

Russia rocket crash caused by engine

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Russia's Federal Space Agency has said a first stage engine shutdown caused a Russian carrier rocket to crash in Kazakhstan.

The agency said the Dnepr rocket, a converted ballistic missile that crashed this week shortly after launching from the Baikonur space center, did not cause any casualties or environmental damage when it crashed, the country's Novosti newspaper reported Friday.

"During the launch of a Dnepr carrier rocket, which was to have orbited 18 Russian and foreign-made (mini-) satellites, the rocket's first stage engine experienced an emergency shutdown," said Igor Panarin, the Federal Space Agency's press secretary. "This is the agency's official viewpoint."

Panarin said the agency had not pinpointed the exact location of the crash.

"A search started in the morning, but the rocket has not been discovered yet," he said. "The rocket most likely fell in an uninhabited area, which will complicate the search."

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