

SpaceX cargo ship reaches International Space Station (Update)

January 12 2015



Space X's Falcon 9 rocket launches on January 10, 2015 as it heads to space from pad 40 at Cape Canaveral, Florida, carrying the Dragon CRS5 spacecraft on a resupply mission to the International Space Station (ISS)

SpaceX's unmanned Dragon cargo ship arrived Monday at the International Space Station, carrying 2.6 tons of food and supplies for the astronauts at the orbiting research laboratory.

"We have captured Dragon," NASA commentator Rob Navias said as

the space station's robotic arm, operated by commander Barry "Butch" Wilmore, grappled the spacecraft at 5:54 am (1054 GMT), according to NASA's television broadcast.

Wilmore was assisted by European Space Agency flight engineer Samantha Cristoforetti as they used the station's 17.6-meter (57.7-foot) robotic arm to reach out and capture the Dragon spacecraft.

The rendezvous was "flawless," Navias said.

Dragon was bolted onto the station's Earth-facing Harmony node at 8:54 (1354 GMT).

The cargo ship launched atop a Falcon 9 rocket from Cape Canaveral, Florida on Saturday. It marked the fifth of at least 12 planned official missions for SpaceX which has a \$1.6 billion contract with NASA to supply the space station.

The equipment on board includes a NASA-developed system known as the Cloud-Aerosol Transport System (CATS) for measuring tiny particles called aerosols in the atmosphere.

Ready-made meals, science experiments, an IMAX camera and tools to help astronauts during spacewalks are also in the payload.

Astronauts may begin unloading the spacecraft as early as Monday afternoon.

Dragon will spend about a month there before returning to Earth with over 3,600 pounds (1,600 kilograms) of cargo that is no longer needed by the crew in space, as well as computer equipment and science experiments that need further analysis on Earth.

The spaceship is the only cargo vessel in the world that can return to Earth intact. Other supply ships burn up on re-entry to Earth's atmosphere.

It will head back to Earth for an ocean splashdown on February 10, NASA said.

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