

TODAY'S MEDIA TRENDS

RT

MARCH 6, 2026

THE G D E L T P R O J E C T

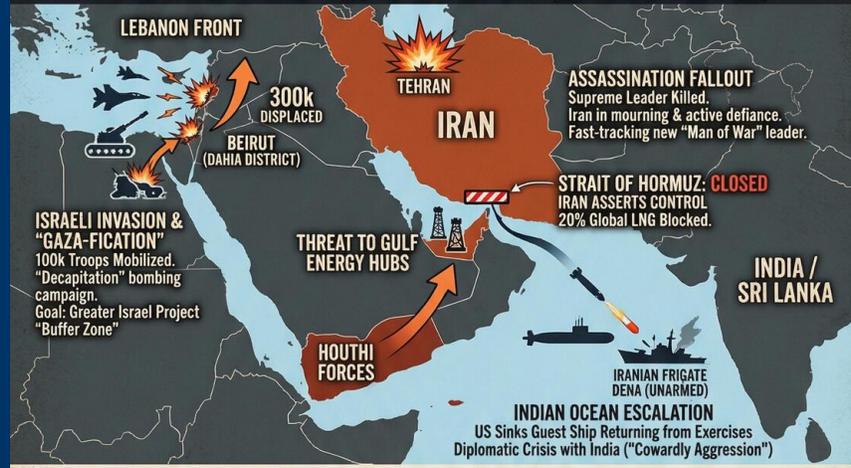
THE EXPANSION OF GLOBAL CONFLICT: US-ISRAELI "EPIC FURY" & THE BRINK OF TOTAL REGIONAL WAR

DAY 7: THE SHIFT TO "FOREVER WAR" DOCTRINE

OPERATION EPIC FURY: TOTAL DECONSTRUCTION  Trump Administration Abandons "Anti-War" Stance for "Unconditional Surrender" Ultimatum. Dept. of Defense Renamed "DEPARTMENT OF WAR"

TARGET: IRANIAN STATE INFRASTRUCTURE 

THE MULTI-FRONT REGIONAL THEATER (DAY-AT-A-GLANCE)



GLOBAL RIPPLE EFFECTS: ENERGY & GEOPOLITICS



DEEP DIVE: TRENDS, THEMES & STRATEGIC FORESIGHT

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| <p>THE END OF INTERNATIONAL LAW</p>  <p>TERMINUS OF "LEGAL WARFARE" "Illegal" category retired. Targeting of schools, hospitals, guest ships normalized. Shift to "Barbarism" and "Eye for an Eye" deterrents.</p> | <p>ASYMMETRICAL ATTRITION STRATEGY</p>  <p>RESISTANCE DOCTRINE (Hezbollah, IRGC, Houthis) Aim: Exhaust global economy & US financial resources via infrastructure targeting. Not seeking conventional victory, but economic collapse.</p> | <p>STRATEGIC FORESIGHT (SHORT TO LONG TERM)</p>  <p>SHORT TERM: Massive humanitarian crisis in Lebanon. Retaliatory strikes on Dubai "bubble". New hardline Iranian leadership.</p> <p>MEDIUM TERM: The "Stalingrad Effect" – Grinding war of attrition maxing out US military. EU social unrest.</p> <p>LONG TERM: Permanent shift to overland Eurasian trade routes. Total "Balkanization" of Middle East OR expulsion of US forces.</p> |
|---|--|--|

| | | |
|--|--|--|
|  <p>INTERNATIONAL POLICY: Prepare for end of US maritime security. Global South must harden critical infrastructure.</p> |  <p>INVESTORS: Pivot from maritime LNG to overland pipelines. Gulf Sovereign Risk is "extinction-level".</p> |  <p>DIPLOMACY: Shift toward BRICS+ for conflict resolution as UN framework fails.</p> |
|--|--|--|

TODAY'S MEDIA TRENDS

RT

MARCH 6, 2026

THE EXPANSION OF GLOBAL CONFLICT: US-ISRAELI "EPIC FURY" OPERATIONS AND THE BRINK OF TOTAL REGIONAL WAR

DAY-AT-A-GLANCE

The seventh day of the US-Israeli war on Iran has seen a dramatic expansion of hostilities into a multi-front regional conflict, marked by the confirmed assassination of the Iranian Supreme Leader and a full-scale Israeli ground and air offensive into Lebanon. The Trump administration has abandoned the "anti-war" posturing of its campaign in favor of a "forever war" doctrine, characterized by the renaming of the Department of Defense to the [Department of War](#) and a demand for the unconditional surrender of the Iranian state. This shift represents a total abandonment of previous "minimalist" rules of engagement, replaced by Operation Epic Fury, a campaign intended to deconstruct Iranian military and civilian infrastructure entirely.

The conflict has spilled into the Indian Ocean, where a US submarine sank the unarmed Iranian training vessel Dena, killing over 100 sailors and causing a diplomatic crisis with India, the host of the naval exercises from

which the ship was returning. Simultaneously, Israel has launched a massive "decapitation" and "carpet bombing" campaign in Lebanon, specifically targeting the [Dahia district](#) of Beirut. Israeli officials have overtly stated their intent to "Gaza-fy" Lebanon, displacing hundreds of thousands of civilians to create a "buffer zone" and pursue the "Greater Israel Project" that seeks territorial expansion from the Nile to the Euphrates.

Globally, energy markets are in a state of hyper-volatility as Iran asserts control over the Strait of Hormuz and Yemen's Houthi forces threaten to target energy infrastructure in Gulf monarchies that assist the US. While Western markets face skyrocketing gas prices, Russia and China appear to be leveraging long-term pipeline strategies to bypass the maritime vulnerabilities now crippling European and Asian energy security. The day's events suggest a total breakdown of the post-WWII international legal order, with all parties now preparing for a war of attrition that could last months or years.

MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS

- **Trump's "Unconditional Surrender" Ultimatum:** President Donald Trump has officially declared there will be no peace deal with Iran without an [unconditional surrender](#) and the selection of new, US-approved leadership, framed under the slogan "MEGA - Make Iran Great Again."
- **The Sinking of the Frigate Dena:** A US submarine torpedoed an Iranian naval vessel in international waters off the coast of Sri Lanka. The ship was unarmed and returning from [joint exercises](#) in India, leading to accusations of war crimes and "cowardly" aggression against training officers.

- **Invasion of Southern Lebanon:** Israel has mobilized 100,000 troops to the Lebanese border, issuing evacuation orders for all territory [south of the Litani River](#) and threatening to reduce Beirut to the same state of ruin as Gaza.
- **Assassination Fallout:** Iran is in a state of mourning and mobilization following the killing of Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. Massive Friday prayers in Tehran served as a venue for [active defiance](#), with officials vowing that the selection of a new leader will proceed regardless of US strikes.
- **Energy Market Ignition:** WTI crude has spiked by 30%, and European natural gas prices have surged by 70%, as the closure of the Strait of Hormuz removes [20% of global LNG](#) capacity from the market overnight.
- **Multi-Lateral Rupture:** India and Sri Lanka have expressed significant alarm over US military actions in the Indian Ocean, with New Delhi viewing the attack on its "guest" ship as an [embarrassment](#) and an undercut to regional stability efforts.

KEY GOVERNANCE TOPICS

Geopolitical Power Dynamics: The conflict is being framed by analysts as a war against the Global South and a desperate attempt by the US to maintain a unipolar world order.

- The "Greater Israel Project" is cited as a primary driver for the expansion into [Lebanon and Syria](#), with US political figures like Mike Huckabee reportedly supporting Israeli expansion into neighboring countries.

- Russia and China are positioning themselves as "reliable partners" for the Global South, with China's "Power of Siberia 2" pipeline highlighted as a strategic hedge against [maritime vulnerability](#).

Energy Security: Western sanctions and the ensuing war have led to what critics call "self-inflicted wounds" for the European energy sector.

- The EU is reportedly pressuring Ukraine to allow inspections of the [Drushba pipeline](#) to resume Russian oil flow as LNG alternatives fail.
- Goldman Sachs estimates gas prices could rise by [130%](#) if the Strait of Hormuz remains closed for a month.

Succession & Stability: The Iranian government is fast-tracking the selection of a new Supreme Leader through its Assembly of Experts.

- Despite US hopes for a "decapitation" of the hierarchy, Iranian state institutions remain [nation-state based](#) and continue to function, providing fuel, water, and food to citizens during bombardments.

Security Architecture: The US has transitioned to a "Department of War" model, with Secretary Pete Hegseth claiming "maximum authorities" to ignore previous [restrictive minimalist rules](#) of engagement.

LEGISLATIVE ROUNDUP

Congressional and executive actions have focused on formalizing a state of total war and providing absolute military support to Israel, while dismantling previous diplomatic

frameworks such as the Iran nuclear deal residues.

BILLS DISCUSSED/DEBATED:

- **US Department of War Transition:** Discussion regarding the administrative and symbolic shift from "Defense" to "War," emphasizing a mandate for [offensive victory](#) rather than containment.
- **EU Sanctions Package 20:** Implementation of further restrictions on Russian LNG, which has ironically increased [European energy prices](#) and dependency on unstable maritime routes.
- **Banning of Hezbollah's Political and Military Wings:** The Lebanese government, under intense pressure, has reportedly moved to ban Hezbollah's weapons, a move seen as a precursor to [civil confrontation](#) in Lebanon.

HEARINGS & PRESS EVENTS:

- **Trump Surrender Statement:** A televised address demanding [unconditional surrender](#) from Tehran, dismissing any possibility of negotiations.
- **Hegseth Operation Update:** Press briefing on "Operation Epic Fury," confirming the use of [precision strike missiles](#) and the sinking of Iranian assets in the Indian Ocean.
- **Houthi Spokesperson Interview:** A declaration that Yemen will not abandon Iran and will strike [Gulf oil facilities](#) if the US continues its aggression.

DEEP DIVE: TRENDS AND THEMES

The End of International Law: Multiple reports suggest that "legal warfare" (lawfare)

has reached a terminus. Analysts note that the category of "illegal" has been [effectively retired](#) as the US and Israel target schools, hospitals, and red crescent facilities. The bombing of a [girls' school](#) in Tehran and the sinking of a guest ship in Indian waters are cited as evidence of a shift toward "barbarism" where deterrents are no longer based on law, but on "an eye for an eye."

Asymmetrical Attrition: The resistance movements (Hezbollah, IRGC, Houthis) are pursuing a strategy of "asymmetrical attrition." Rather than seeking a decisive conventional victory, they aim to [exhaust the global economy](#) and put a massive financial burden on the United States. By targeting energy infrastructure and maintaining hidden "underground" launch sites, they intend to force a US concession through economic collapse rather than military defeat.

The "Epstein Class" vs. The Global South: A recurring theme in the discourse (particularly from Tehran University) is the characterization of the US leadership as an [oligarchy or "Epstein class"](#) that lacks morality. This narrative seeks to frame the war not as a conflict between nations, but as a struggle between a corrupt, "pedophilic" Western elite and the "civilizational" states of the East (Iran, Russia, China).

STRATEGIC FORESIGHT

Short Term (1-4 Weeks):

- Expect a massive humanitarian crisis in Lebanon as [300,000 refugees](#) from the Dahia district and southern Lebanon flood northern and eastern provinces with zero infrastructure to support them.

- Retaliatory strikes by Iran and the Houthis on UAE and Saudi energy hubs are highly probable, potentially targeting the [Dubai "bubble"](#) to shatter the image of regional safety and trigger massive capital flight.
- Selection of the new Iranian Supreme Leader will be completed, likely resulting in a "man of war" leader who will terminate all back-channel negotiations with Washington.

Medium Term (1-6 Months):

- The "Stalingrad" effect: The war on Iran may transition into a grinding [war of attrition](#) that the US military, already "maxed out," cannot sustain indefinitely without a domestic draft or massive economic rationing.
- Europe may face a "De-industrialization Winter" as the lack of Russian and Middle Eastern gas leads to factory closures and social unrest across the EU.
- Potential for "color revolutions" or US-orchestrated [Kurdish uprisings](#) in Iran, though these risk backfiring into a wider civil war that destabilizes Iraq and Turkey.

Long Term (1-5 Years):

- A permanent shift in global trade routes: The "Power of Siberia" and other [overland corridors](#) will become the primary arteries for Eurasian energy, leaving the US-controlled maritime routes increasingly irrelevant and dangerous.
- The total "Balkanization" of the Middle East if the Greater Israel Project succeeds, or the total expulsion of US forces from the region if the "Axis of Resistance" maintains its [deterrence capacity](#).

RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLICATIONS

For International Policy:

- Coalition partners must prepare for the total abandonment of US maritime security guarantees in the Indian Ocean and Gulf; states like India and Sri Lanka should move toward [autonomous security](#) regional blocs.
- The use of "preemptive" strikes as a standard doctrine necessitates that all Global South nations harden their critical infrastructure against cyber and drone attacks, as civilian status no longer provides protection.
- Diplomatic efforts should shift toward BRICS+ as the primary forum for conflict resolution, given the [perceived failure](#) of the UN and Western institutions to uphold international law.

For Private Sector/Investors:

- **Energy Diversification:** Investors should immediately pivot from maritime-dependent LNG to overland pipeline projects and domestic energy production as the Persian Gulf becomes a "no-go" zone for insurance providers.
- **Supply Chain Risk:** The Mediterranean and Indian Ocean shipping lanes are at risk of [torpedo attacks](#) and drone interceptions; re-routing through the Arctic or land-based Silk Road alternatives is advised.
- **Sovereign Risk in the Gulf:** Capital currently in UAE and Qatar faces "extinction-level" risk if the war expands to [energy facilities](#) and desalination plants; diversification into Russian or Chinese markets may offer more stability for non-Western capital.

ABOUT THIS REPORT

Today's Media Trends is a public interest experiment in applying deep thematic trend analysis to television news coverage from around the world to explore how responsibly applied advanced AI can help journalists and scholars better understand the overarching trends, themes and patterns of our global world.

No data is used to train or tune any AI model.

Each morning, in collaboration with the Internet Archive's TV News Archive, we apply Google's Gemini 3 to deeply examine yesterday's coverage from each television news channel to tease out the overarching themes and trends of its news coverage into a richly annotated thematic analysis. Each high-level insight is connected back to the original broadcast, allowing journalists and scholars to understand the dominate themes and trends

and instantly click out to the underlying sources for details.

By helping journalists and scholars see the broader trends and patterns of global news coverage, this analysis helps them identify relevant stories and coverage they might not otherwise have encountered and uncover connections, emphases and narrative shifts that enable more comprehensive reporting and deeper, evidence-based research.

This report is entirely machine generated using Gemini 3 and may include errors and omissions. Please verify all findings. No data is used to train or tune any AI model.

For questions or suggestions, please contact kalev.leetaru5@gmail.com. You can also learn more about the GDEL T Project at <https://blog.gdel tproject.org/> and the Internet Archive's TV News Archive at <https://archive.org/details/tv>.