orbit Thursday, making the mission that nation's longest manned space flight.

Taikonauts Nie Haisheng, celebrating his 41st birthday Thursday, and Fei Junlong, carried out experiments concerning the spacecraft's stability, the BBC reported.

By noon China time Thursday Shenzhou VI had circled Earth 18 times, with each orbit taking about 90 minutes to complete.

Nie's 11-year-old daughter sang Happy Birthday to him late Wednesday and he told her: "It's marvelous around here. The Earth looks beautiful."

China's state-run Xinhua news agency said "at these words, Nie Haisheng was in tears."

The two taikonauts were to spend Thursday taking their space suits on and off and opening and closing the capsule doors.

"They would purposely use more strength to move, so as to test the disturbance of people's movement on the spacecraft," according to Xinhua.

The taikonauts were using secret codes to communicate with space agency physicians, Xinhua said, so as to protect their privacy.

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