



NORTH DAKOTA STATE AND LOCAL INTELLIGENCE CENTER

CI/KR Ticker

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NORTH DAKOTA AND REGIONAL

At Least 3 Dead as Tornadoes Strike North Dakota, Officials Say

At least three people were killed in North Dakota after severe thunderstorms and tornadoes ripped across North Dakota and Minnesota overnight Friday, officials said. Storm chasers found two people dead in a damaged home near Enderlin, N.D., which is about 175 miles east of Bismarck, on Friday night, the Cass County Sheriff's Office said on Facebook. A third person killed in the severe weather was discovered by the Enderlin Sheldon Fire Department and "deputies found extensive damage to the area," the sheriff's office said. About 10 homes in the area were destroyed, said Jon Anderson, the chief of the Enderlin Sheldon Fire Department. The National Weather Service confirmed that at least two tornadoes touched down near Enderlin and Spiritwood.

Source: <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/06/21/weather/tornadoes-deaths-north-dakota-minnesota.html>

Company Eyes 300-Acre Data Center Development in Bismarck

A data center campus could be coming to North Dakota. First reported by the Bismarck Tribune, Aurum Capital Ventures, Inc. this week told the Burleigh County Commission it is considering buying land within Bismarck city limits for a new data center. The company is reportedly looking at 300 acres of county-owned land in east Bismarck at the same listed address as the Buckstop Junction historical village. Aurum is also considering a purchase of "several hundred acres" of state land north of the county land. Further details on the potential development weren't shared. Aurum Capital Ventures, founded in 2019, describes itself as a sustainable data center firm focused on modular developments for AI and HPC workloads.

Source: <https://www.datacenterdynamics.com/300-acre-data-center-development>

North Dakota's Garrison Dam Gets Millions of Dollars for Upgrade Work

Infrastructure upgrades to the Garrison Dam continue to move forward over a decade after structural weaknesses became apparent when the dam's spillway was first used. Nearly \$24 million has been awarded by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for dredging and replacement of riprap protections that support the dam's spillway, according to recent announcements from U.S. Sens. John Hoeven and Kevin Cramer. The effort is expected to be completed in 2028. Last November, a separate \$22 million for dredging of the spillway approach was awarded. That work is expected to be finished in 2027. A broader Garrison Dam Spillway Modification Project is ongoing to address the spillway concerns. The aim of the project is to allow the Corps to better control flows from Lake Sakakawea in the event of major flooding. The lake is the third largest water reservoir in the U.S. The recently awarded funding is not directly connected to the modification project, according to Chief of the Army Corps Dam and Levee Safety Branch Andrew Barry, but it will address bank erosion and sediment accumulation in the spillway approach which are immediate maintenance needs.

Source: <https://bismarcktribune.com/news/state-regional/article>

UND Launches North Dakota's First-Ever Satellite Mission

The University of North Dakota (UND) made history this past weekend as it launched the state's first-ever satellite mission into orbit. The pair of satellites developed through UND's Rendezvous & Operations for Autonomous Docking and Servicing (ROADS) program was scheduled to lift off Saturday at 4:19 p.m. CT from Vandenberg Space Force Base in California. The launch was carried out aboard a SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket and livestreamed via the company website. UND partnered with AVS USA, an engineering firm based in New York, to build the satellites, which will orbit Earth at low altitudes from 1,200 miles or less. Once in space, they can be controlled from the university's satellite operation center atop Odegard Hall. "This marks a major step toward establishing UND's presence in the aerospace industry," said Ron Fevig, associate professor of Space Studies and the project's technical lead. "We're developing the capability to operate satellites — right here in North Dakota."

Source: <https://www.kxnet.com/north-dakotas-first-ever-satellite-mission>

NATIONAL

U.S. Launches Strikes on 3 Iranian Nuclear Facilities, Trump Says

The United States launched strikes on three Iranian nuclear facilities, President Trump announced Saturday evening, calling them a "spectacular military success." "The U.S. military carried out massive precision strikes on the three key nuclear assemblies in the Iranian regime: Fordo, Natanz and Isfahan," President Trump said in a national address from the White House Saturday night. "Our objective was the destruction of Iran's nuclear enrichment capacity and a stop to the nuclear threat posed by the world's number one state sponsor of terror." Defense Department officials confirmed that American B-2 Spirit bombers were used to strike Fordo early Sunday local time, with each of those B-2s armed with U.S.-produced "bunker-buster" bombs known as the GBU-57 Massive Ordnance Penetrators, or MOPs — bombs so heavy that they could only be dropped by a B-2. The U.S. reached out to Iran diplomatically Saturday to say the strikes are all the U.S. plans and that regime change efforts are not planned, the sources said.

Source: <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/u-s-launches-strikes-iranian-nuclear-facilities-trump-says/>

OpenAI Wins \$200 Million U.S. Defense Contract

ChatGPT maker OpenAI was awarded a \$200 million contract to provide the U.S. Defense Department with artificial intelligence tools, the Pentagon said in a statement on Monday. "Under this award, the performer will develop prototype frontier AI capabilities to address critical national security challenges in both warfighting and enterprise domains," the Pentagon said. The work will be primarily performed in and near Washington with an estimated completion date of July 2026, the Pentagon said. In a blog post, OpenAI said the contract represents the first arrangement in a new initiative named OpenAI for Government, which includes the existing ChatGPT Gov product. OpenAI for Government will give U.S. government bodies access custom AI models for national security, support and product roadmap information. Meanwhile, OpenAI is working to build additional computing power in the U.S. In January, Altman appeared alongside President Donald Trump at the White House to announce the \$500 billion Stargate project to build AI infrastructure in the U.S.

Source: <https://www.cnn.com/2025/06/16/openai-wins-200-million-us-defense-contract.html>

The Department of Energy Axes \$3.7 Billion in Clean Energy Project Grants

Energy Secretary Chris Wright said Friday he canceled nearly \$4 billion in project grants, in another massive blow to clean energy and greenhouse gas emissions reduction efforts in the U.S. under President Donald Trump's administration. The grants, largely awarded during former President Joe Biden's final few months in the White House, were primarily for programs to capture carbon emissions and store them underground. Other targeted efforts span cleaner cement, natural gas and more. The news was a swift follow-up to plans the Energy Department announced earlier this month to review 179 funded projects, totaling over \$15 billion, that were awarded by the Office of Clean Energy Demonstrations created under the 2021 bipartisan infrastructure law.

Source: <https://apnews.com/article/climate-energy-projects-funding-canceled>

State Department Issues 'Worldwide Caution' Security Alert

On Sunday evening, the State Department issued a "worldwide caution" security alert, almost 24 hours on from attacks on Iranian nuclear sites by the United States. In a release on its website, the State Department said, "The conflict between Israel and Iran has resulted in disruptions to travel and periodic closure of airspace across the Middle East. There is the potential for demonstrations against U.S. citizens and interests abroad. Low-level cyber-attacks against U.S. networks by pro-Iranian hackers are likely, and cyber actors affiliated with the Iranian government may conduct attacks against U.S. networks. Iran has said it will retaliate against attacks on its three nuclear sites in Fordow, Natanz, and Esfahan. Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian said there will be a response.

Source: <https://www.newsnationnow.com/world/state-department-worldwide-caution-alert/>

INTERNATIONAL

Chinese Military Unveils Mosquito-Sized Drones that can Perform Battlefield Missions

China's National University of Defense Technology (NUDT) has developed a mosquito-sized drone designed for covert military operations. Details are a little thin, but its development is likely focusing on surveillance and reconnaissance missions in complex or sensitive environments. The drone's main unique selling point is its compact size, making it relatively easy to hide or conceal. It has two leaflike wings that are reportedly able to flap just like an insect's wings. To make it work, the drone features advanced integration of power systems, control electronics, and sensors, all in an incredibly tiny package. These drones can operate undetected, making them valuable in covert warfare, espionage, or tactical reconnaissance. Its development may also signal a broader trend. For example, the U.S., Norway, and other countries are also investing in micro-UAVs for both military and non-military purposes.

Source: <https://www.yahoo.com/news/chinese-military-unveils-mosquito-sized-drone>

China Accuses Taiwan of Backing Cyberattacks on 1,000 Sensitive Targets

Chinese authorities have accused a hacker group they allege is backed by Taiwan's ruling Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) of orchestrating cyberattacks on up to 1,000 sensitive mainland networks, including military, energy and government systems. The claim was made public by the Guangzhou city police, who said the group used "rudimentary and crude" methods to launch widespread attacks from overseas IP addresses, including from the United States, France and Japan. Mainland cyber investigators said the group had scanned more than 1,000 key information systems across more than 10 provinces in recent years, according to the police report. Targets were reported to include military industrial assets, power grids, water infrastructure, transport systems and government networks.

Source: <https://www.scmp.com/mainland-china-accuses-taiwan-backing-cyberattacks>

Israel Killed at Least 14 Scientists in an Unprecedented Attack on Iran's Nuclear Program

Israel's tally of the war damage it wrought on Iran includes the targeted killings of at least 14 scientists, an unprecedented attack on the brains behind Iran's nuclear program that outside experts say can only set it back, not stop it. Israel's ambassador to France Joshua Zarka told AP that Israeli strikes killed at least 14 physicists and nuclear engineers, top Iranian scientific leaders who "basically had everything in their mind." International humanitarian law bans the intentional killing of civilians and non-combatants. But legal scholars say those restrictions might not apply to nuclear scientists if they were part of the Iranian armed forces or directly participating in hostilities. Israel has long been suspected of killing Iranian nuclear scientists but previously didn't claim responsibility as it did this time. In 2020, Iran blamed Israel for killing its top nuclear scientist, Mohsen Fakhrizadeh, with a remote-controlled machine gun.

Source: <https://apnews.com/article/israel-iran-nuclear-science-attacks>

Ukraine Hits Russian Plant Producing Military Drones Used to Terrorize Civilians

Ukrainian drones struck a Russian military factory that produces combat aircraft, causing explosions and damaging a nearby football stadium on the night of 25 June. Ukraine has consistently targeted Russian military facilities, defense manufacturing plants, and energy systems both in occupied areas and within Russian territory aiming to disrupt military supply chains and weaken Russia's ability to sustain combat operations. Ukrainian sources identified the primary target as the Atlant Aero UAV factory, claiming the strike caused an explosion and subsequent fire at the facility. According to Andrii Kovalenko, head of Ukraine's Center for Countering Disinformation, the factory serves as a key component in Russia's military-industrial complex, producing combat drones including space-capable variants, drone components, specialized equipment, and control systems.

Source: <https://euromaidanpress.com/ukraine-hits-russian-plant-producing-military-drones>

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