Contact lost with Progress spaceship carrying 2.6 tons of cargo to ISS

01/12/2016

The Russian space agency has reported disruption of the data signal with its Progress cargo spaceship, which was launched to deliver 2.6 tons of supplies to the International Space Station (ISS).

"*After the launch of the Soyuz-U launch vehicle along with the Progress MS-04 cargo spacecraft, telemetry connection was lost on the 383th second of flight,*" Roscosmos said in a statement.

The data received from the spacecraft is not enough to say clearly what went wrong with the Progress MS-04 during the separation of the rocket's third stage, NASA also said.

~~@~~**ISS101** Fate of Russian **#Progress** Cargo Ship unknown after suspected In-Flight Anomaly - http://spaceflight101.com/progress-ms-04/progress-ms-04-in-flight-anomaly/… **#Soyuz**

The navigation equipment of Progress did open, but there is no information whether its solar batteries are functioning properly, the US space agency added.

The Progress craft managed to reach an interim orbit, but its coordinates are yet to be established, according to the US space agency.

@ISS101 Fate of Russian #Progress Cargo Ship unknown after suspected In-Flight Anomaly - http://spaceflight101.com/progress-ms-04/progress-ms-04-in-flight-anomaly/ … #Soyuz

Russian news agency sources, however, are not optimistic about the possible outcome and speculate the spacecraft may have already crashed. There is no official confirmation of that.

"Our astronauts and the Russian cosmonauts are safe aboard the station. Consumables aboard the station are at good levels," NASA's blog reported after the incident.

The cargo spacecraft was expected to deliver 2.6 tons of food, fuel and supplies for the Expedition 50 aboard to the ISS. It took off from the Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazkhastan at 9:51am EST (8:51pm local time).

Progress-series spacecraft have also faced issues in the past. In 2015, the Russian cargo ship Progress-M27M went into an orbit 40km higher than was initially planned. The craft was also carrying 2.5 tons of cargo for a multinational ISS crew, including oxygen, food, fuel, and equipment for scientific experiments, as well as personal packages for the cosmonauts and astronauts.

READ MORE: Russian Progress spacecraft flies too high, docking delayed

ISS crews usually have an extra stock of supplies in case a supply run fails.

The Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) is expected to launch an H-II Transfer Vehicle (HTV)-6 to the space station on December 9, NASA’s blog also said.