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Damaged Russian Soyuz Capsule Returns to Earth — Roscosmos

By AFP

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The Russian-made space vessel descends over Kazakhstan. **Roscosmos**

A Russian unmanned Soyuz MS-22 capsule returned to Earth on Tuesday from the International Space Station (ISS), landing in Kazakhstan three months after experiencing a coolant leak.

The vessel landed at 5:46 p.m. local time in the vast Central Asian country, a Roscosmos live transmission showed.

Russia's space agency said the capsule carried "around 218 kilograms of cargo," including the results of scientific experiments.

It landed near the Kazakh town of Zhezkazgan.

The capsule flew Russian cosmonauts Dmitry Petelin and Sergei Prokopyev, as well as NASA astronaut Frank Rubio, to the ISS in September last year and was due to bring them home.

But the space vessel began leaking coolant in mid-December — shortly before Russian crew members were to begin a spacewalk — after being hit by what U.S. and Russian officials believe was a small meteoroid.

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In February, Russia sent an MS-23 vessel to the ISS to pick up the stranded crew. It is expected to bring them back to Earth in September.

The damage caused by the suspected tiny space rock to the MS-22's cooling system raised fears that there could be problems during re-entry when the capsule undergoes extreme temperatures.

Space exploration has remained a rare venue of cooperation between Moscow and Washington since the start of the war in Ukraine.

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