

Hong Kong welcomes arrival of Shenzhou-7 delegation

The delegation of the Shenzhou-7 manned space mission arrived in Hong Kong this morning (December 5) for a four-day visit.

The delegation was met at Hong Kong International Airport by the Chief Secretary, Mr Henry Tang; the Secretary for Home Affairs, Mr Tsang Tak-sing; the Director of the Liaison Office of the Central People's Government in the HKSAR, Mr Gao Siren; the Deputy Director of the Liaison Office, Mr Peng Qinghua; the Commissioner of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China in the HKSAR, Mr Lu Xinhua; the Commander of the People's Liberation Army Hong Kong Garrison, Major General Zhang Shibo, and the Political Commissar of the People's Liberation Army Hong Kong Garrison, Lieutenant General Liu Liangkai.

Led by the Deputy Commander-in-Chief of China's Manned Space Engineering Programme Mr Zhang Jianqi, the 40-strong delegation includes astronauts Zhai Zhigang, Liu Boming and Jing Haipeng, as well as commanders or designers of the mission's major engineering systems.

About 300 schoolchildren and members of the public waved flags and applauded the delegation in the arrival hall. A small group of children presented bouquets to Mr Zhang and the three astronauts.

The delegation will attend a welcome dinner hosted by the HKSAR Government at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre in the evening to meet members from various sectors of the community.

Ends/Friday, December 5, 2008