



CHINESE PILOT EMBARKS ON ROUND-THE-WORLD FLIGHT

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A Chinese pilot and his crew left Beijing Sunday on a flight across the globe, the first around-the-world flight from China.

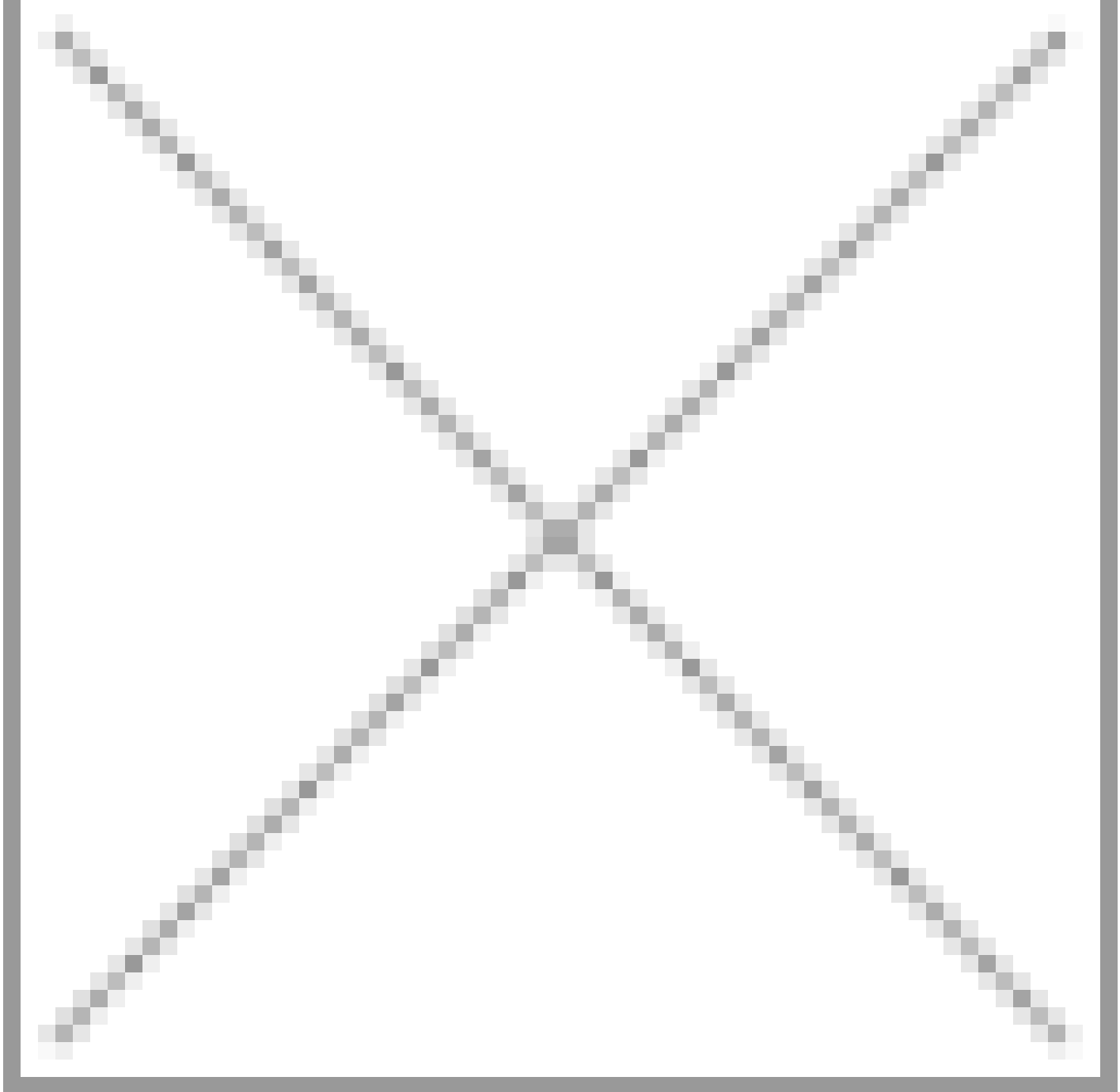
After two years of careful preparation, the single-engine turboprop TMB700 aircraft left Beijing Capital International Airport Sunday afternoon.

The 58-day journey will cover 40,000 kilometers and over 20 countries including Russia, the United States, Canada, Iceland and Britain.

According to pilot Zhang Bo, who is in his fifties, there will be around 50 stops, and will follow part of the Ancient Silk Road trade route.

As an aviation enthusiast, Zhang learned to fly while studying for his doctor's degree at the University of Illinois. He now has over 600 hours' flying experience.

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