



Lack of diversity creating bias in AI

INSIDE, 4A

TIMES RECORD

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Trump-Putin bromance flowered then soured

U.S. president appears to be shifting his thinking

**Kim Hjelmggaard, Francesca Chambers
and Cybele Mayes-Osterman**
USA TODAY

President Donald Trump said he would end the war in Ukraine within his first 24 hours in office. But now, more than 4,000 hours in, Trump's patience with Russian Presi-

dent Vladimir Putin, whom the U.S. president in June called "very kind," appears to be wearing thin. Relations have hit a wall as Russia's leader has pushed forward with intensifying drone and missile attacks on Ukrainian cities while appearing to repeatedly rebuff Trump's attempts to broker a ceasefire.

"We get a lot of (expletive) thrown at us by Putin, if you want to know the truth," Trump told reporters on July 9, summing up what Ukrainians and other seasoned Russia watchers have been saying for two decades. "He's very nice to us all the time, but it turns out to be meaningless."

Trump initiated direct talks with Putin shortly after taking office, saying –

See **BROMANCE**, Page 2A



President Donald Trump, right, has spent years praising and appearing to carefully avoid criticizing Russian President Vladimir Putin.
MARCOS BRINDICCI/REUTERS



Oklahoma City's Jaylin Williams celebrates with Isaiah Joe at Scissortail Park as the Oklahoma City Thunder celebrate their first NBA Finals title win with a champions parade throughout downtown Oklahoma City on June 24.
SARAH PHIPPS/THE OKLAHOMAN

From Grizzlies to Glory

Fort Smith celebrates
NBA Title with parade

George "Clay" Mitchell
Fort Smith Southwest Times Record
USA TODAY NETWORK

Fort Smith will celebrate the Oklahoma City Thunder's win of the NBA title with two of its own, as the city will present Thunder in the Fort on July 24, featuring a parade for Jaylin Williams and Isaiah Joe down Garrison Avenue. The event begins at 4 p.m. at the Bakery District, with the parade starting at 6 p.m. Williams and Joe will return to

the Bakery District after the parade for speeches. For Michael Beaumont, the Fort Smith athletics and activities director, it's almost a storybook tale. "You have two young men from the same city, who went to the same middle school, the same high school, and won a state championship," Beaumont said. "They end up at the same college in their home state, and end up on the same team together and win an NBA world championship. That's pretty good for a couple of kids from Fort Smith, Arkansas." The Thunder finished with a franchise-record 68-14 (.829), capturing the

Northwest Division and the top seed in the Western Conference. They led the league in net rating (+12.8) and outscored opponents by an average of 12.9 points per game, surpassing even the legendary 1971-72 Lakers. The team was ranked fourth in offensive rating (120.3) and first in defensive rating (107.5). Shai Gilgeous-Alexander averaged 32.7 PPG (league high), 6.4 APG, and 51.9% shooting, earning both the NBA MVP and Finals MVP honors. Chet Holmgren (8.7 RPG, 2.2 BPG), Isaiah Hartenstein (10.7 RPG), Jalen Williams

See **NBA**, Page 2A

Another forecasting tool is scrapped

Experts: Government
cuts damage U.S. status
as global science leader

Dinah Voyles Pulver
USA TODAY

The heart-wrenching July 4 flooding in Texas served as a stark reminder of the importance of accurate and timely weather forecasts. As extreme rainfall events grow more intense, such tragedies are expected to increase. Further improvement to forecasts is critical, but meteorologists worry that with the additional cuts planned by the Trump administration, the nation's weather and climate research programs won't be able to keep up. The latest blow was the announcement by the U.S. Navy that it would no longer transmit data from aging satellites past June 30, roughly 15 months earlier than expected. Later, the department extended the deadline to July 31. Without those satellite images, hurricane forecast accuracy could be compromised, say current and former scientists with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Polar researchers, who use the images to measure the extent of sea ice, hope to acquire the same data through a Japanese government satellite instead. In any other year, the satellite snafu might not have gathered much attention. But this summer, it exacerbates mounting concerns about the accuracy of weather prediction amid contract cancellations, staff reductions and

See **TOOL**, Page 2A

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