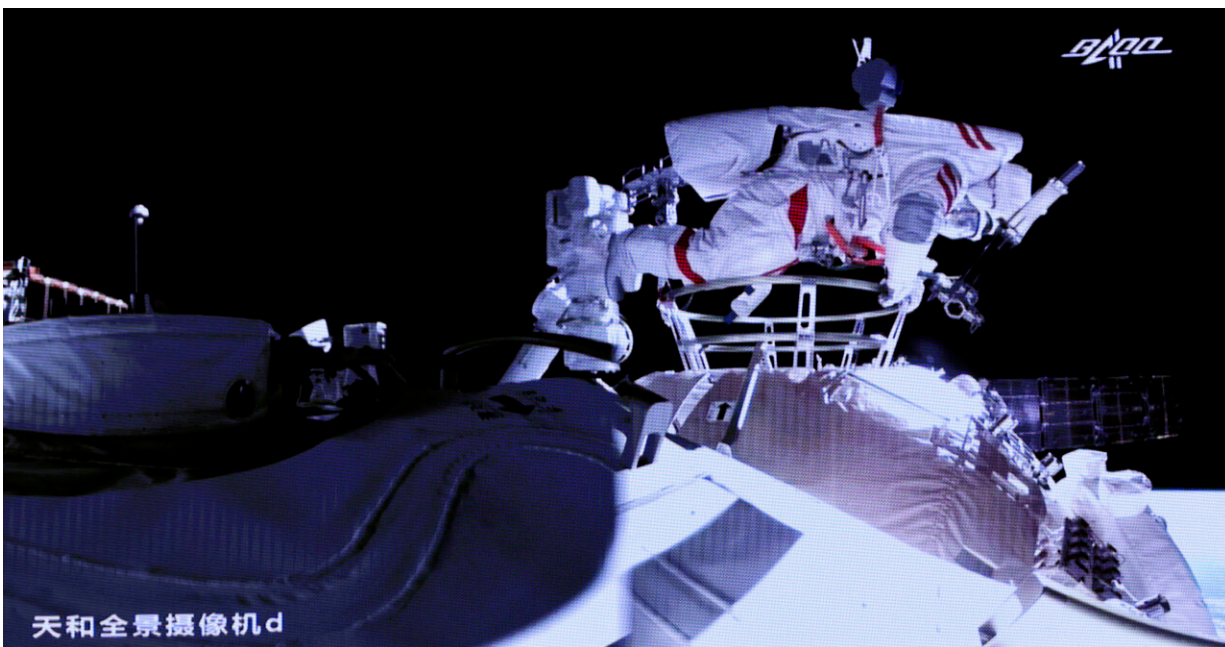


Chinese astronauts make first spacewalk outside new station

July 4 2021



This photo released by Xinhua News Agency shows a screen at Beijing Aerospace Control Center showing astronaut Liu Boming stepping out of core module of the China's new space station in space on Sunday, July 4, 2021. Two astronauts made the first space walk on Sunday outside China's new orbital station to work on setting up a 15-meter (50-foot) long robotic arm. Credit: Jin Liwang/Xinhua via AP

Two astronauts on Sunday made the first spacewalk outside China's new orbital station to set up cameras and other equipment using a 15-meter-

long (50-foot-long) robotic arm.

Liu Boming and Tang Hongbo were shown by state TV climbing out of the airlock as Earth rolled past below them. The third crew member, commander Nie Haisheng, stayed inside.

Liu and Tang spent nearly seven hours outside the station, the Chinese space agency said.

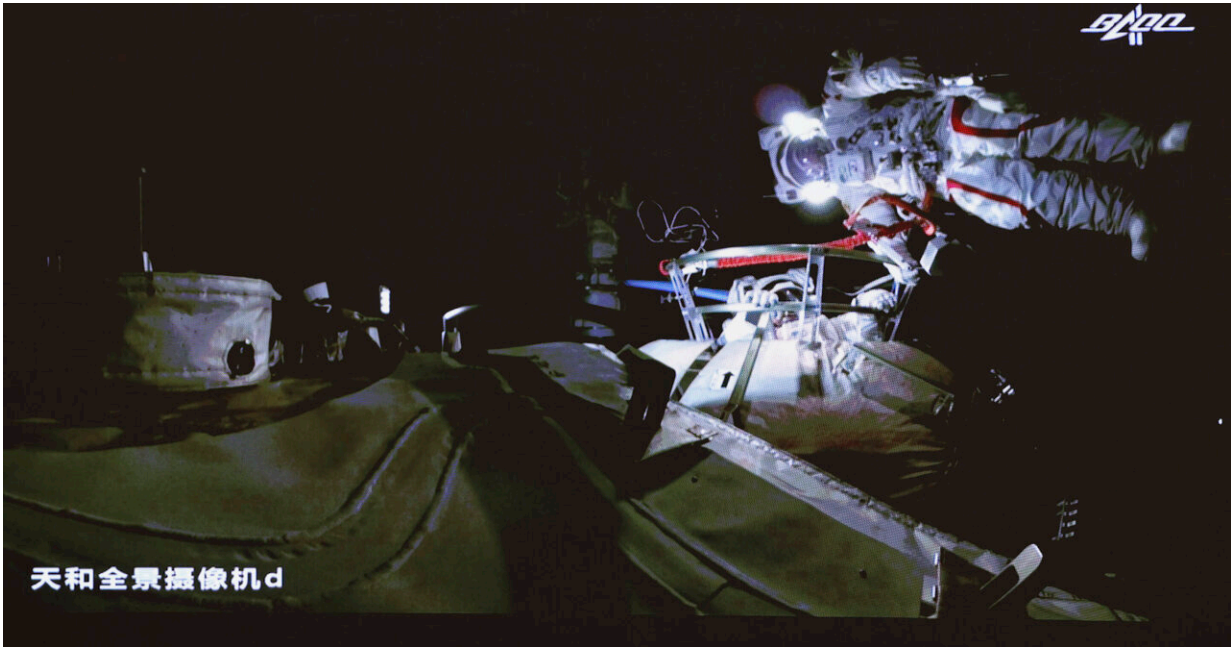
The astronauts arrived June 17 for a three-month mission aboard China's third orbital station, part of an ambitious space program that landed a robot rover on Mars in May. Their mission comes as the ruling Communist Party celebrates the 100th anniversary of its founding.

The station's first module, Tianhe, or Heavenly Harmony, was launched April 29. That was followed by an automated spacecraft with food and fuel. Liu, Nie and Tang arrived June 17 aboard a Shenzhou capsule.

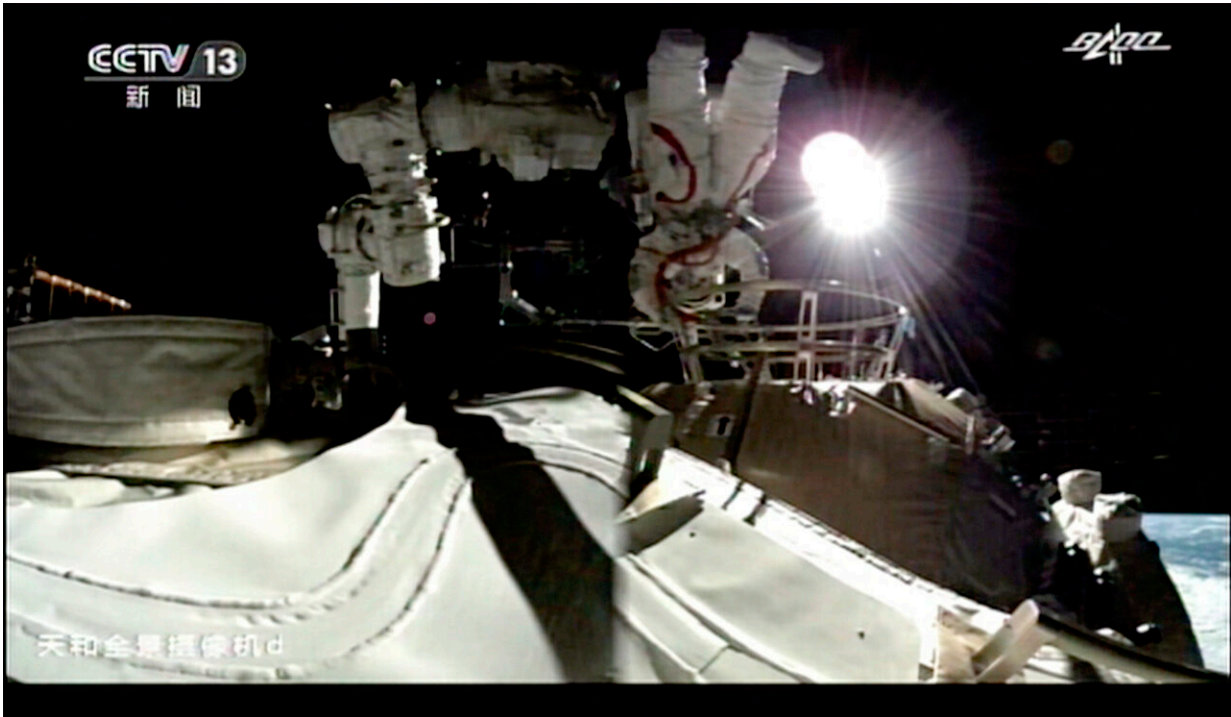
On Sunday, Liu attached his feet to a platform at the end of a remote-controlled arm that held him in place while he used an electric drill and other tools to install equipment.

China's space agency plans a total of 11 launches through the end of next year to add two more modules to the 70-ton station.

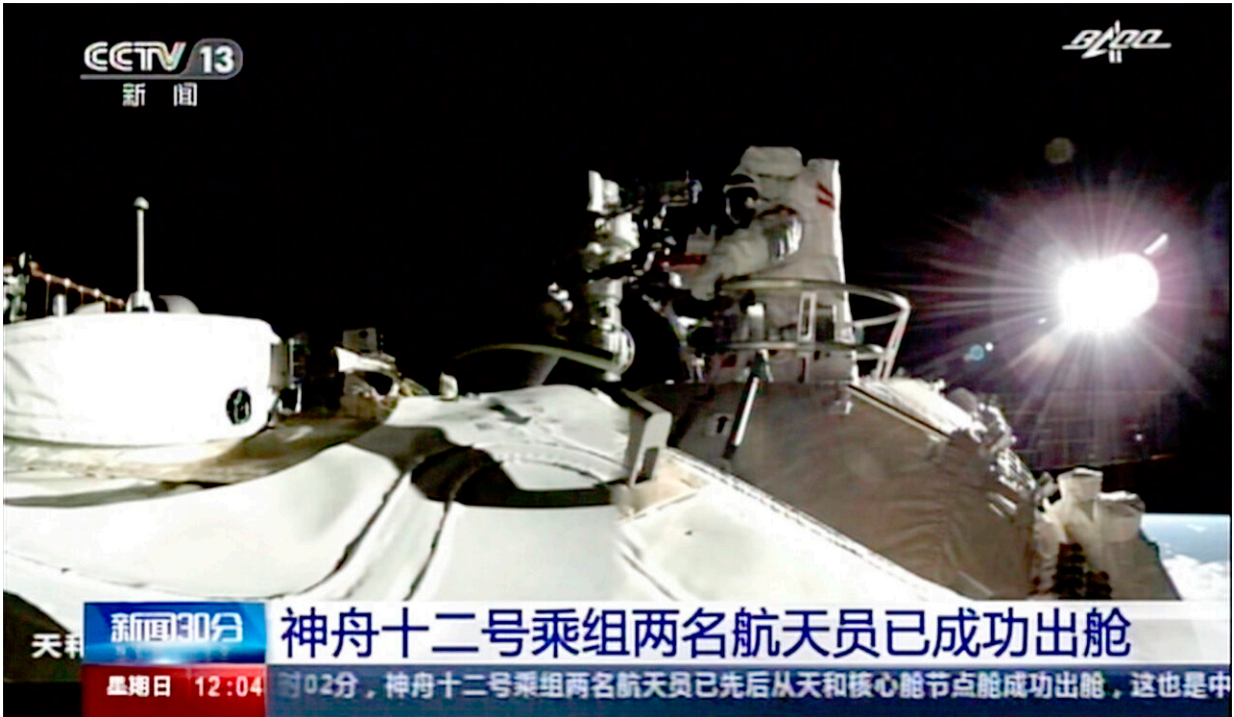
Liu is a veteran of the Shenzhou 7 mission in 2008, during which Zhai Zhigang made China's first space walk. Nie is on his third trip into space while Tang is making his first. All are military pilots.



This photo released by Xinhua News Agency shows a screen at Beijing Aerospace Control Center showing an astronaut stepping out of core module of the China's new space station in space on Sunday, July 4, 2021. Two astronauts made the first space walk on Sunday outside China's new orbital station to work on setting up a 15-meter (50-foot) long robotic arm. Credit: Jin Liwang/Xinhua via AP



In this image taken from video footage run by China's CCTV, astronaut Liu Boming steps out of core module of the China's new space station in space on Sunday, July 4, 2021. Two astronauts made the first space walk on Sunday outside China's new orbital station to work on setting up a 15-meter (50-foot) long robotic arm. Credit: CCTV via AP Video



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In this photo released by China's Xinhua News Agency, Chinese astronauts, from left; Tang Hongbo, Nie Haisheng, and Liu Boming salute from aboard China's space station core module Tianhe during a video conversation with Chinese President Xi Jinping, Wednesday, June 23, 2021. Credit: Yue Yuewei/Xinhua via AP

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