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 Federal Bureau of Investigation - Seal

July 15, 2025
Federal Bureau of Investigation
Daily News Briefing

(In coordination with the Office of Public Affairs)

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COUNTERTERRORISM

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WASHINGTON SCHEDULE

IN THE NEWS

Continued Reporting: Deputy Director Bongino Still in Limbo

[CNN](#) (07/14, Collins, Holmes, et al.) reported that Deputy Director Bongino showed up to work after a fallout with AG Bondi over the handling of the Jeffrey Epstein files, but his long-term future in the role remains uncertain. As of Monday morning, no one in leadership at the Justice Department had spoken to Deputy Director Bongino since Wednesday, when he implied that he could no longer continue in his position as long as AG Bondi was there. According to the article, the threat infuriated Trump, who spent the weekend fuming over both Deputy Director Bongino and Director Patel. Most of his fury was directed at Deputy Director Bongino, causing aides to expect that the deputy director would depart his job in the coming days. But Vice President JD Vance spent the weekend attempting to mediate, at times fielding calls from Director Patel, Deputy Director Bongino, and AG Bondi, sources said. The article highlighted that President Trump, asked Sunday whether Deputy Director Bongino was still the FBI's deputy director, told reporters, "I think so," and indicated they had spoken. "I think so. I spoke to him today," the president said. "Dan Bongino is a very good guy. I've known him for a long time. I've done his show many, many times. And he sounded terrific, actually, no, I think he's in good shape." In a statement Monday, White House spokesman Harrison Fields made mention of AG Bondi, Director Patel, and Deputy Director Bongino as part of Trump's "incredible team of Law and Order patriots who are committed to Making America Safe Again and restoring the integrity of our criminal justice system." The statement said: "AG Bondi, Director Patel, Deputy Director Bongino, and the countless other heroes of our law enforcement community are dedicated to executing President Trump's agenda of protecting civil rights, safeguarding communities, holding criminals accountable, and defending victims. This work will continue in lockstep and with unprecedented success." The article explained that frustration over the Epstein case had been brewing inside the administration for months. But it came to a head during a Wednesday meeting, which included Deputy Director Bongino, AG Bondi, Director Patel, and White House chief of staff Susie Wiles, sources said. Deputy Director Bongino and Director Patel were confronted about whether they were behind a story that said the Justice Department stopped the FBI from releasing more information. Deputy Director Bongino denied leaking that notion to NewsNation, which published the story. The article noted that Trump has firmly sided with AG Bondi throughout the Epstein memo controversy. He publicly defended her and attended a soccer game Sunday with her by his side, showing how Deputy Director Bongino miscalculated the situation, officials said. [The Daily Beast](#) (07/14, Brancolini) reported that Tucker Carlson blames AG Bondi for damaging Deputy Director Bongino's career due to the Jeffrey Epstein scandal. Carlson claims that AG Bondi's interview, suggesting she had Epstein's client list, led to backlash against Deputy Director Bongino. Carlson believes Deputy Director Bongino's reputation has been hurt, making it difficult for him to return to his podcast audience, and accuses AG Bondi of being "insecure" and trying to please her audience. Additional reporting on the story was provided by [Benzinga](#) (07/14, Bhattacharjee), [Newsweek](#) (07/14, Clark), [The Guardian](#) (07/14, Campbell) (2), [Forbes](#) (07/14, Durkee, Folk), [Daily Mail](#) (07/14, Caralle), [Raw Story](#) (07/14, Chapman) (2), [New York Magazine](#) (07/14, Hartmann), [MSNBC](#) (07/14, Benen), [Baltimore Sun](#) (07/14, Altman-Devilbiss), [NewsNation](#) (07/14, Falzone), [The Daily Beast](#) (07/14, Tomazin), [New York Post](#) (07/14, Nava), [The Independent](#) (07/14, Hawkinson), [Washington Examiner](#) (07/14, Notheis), [NPR](#) (07/14, Fowler), and [The National Desk](#) (07/14, Galka). Opinion pieces were published by the [Washington Post](#) (07/14, Bump, Hohmann, McArdle), [Bloomberg](#) (07/14, O'Brien), [CNN](#) (07/14, Klein), and [The Hill](#) (07/14, Soave). [CNN](#) (07/15, Collinson) also posted an analysis piece on the story. Broadcast coverage was posted by [MSNBC](#) (07/14, Video), [CBS News](#) (07/14, Video), and [Daily Mail](#) (07/14, Video).

DOJ Urges Supreme Court to Turn Away Epstein Accomplice Ghislaine Maxwell's Appeal

[ABC News](#) (07/14, Hill) reported that the DOJ has urged the Supreme Court to reject Ghislaine Maxwell's appeal, arguing that her prosecution was not barred by Jeffrey Epstein's 2007 non-prosecution agreement. According to the article, Maxwell, who is serving a 20-year prison sentence for conspiring with Epstein to abuse underage girls, claims that the agreement's co-conspirator clause should have protected her from prosecution in New York. The article noted that the DOJ argues that the clause only applied to the Southern District of Florida and was not intended to bind other federal districts, and that Maxwell was not an intended beneficiary of the agreement. Additional reporting on the story was provided by [The Daily Beast](#) (07/14, Vaillancourt), [Fox News](#) (07/14, Oliver), [Law & Crime](#) (07/14, Naham), [Newsweek](#) (07/14, Plummer), [Washington Examiner](#) (07/14, Deese), [New York Post](#) (07/14, Kochman), [New York Daily News](#) (07/14, Crane-Newman), [The Independent](#) (07/14, Dobkin), [USA Today](#) (07/14, Bagchi), [The New York Sun](#) (07/14, Curl), [Daily Mail](#) (07/14, Caralle), [Newsmax](#) (07/14, Reyner) and [Business Insider](#) (07/14, Shamsian).

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Epstein Hired Private Investigators to Intimidate FBI Agents

[Rolling Stone](#) (07/14, Boguslaw) reported that Jeffrey Epstein hired private investigators to follow, intimidate, and surveil FBI special agents investigating allegations that he paid underage women for sex. According to the article, the tactic was part of Epstein's efforts to kill the investigation, which also included investigating DOJ officials' family members and filing legal briefs to undermine the charges. The article explained that FBI agents were subjected to surveillance, harassment, and intimidation, with one agent moving to a gated community to reduce the constant harassment, according to law enforcement officials who spoke with Rolling Stone. The article highlighted a post that Director Patel made on Saturday on X: "The conspiracy theories just aren't true, never have been. It's an honor to serve the President of the United States @realDonaldTrump — and I'll continue to do so for as long as he calls on me." The article added that both Director Patel and Deputy Director Bongino have become increasingly distraught with AG Bondi over issues beyond the Epstein disclosures, and have registered their discontent to Justice Department leadership.

Under Trump, the Government Mobilizes in Response to Fringe Theories

The [Washington Post](#) (07/14, Bendavid) reported that the Trump administration has been mobilizing government resources to investigate and respond to fringe theories and conspiracy theories, often promoted by President Donald Trump himself. According to the article, examples include investigating a debunked claim that Jeffrey Epstein's client list was being concealed, revamping the Social Security database based on a false claim that millions of dead people were receiving benefits, and developing plans to resettle White farmers from South Africa due to a false claim of systematic massacres. Christopher O'Leary, who spent more than two decades as an FBI counterterrorism agent, noted that leaders of the Justice Department and FBI had promoted the Epstein conspiracy theories before taking office. "Once they came into their jobs, they were responsible for uncovering the details beneath this conspiracy, which did not exist, so they had to go through the motions," O'Leary said. "The review, in my assessment, was performative." It took time from counterterrorism, counterespionage, and other important matters, he added. "You have finite resources, and if you are focused on something like this, you are not doing other things you should be doing," O'Leary said. "At one point, nearly the entire New York field office, certainly on the criminal side, had to be focused on this, because it was the attorney general's priority." The article explained that when Trump took office, his aides deployed teams of agents, analysts, attorneys, and experts to comb through volumes of evidence, saying they were committed to transparency on the issue. Then last week, they disclosed

their findings: As three previous investigations had concluded, Epstein had no client list, was not blackmailing anyone, and died by his own hand. "One of our highest priorities is combating child exploitation and bringing justice to victims," the FBI and Justice Department said in a memo. "Perpetuating unfounded theories about Epstein serves neither of those ends."

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COUNTERTERRORISM

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CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS

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Opinion: Crime Drops but Trust Erode, FBI at the Crossroads in Trump's America

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INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Trump Reaches Deal to Send Weapons to Ukraine

[Wall Street Journal](#), [Fox News](#), [Bloomberg](#), [NPR](#), [Politico](#), [CNN](#), [Washington Examiner](#)

Plan to Indefinitely Displace Palestinians Threatens to Derail Gaza Truce

[New York Times](#)

Palestinians Call Out IDF Following Beating Death of American Man

[CNN](#)

59 Palestinians in Gaza Killed by Israeli Airstrikes or Shot Dead While Seeking Aid

[NBC News](#)

Air India Chief Says Preliminary Crash Report Raises Fresh Questions

[Wall Street Journal](#)

E.U. Is Delaying Retaliatory Tariffs on U.S. Goods in Hope of Reaching a Deal by Aug. 1

[NBC News](#)

Dozens Killed in Clashes Between Druze and Bedouin in Southern Syria

[BBC](#)

Australia PM Albanese to Discuss Trade, Security in Meeting With China's Xi

[Reuters](#)

China Suffers \$7.6 Billion in Losses From Natural Disasters in H1 2025

[Reuters](#)

Brazil Still Waiting for U.S. Reply to May Trade Proposal, Vice President Says

[Reuters](#)

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OTHER WASHINGTON NEWS

Biden Chief of Staff Reportedly Gave Approval for Autopen Pardons on Final Day in Office

[Fox News](#), [Washington Examiner](#), [New York Times](#), [The Hill](#), [New York Post](#)

Trump Admin Seeks to Overturn Federal Restraining Order Limiting ICE Operations in Los Angeles

[Fox News](#), [Los Angeles Times](#), [CNN](#), [LA Mag](#), [The Center Square](#)

With Temporary Protections for Some Afghans Set to Expire, Appeals Court Steps In

[Associated Press](#), [Reuters](#), [New York Times](#), [CBS News](#), [Newsmax](#)

A Chaotic Raid, 360 Arrests, and a Tragic Death: What Happened at California's Glass House Farms

[Associated Press](#), [Los Angeles Times](#), [The Guardian](#), [People](#), [HuffPost](#)

ICE Declares Millions of Undocumented Immigrants Ineligible for Bond Hearings

[Washington Post](#), [Reuters](#)

The Federal Government Is Retreating From Student Lending

[Wall Street Journal](#)

Mother of Slain Soldier Held by Hamas Terrorists for 4K Days Makes Plea to Trump

[Fox News](#)

U.S. Undocumented Farm Workers Feel ‘Hunted Like Animals’ Amid Trump’s Immigration Raids

[The Guardian](#)

Under Fire for Cost Overruns, Powell Asks Watchdog to Review the Fed’s \$2.5 Billion Renovation Plan

[CNN](#)

Obama’s Blunt Message for Democrats: ‘Toughen Up’

[CNN](#)

Facing Painful Cuts, the V.A. Reported Dubious Savings to DOGE

[New York Times](#)

Cuomo Will Stay in the Race for N.Y.C. Mayor to Challenge Mamdani

[New York Times](#)

Trump’s Welcome Crackdown on Chinese Ownership of American Farmland

[Washington Examiner](#)

Supreme Court Allows Trump Administration to Implement Widespread Education Department Layoffs

[NBC News](#)

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WASHINGTON SCHEDULE

White House

President Trump

- 9:00 AM: In-Town Pool Call Time
- 11:15 AM: Out-of-Town Travel Pool Call Time
- 12:30 PM: The President departs the White House en route Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
- 2:30 PM: The President participates in the Inaugural Pennsylvania Energy and Innovation Event
- 5:40 PM: The President departs Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, en route The White House
- 6:50 PM: The President arrives The White House

Vice President Vance

- No official presidential schedule released or announced.

US Senate

- Hearings to examine the nominations of John Arrigo, of Florida, to be Ambassador to the Portuguese Republic, Christine Toretta, of Pennsylvania, to be Ambassador to the Kingdom of Sweden, and Michael G. Waltz, of Florida, to be Representative of the United States of America to the Sessions of the General Assembly of the United Nations during his tenure of service as Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations, and to be the Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations, with the Rank of Ambassador, and the Representative of the United States of America in the Security Council of the United Nations, all of the Department of State. – 10:00 AM – Host: Foreign Relations

- Hearings to examine smash and grab, focusing on criminal networks and organized theft. – 10:15 AM – Host: Judiciary
- Hearings to examine voices of the vaccine injured. – 3:00 PM – Host: Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
- Closed business meeting to consider pending calendar business. – 3:00 PM – Host: Intelligence
- Hearings to examine stakeholder perspectives on Federal oversight of digital commodities. – 3:30 PM – Host: Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry

US House of Representatives

- Hearing: "Surveillance Sabotage and Strikes: Industry Perspectives on How Drone Warfare Abroad Is Transforming Threats atHome" – 10:00 AM – Host: Committee on Homeland Security
- Hearing: Breaking China's Chokehold on Critical Mineral Supply Chains. – 10:00 AM – Host: Committee on Foreign Affairs
- Hearing: Bankruptcy Law: Overview and Legislative Reforms. – 10:00 AM – Host: Committee on the Judiciary
- Markup: H.R. 3838 - Streamlining Procurement for Effective Execution and Delivery and National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2026. – 10:00 AM – Host: Committee on Armed Services
- Markup: Fiscal Year 2026 Interior Environment and Related Agencies Bill. – 10:00 AM – Host: Committee on Appropriations
- Markup: Markup of an Amendment in the Nature of a Substitute to H.R. 4275 the "Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2025". – 10:00 AM – Host: Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
- Business Meeting: Business Meeting. – 10:15 AM – Host: Committee on Energy and Commerce
- Hearing: Antisemitism in Higher Education: Examining the Role of Faculty Funding and Ideology. – 10:15 AM – Host: Committee on Education and Workforce
- Markup: Committee on Natural Resources Full Committee Markup of:H.R. 281 Rep. Hageman Grizzly Bear State Management Act of 2025 Amendments to H.R. 281 must be drafted to the amendment in the nature of a substitute attached to this noticeH.R. 435 Rep. Issa Direct Hire To Fight FiresH.R. 556 Rep. Wittman Protecting Access for Hunters and Anglers Act of 2025 Amendments to H.R. 556 must be drafted to the amendment in the nature of a substitute attached to this noticeH.R. 831 – 10:15 AM – Host: Committee on Natural Resources
- Markup: Markup of One Bill. – 10:30 AM – Host: Committee on Energy and Commerce
- Markup: Fiscal Year 2026 National Security Department of State and Related Programs Bill. – 11:00 AM – Host: Committee on Appropriations
- Markup: Fiscal Year 2026 Commerce Justice Science and Related Agencies Bill. – 12:00 PM – Host: Committee on Appropriations
- Hearing: How Leftist Nonprofit Networks Exploit Federal Tax Dollars to Advance a Radical Agenda. – 2:00 PM – Host: Budget
- Hearing: Case by Case: Returning Parole to Its Proper Purpose – 2:00 PM – Host: Budget
- Hearing: FY26 State Department Posture: Management and Resources. – 2:00 PM – Host: Committee on Foreign Affairs

Cabinet Members

- Secretary of State Rubio meets with Italian Foreign Minister Antonio Tajani at the Department of State at 9:30 AM.

Visitors

- No events scheduled.

General Events

- Brookings: Rising risks of conflict in the Horn of Africa – Tuesday, July 15, 2025. Location: Online event, 11:00 AM. In the summer of 2021, Ethiopia was in the midst of a brutal civil war. Tigrayan forces advanced toward Addis Ababa after breaking a siege imposed by Ethiopian federal troops allied with Eritrean forces. Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed and Eritrean President Isaias Afwerki viewed the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) as an existential threat and joined forces to defeat it. But their alliance fractured after the 2022 Pretoria agreement ended the war in Tigray.
- CSIS: Senator Shaheen on U.S. Soft Power and Competition with China – Tuesday, July 15, 2025. Location: Online event, 8:45 AM. On Tuesday, July 15 at 8:45 a.m. ET, CSIS welcomes Senate Foreign Relations Committee Ranking Member Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH) for a fireside chat on U.S. soft power and competition with China. The fireside chat, moderated by CSIS President and CEO Dr. John J. Hamre, will be followed by a dialogue with a panel of experts.
- American Progress: Democracy on the Line: Global Lessons on Countering Authoritarianism – Tuesday, July 15, 2025. Location: Online event, 10:00 AM. Join the Center for American Progress for a critical conversation on what it takes to defend democracy.
- Hudson Institute: The Iranian Regime Under Pressure: What's Next? – Tuesday, July 15, 2025. Location: Online event, 8:00 AM. Operation Midnight Hammer, the United States' recent strike against Iranian nuclear infrastructure, and Israel's Operation Rising Lion, which dismantled Iran's covert infrastructure and paved the way for the US attack, have forced the Islamic Republic into a new phase of strategic decision-making.
- Hudson Institute: Drone Warfare and Securing America's Military Against Emerging Threats with Senator John Boozman – Tuesday, July 15, 2025. Location: Online event, 9:00 AM. In Operation Spiderweb, Ukrainian forces smuggled drones deep into Russia and used them to attack grounded aircraft. This tested a fundamental assumption about warfare: that physical distance from the frontline can guarantee safety from enemy strikes. Asymmetric warfare, waged with capabilities such as long-range drones, can change the strategic fundamentals of a conflict at relatively low human and material cost. American military planners now face the urgent question of how to secure installations and bases, both in the United States homeland and abroad, against this new threat.
- Hudson Institute: Countering Communist Cyborgs: China's Dystopian AI Ambitions and the Robotics Race – Tuesday, July 15, 2025. Location: Online event, 2:00 PM. Artificial intelligence is widely recognized as this century's critical technology. The nation that leads in AI computational power, innovation, and diffusion will determine the primary application of the technology, either in defense of freedom and individual liberty or in service of autocracy and tyranny.

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