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BACK TO EARTH WITH A BUMP!

Reported by Amanda Kelper, Media Correspondent, London

After a six month stay on the International Space Station (ISS), astronauts Tim Peake, Yuri Malenchenko and Timothy Kopra have finally returned home to Earth.

Last week, British astronaut Tim Peake returned home from an incredible six month stay aboard the ISS, alongside his crewmates Yuri Malenchenko and Timothy Kopra. He is the first British astronaut to have lived on the ISS.

The International Space Station is a large spacecraft that travels around the Earth. It is a home where astronauts can live while in Space. The Space Station was built in pieces and many nations were involved in its construction. For example, the first piece was launched in November 1998 by the Russians. Construction of the space station was finally completed in 2011.

The men were launched into space on 15th December 2015. The mission involved conducting experiments, testing out new technology and inspiring the next generations of space travellers. Peake told reporters that the best part of his mission was a spacewalk where he had to make a repair on the space station.

Having circled the planet nearly 3,000 times, the crew returned home to Earth in a capsule, which reached speeds of up to 28,000 kilometres per hour. The touchdown was bumpy due to high winds, however the astronauts landed safely in Kazakhstan, all returning in good health. Having arrived back on solid ground, the astronauts were pulled out of the capsule and carried as their leg muscles were too weak to walk. While sitting in their space suits, the men were checked over by medical staff. During these checks, Peake



Landing with a bump! Tim Peake lands safely in Kazakhstan.

was asked how it felt to be home. 'The smells of Earth are so strong and it's wonderful to be back in the fresh air'.

Tim later flew from Kazakhstan to the headquarters of the European Space Agency in Germany where he is getting used to life back on Earth. Scientists and doctors are carrying out tests to see how his body has been affected by his time in space. Being in space can have a serious impact on the human body. When astronauts return home, they have to readapt to the gravity on Earth as the lack of gravity in space can also cause your bones and muscles to weaken.

Peake recently commented on how he'd missed family and friends, and even the rain. Tim said he was now looking forward to spending some quality time with his family. When asked if he'd return to space in the future, he replied, '...in a heartbeat'.

Having been recognised by the Queen for his services to science, Tim is now a CMG, or Companion of the Order of St Michael and St George. He dedicated this award to his entire team.

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