

A man with short, dark hair, wearing a blue polo shirt with a small logo on the left chest, is speaking against a blue background. A horizontal bar with a light blue gradient is positioned below his chest, containing his name and title.

**Alexander Samokutyaev**  
Expedition 41 Flight Engineer

1

00:00:01,400 --> 00:00:06,800

Alexander Samokutyaev was born and raised in Penza, southeast of Moscow.

2

00:00:06,800 --> 00:00:11,929

As a boy he loved science and ice hockey, but he had no real doubt about what he would

3

00:00:11,929 --> 00:00:13,559

do with his life.

4

00:00:13,559 --> 00:00:18,560

A lot of children, when you ask them who they want to be, sometimes it's hard for them to

5

00:00:18,560 --> 00:00:19,619

answer.

6

00:00:19,619 --> 00:00:24,109

As long as I remember myself, it was never a difficult question for me.

7

00:00:24,109 --> 00:00:25,620

Who do you want to be?

8

00:00:25,620 --> 00:00:29,519

I always knew I was going to be a pilot.

9

00:00:29,519 --> 00:00:35,340

Maybe a little bit later, I realized I wanted to be a military pilot.

10

00:00:35,340 --> 00:00:41,250

Samokutyaev made his first flight as a pilot at age 16; after high school he went to the

11

00:00:41,250 --> 00:00:47,160

Chernigov Air Force Pilot School in Ukraine, graduating in 1992 and starting his career

12

00:00:47,160 --> 00:00:49,030  
in the Russian Air Force.

13

00:00:49,030 --> 00:00:54,640  
He graduated from the Gagarin Air Force Academy  
in 2000 and was assigned to the Gagarin Cosmonaut

14

00:00:54,640 --> 00:00:59,460  
Training Center as a division chief, before  
being selected to start cosmonaut training

15

00:00:59,460 --> 00:01:02,210  
himself in 2003.

16

00:01:02,210 --> 00:01:07,650  
He completed one spacewalk on his first flight,  
a 164-day mission to the international space

17

00:01:07,650 --> 00:01:12,440  
station as flight engineer on expeditions  
27 and 28.

18

00:01:12,440 --> 00:01:16,510  
Since then, he retired from the Russian air  
force as a colonel, and has been studying

19

00:01:16,510 --> 00:01:21,670  
finance and economics at the Russian Government  
Service Academy, but he's eager to continue

20

00:01:21,670 --> 00:01:27,800  
the exploration of space:  
...and with the prospect of flying to distant

21

00:01:27,800 --> 00:01:33,409  
planets, maybe out into the solar system,  
right now we're laying the foundation, the