

Xi honors military officers, unit ahead of Army Day

Chinese President Xi Jinping, also chairman of the Central Military Commission (CMC), on Friday awarded the Order of Bayi to 10 military officers and conferred a flag to a military company ahead of the Army Day, which falls on Aug. 1.

Approved by the CMC, the Order of Bayi is awarded to those who have made outstanding contributions to safeguarding national sovereignty, security and development interests, and advancing the modernization of national defense and the armed forces.

The officers receiving the honor included Chinese astronaut Jing Haipeng, commander of the Shenzhou-11 spacecraft. Jing was praised as a heroic astronaut dedicated to serving the country while taking to space to pursue his dreams.

Wang Gang, head of a detachment of the armed police in Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, was also awarded the Order of Bayi. He was honored as a hero in anti-terrorist work, willing to endure “fire and water” and charge forward with great courage.

Xi, also general secretary of the Communist Party of China Central Committee, helped the 10 military officers wear their medals, and presented them with certificates of honor.

The president decorated an armored infantry company of the People’s Liberation Army (PLA), conferring a flag which reads: “Model company in learning and practicing the Party’s innovation theory.”

In another statement released Friday, Xi signed an order to give the company an honorary title.

It was the first time for the CMC to grant the Order of Bayi, the country’s highest military award, several days before the 90th founding anniversary of the Chinese armed forces.

It fully embodied the CMC’s respect and praise for the decorated officers, and will boost the morale of the military, and motivate soldiers to contribute to realizing the dreams of stronger country and stronger army, said a military statement released after the honoring ceremony.

Fan Changlong, CMC vice chairman, read an order signed by Xi to honor the officers and the unit. The awarding ceremony was presided over by Xu Qiliang, also vice chairman of the CMC.

In a separate statement, Xi signed orders to award merit citations to two military units and ten individuals for outstanding services.