

ISS prepares for next cargo ship arrival

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A new Russian Progress cargo spaceship was being prepared Monday for its launch later this week to the International Space Station.

Scheduled to lift off shortly after 9 p.m. EST Wednesday from the Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan, the spacecraft will be loaded with more than 2.5 tons of fuel, oxygen, other supplies and equipment.

National Aeronautics and Space Administration controllers in Houston said the space station's 24th Progress unpiloted cargo carrier will bring to the orbiting laboratory more than 1,720 pounds of propellant, about 110 pounds of oxygen and 3,285 pounds of dry cargo -- a total of 5,115 pounds.

ISS Commander Michael Lopez-Alegria and astronauts Mikhail Tyurin and Suni Williams spent the past week preparing for ISS Progress 24, which is scheduled to arrive Friday at approximately 10 p.m. EST.

NASA said Progress 22, packed with discarded items, will undock from the space station Tuesday around 6:30 p.m. and its engines will fire three hours later to send it back into Earth's atmosphere where it will be destroyed by re-entry heat.

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