International Space Station status report: SS07-26

by Bend_Weekly_News_Sources

A spacecraft automatically docked to the International Space Station early Tuesday, delivering 2.5 tons of food, fuel and supplies for the residents on board. The ISS Progress 25 linked up to the aft port of the Zvezda Service Module at 12:10 a.m. CDT Tuesday as the station sailed 208 miles above the Earth off the northeast coast of Australia. Within minutes, hooks and latches engaged between the two spacecraft to form a tight seal. The hatch to the supply ship will be opened overnight to enable its cargo to be unloaded. As the Progress approached for its docking, Expedition 15 Commander Fyodor Yurchikhin and Flight Engineer Oleg Kotov stood by in Zvezda in case they needed to take over manual control of the linkup. The docking, under the guidance of the Kurs automatic rendezvous system, was smooth and uneventful. Flight Engineer Suni Williams monitored other station systems and photographed the Progressâ€™ approach. The Kurs proximity antenna was retracted earlier than usual, at a distance of about 148 meters. This enabled Russian flight controllers to confirm it was functioning properly, since it failed to retract during the Progress 23 docking last October. In February, the Expedition 14 crew conducted a spacewalk to fix the problem. The unpiloted ship launched from the Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan at 10:25 p.m. CDT Friday for its three-day journey to the station. The Progress delivered more than 1,050 pounds of propellant, almost 100 pounds of air, more than 925 pounds of water and 3,042 pounds of dry cargo.