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Russian Spaceship Crashed Because of Rocket Failure, Roscosmos Says

By The Moscow Times

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An unpiloted ISS Progress resupply vehicle approaches the International Space Station.

A Russian mission to resupply the International Space Station failed because of a fault with the carrier rocket, the head of Roscosmos space agency said on Tuesday.

The Russian Progress M-27M cargo ship, carrying almost three tons (2,722 kilograms) of supplies, burned up in the Earth's atmosphere last week after ground crews lost control of the freighter shortly after it launched on April 28.

A preliminary investigation showed the third stage of the Soyuz rocket used to launch the Progress cargo ship separated early, Roscosmos head Igor Komarov said, leaving the capsule about 13 miles (20 kilometers) short of its intended altitude.

"There was an unintended separation of the carrier rocket," he said.

A team of three International Space Station (ISS) crew members, who had been scheduled

to leave the station later this week, will now return to Earth in June, the TASS news agency reported.

The next Progress resupply shuttle to the ISS has also been delayed until the beginning of July and a manned mission to the space station will launch a few weeks later, Roscosmos said in a statement.

The space agency said it would present the final results of its investigation on May 22.

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