

NASA astronauts stuck on ISS

Vocabulary Match

thruster ● deemed ● risky ● setback ● successful ● support ●

● dangerous ● considered ● failure ● good ● agree ● engine

Article

Two NASA astronauts, Butch Wilmore and Suni Williams, have been stuck on the International Space Station (ISS) since June. They were supposed to return to Earth in Boeing's Starliner spacecraft, but due to problems like thruster failures and helium leaks, it was deemed too risky.

NASA decided on August 24 that the astronauts will now return with SpaceX in February. Norm Knight, a NASA official, said the astronauts support this decision.

The Starliner will return to Earth without any crew in September. This situation is a setback for Boeing, which has had issues with the Starliner. NASA hopes to fix these problems for future flights.

SpaceX has been more successful, completing nine astronaut flights since 2020.

Quiz

1. Why are the NASA astronauts stuck on the ISS?
2. When will the astronauts return to Earth?
3. What will happen to the Starliner in September?
4. How many astronaut flights has SpaceX completed since 2020?

Conversation

A: Butch, did you hear we're going back with SpaceX?
B: Yeah, Suni, I heard. I'm relieved!
A: Me too, but we can't go back until February.
B: Yeah... We were only supposed to be here for one week.
A: I know. I never expected it to last eight months!
B: I'm a bit worried. There's no washing machine up here!

Discussion

1. What would you do if you were stuck on the ISS?
2. Have you ever had to change your plans suddenly? What happened?
3. Where would you rather go, the ISS or Antarctica? Why?
4. Claustrophobia is the fear of confined spaces, like elevators. Are you claustrophobic?