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Cosmonauts ready to fix Mir

MOSCOW (AP) — In another step toward boosting Mir's power, two Russian cosmonauts plan a 5½-hour spacewalk Monday to remove an old solar panel from the space station and make way for the installation of a new one later in the week.

The cosmonauts started getting ready Sunday, waking up at 10 p.m. local time and eating breakfast, said Mission Control spokeswoman Irina Manshilina.

Anatoly Solovyov and Pavel Vinogradov must then begin the lengthy process of putting on their bulky space-suits for the mission, set for 4:30 a.m. Monday.

Solovyov, the world's most experienced spacewalker, is making his fourth trip outside the Mir's pressurized modules since arriving in August. In his career, he has made more than a dozen spacewalks.

The two Russians must remove one of the station's 10 solar panels because it is wearing out. On Thursday, they are to

head out again to install a new panel in its place.

The mission is part of an ongoing operation to increase the Mir's power supply, cut nearly in half when the station was hit by a cargo ship during a practice docking in June.

The two cosmonauts previously made two "internal spacewalks" into the airless Spektr module, punctured in the collision, and reconnected solar panels to the Mir's power system.

Solovyov and U.S. astronaut Michael Foale walked into open space in September to look for the holes in the Spektr's hull, but were unable to find them.

U.S. astronaut David Wolf, who replaced Foale, will remain inside the Mir on Monday but is expected to take part in a future spacewalk with Solovyov to retrieve some American scientific experiments from the outside of the Mir.

The Mir's power supply is sufficient for everyday operations, and this week's

repairs should increase the energy available for scientific experiments and other projects.

If this week's effort is successful, then eight of the Mir's 10 solar panels will be working normally. Another one is operating, but at less than full capacity, and one was damaged beyond repair in the June crash.

The cosmonauts also plan to deploy a small working satellite that is a replica of Sputnik, the world's first man-made satellite, which was launched by the Soviet Union on Oct. 4, 1957.

Russian and French schoolchildren helped make the satellite, which is one-third the size of the original — itself only about as big as a beach ball.

While Russian engineers constructed the exterior of the replica, the children built the transmitter inside, Manshilina said.

The cosmonauts can launch the satellite into orbit simply by pushing it out into space, she said.

Muslim women fight discrimination

AMMAN, Jordan (AP) — Jordan's only elected woman lawmaker recalls the day a Muslim fundamentalist leader offered her a free wardrobe if she only would wear a veil as observant Muslims do.

And the day she was speaking out in parliament against corruption when a conservative tribal leader hurled an ash-tray at her.

Toujan Faisal refused the clothes, and the ash-tray missed. But the message in both cases was clear: Women should carry on tradition and leave politics to men.

Once again, the 48-year-old Faisal is ignoring the message. She is one of 17 women among 535 candidates running in Tuesday's parliamentary election.

"It was an arduous and painful path, just like a garden full of prickles," Faisal told The Associated Press. "But I know I am daring, and very few can do what I do."

A former television talk show hostess, Toujan first ran for office in 1989. She lost after her campaign against polygamy drew calls for her blood from

Muslim fanatics; Islam allows men up to four wives at once.

She won her 1993 parliamentary race on a platform of women's rights and created a stir in the House of Representatives by challenging King Hussein's constitutional right to dissolve the body. Her case, however, was thrown out of court.

If re-elected, Faisal said she will fight discriminatory laws, such as a law preventing the children of women government employees from receiving their mother's pension if she dies while still employed.

Despite her firebrand appeal, Faisal and other women in politics find public acceptance difficult to come by. Some members of Jordan's most powerful fundamentalist group, the Muslim Brotherhood, urge firing women in government jobs and replacing them with men to ease male unemployment.

The challenges are similar for women elsewhere in the Arab world. In Egypt's 1995 parliamentary election, only six women were elected to the 454-member house. President Hosni

Mubarak appointed four others later. Three women serve in Lebanon's 128-member parliament. In Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, United Arab Emirates and Bahrain, women cannot vote.

Jordan's King Hussein, who has modernized Jordan during his 45-year rule, gave women the right to vote and run for parliament in 1974 — though at the time, elections had been suspended since 1967. When balloting resumed in 1989, only 12 women took part. None won.

In 1993, three women ran; Faisal was the sole victor.

This year's 17 women candidates are a "very modest number, but if several of those manage to make it to parliament we would have achieved a great plus," said chief election spokesman Mazen Armouti.

Faisal inspired at least one of them — her sister, Leila.

"It is time that the women's voice is heard," Leila Faisal said. She is vying with another woman and five men in an Amman district.

Britons rally behind nanny

LONDON (AP) — Supporters of a British au pair convicted of murder in Massachusetts prayed for her freedom during Sunday services and demonstrated for it outside the U.S. Embassy.

About 25 protesters demanding the release of Louise Woodward lit candles in flower pots and wrapped a yellow ribbon around a tree outside the embassy as they waited for Hillary Rodham Clinton to arrive.

"This is the only part of America within reach," said Hazel Parker, a retired school headmistress from New Malden, 50 miles west of London.

The first lady had been on a speaking tour in Northern Ireland and was attending a reception at the embassy. But she was driven through a rear entrance of the compound and missed the protest.

Drivers passing the embassy hooted and flashed headlights in agreement with the demonstrators. But it was unclear how many Britons responded to a call by Woodward defenders for drivers to turn on their headlights at 2 p.m.

At a church service in Thornton Le Moors, near Woodward's hometown of Elton in northwest England, the congregation listened with their heads bowed as the vicar complained that Woodward was under pressure to admit guilt in the death of 8-month-old Matthew Eappen.

"It is one thing for people to know that somebody is innocent," said the Rev. Ken Davey. "But when you have other people ... actually putting pressure on you to say that they are guilty, it takes a very strong person to stand

"Nobody was happy having to do this. Nobody thought Louise intended to kill the baby."

JODIE GARBER
juror

up against that pressure."

While the trial is widely regarded in Britain as having been unfair and Thursday's verdict of second-degree murder wrong, opinion is divided on whether Woodward is innocent or should be convicted of a lesser charge.

Woodward received a mandatory life sentence and will be eligible for parole in 15 years. On Tuesday, the judge in the case will consider defense motions to throw out the verdict, order a new trial or reduce the charge — possibly to manslaughter.

In an interview with The Mail on Sunday, one juror said the panel wanted to consider manslaughter, but the judge had allowed Woodward's lawyers to rule out that option.

"Nobody liked the finding we felt compelled to reach," Jodie Garber of Cambridge, Mass., told the Mail. "Nobody was happy having to do this. Nobody thought Louise intended to kill the baby."

Woodward's supporters have raised nearly \$170,000 for a "Free Louise" fund since Thursday's verdict. In Glasgow, Scotland, an unemployed man set up a stall to collect petition

signatures and said he got more than 300 in two hours.

"I thought it was unjust and wrong," said Kenneth Rexter, 37. "It now turns out many jurors feel the same way."

Meanwhile, Swedish newspapers reported Sunday that the woman who preceded Woodward as an au pair for the Eappen family left the job after Deborah Eappen, Matthew's mother, said she was more interested in having fun than caring for children.

Those comments echoed the prosecution's contention that Woodward was frustrated by a job that limited her social life.

"Everything had been great, but suddenly one day Debbie was unpleasant and began to complain that we Swedes were only there to party and have fun and were not interested in watching children," the newspaper Dagens Nyheter quoted Jenny Vestbro as saying.

Vestbro said she decided to leave after that, but had generally good relations with the Eappens in the three months she worked for them in 1996 and ended on friendly terms.