

Soyuz space capsule lands

By Mara D. Bellaby
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

SPACE STATION

Soyuz returns home

A Soyuz space capsule carrying an American, a Russian and a Spaniard, returned home from the International Space Station on Tuesday. The crew landed smoothly and on target in Kazakhstan.

Time remaining until touchdown

Three hours, 20 minutes.
Hooks on the station are opened and the Soyuz separates from the station.

Three hours, 17 minutes.
A short separation burn pushes the Soyuz about 66 feet from the station.

Two hours, 57 minutes
The module carrying the men separates from the unoccupied orbital module, which burns up upon re-entry into the atmosphere.

Two hours, 29 minutes
When the Soyuz is about 12 miles away from the station, the engines fire for a deorbit burn.

23 minutes
Soyuz reaches the entry interface.

13 minutes
Two pilot parachutes are deployed and the drogue chute slows the spacecraft's descent from 514 mph to 179 mph. Another parachute is then released, slowing the Soyuz to a descent rate of 16 mph and giving it the proper angle to descend and expel extra heat.

Two seconds
Engines fire to slow the spacecraft's descent rate from 16 mph to 3 mph at touchdown.

Touchdown
The Soyuz landed near Arkalyk, Kazakhstan.

SOURCE: NASA

Russian engineers had said there was only a slim chance that this crew would suffer from the same computer malfunction that affected the previous flight, but officials took no chances and altered the usual search operation to cover more ground.

NASA, still getting used to its astronauts landing on foreign ground, also requested a medically equipped U.S. Air Force C-17 to stand by in Astana.

Additionally, this Soyuz was equipped with satellite phones and a global positioning satellite system — courtesy of NASA — so if the crew had landed off-course

and communications systems were damaged as happened in May, they would still have been able to phone in their location.

The three-man crew arrived late Tuesday in Moscow, where Malenchenko's new bride, Texas resident Ekaterina Dmitriev, Lu's fiance and Duque's family awaited them. Malenchenko became the first person to marry in space, holding a wedding by proxy.

Associated Press writer Vladimir Isachenkov contributed to this report from Mission Control outside Moscow.

ASTANA, Kazakhstan — A Russian space capsule delivered an American, a Russian and Spaniard home Tuesday from the International Space Station, depositing them safely in Kazakhstan and earning a place in the history books as the first Russian spacecraft to both launch and land an American astronaut.

The bell-shaped Soyuz thumped down beneath a parachute at 5:40 a.m. Moscow time near Arkalyk in north-central Kazakhstan. Its passengers, American Ed Lu, Russian Yuri Malenchenko and Spaniard Pedro Duque, emerged smiling after their 3 1/2-hour descent to Earth. "It is great to be back home," said Lu, after Russian workers lifted him from the capsule.

Lu had planned to ride to the space station onboard the U.S. shuttle Atlantis until the disintegration of the space shuttle Columbia in February put the American manned spaceflight program on hold. Since then the smaller, non-reusable Soyuz crafts have become the linchpin of the space station program.

Lu and Malenchenko blasted off in the same Soyuz capsule last April for a nearly six-month stay in space, while Duque arrived eight days ago along with a U.S.-Russian crew.

In May, the first time American astronauts returned on the Soyuz, a computer malfunction sent the crew on a dive so steep the astronauts' tongues rolled back in their mouths.

This time, everything went mostly as planned.

"We were very fortunate. It was as smooth a landing as could have been hoped for," said Gen. Vladimir Popov, who heads the team responsible for Russia's space search and rescue operations.

The operation was marred when one of the space capsule occupant pushed a button during the undocking, which caused the space station to rotate 25 degrees, and required a large amount of fuel to correct the alignment, Russian media reported.

Sony's 'big bang' overhaul starts with job cuts

By Yuri Kageyama
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

TOKYO — Sony Corp., its consumer electronics sheen dulled by cheaper competition, is struggling to bounce back with a corporate retooling that will slash 20,000 jobs, or about 13 percent of its global work force.

Sony said the job cuts would occur over the next three years and include 7,000 workers in Japan. It gave no further regional breakdowns or other details. Sony employs some 161,100 people worldwide.

The company's plan is to trim costs while trying to exploit Sony's traditional strengths in entertainment, electronics and video games — particularly with new networked and wireless consumer devices.

"It may appear as though Sony is being sucked into a black hole," Sony executive deputy president Ken Kutaragi said. "But we hope to create a 'Big Bang' that will lead to new business."

As part of the job cuts, Sony said it would integrate overlapping administrative and corporate jobs, such as by relocating mainly to the West Coast

electronics and marketing operations currently divided between both U.S. coasts. The company has about 22,000 employees in the United States.

Rick Clancy, a spokesman for U.S.-based Sony Electronics Inc., said moving most of Sony's East Coast operations to the West Coast may result in a "few hundred" layoffs but that the actual number of cuts remain unclear.

Credit Lyonnais Securities analyst Kun Soo Lee said the job cuts were bigger than expected and signal that Japanese workers, traditionally accustomed to lifetime employment, weren't going to be protected.

"Sony made it clear that it will trim unnecessary parts of its operations to survive," Lee said.

One element of the new strategy focuses on hardware, including the computer chips, for a networked home where electronics, video games, music and video merge in products including flat-panel TVs, DVD recorders and home servers. Another highlight of Tuesday's announcement was an agreement with Samsung Electronics Co. of South Korea to set up a \$2 billion joint venture to develop next-generation liquid crystal display panels for flat TVs.

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