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00:00:07,000 --> 00:00:07,933

Imagine leaving your home, culture and familiar language thousands of miles behind as you

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carry your nation's hope for space exploration on your shoulders.

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That's just what some of Japan's space pioneers have been doing for a number of years as

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they prepare their country's first human spaceflight facility.

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The Japanese Experiment Module is called Kibo -- which means "hope" in Japanese.

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The first two components of Kibo are now undergoing processing and checkout in the

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Space Station Processing Facility at NASA's Kennedy Space Center in Florida.

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Tetsuro Yokoyama, operations project deputy manager for Kibo, says of the cultural challenges they've faced:

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"Difference of language might be the biggest one, for which we Japanese were prepared to work with the NAS

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"For me to see situations for our bright engineers, despite their excellent knowledge and experience,

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struggle to make themselves understood -- I would assume our Japanese speak in English better than America

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Koki Oikawa, who is in charge of both pressurized Kibo components as well as their launch

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site operations, has seen the mutual understanding evolve:

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"After some accumulated experience in the joint operations at KSC, the American team started to understand o

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and even our individual personalities and ways of thinking.

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While Kibo's orbiting of Earth as part of the space station will be the tangible result of the cooperative effort,

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Scott Higginbotham -- NASA's payload manager for the Kibo elements -- recognizes the commonalty that exist