

TODAY'S MEDIA TRENDS

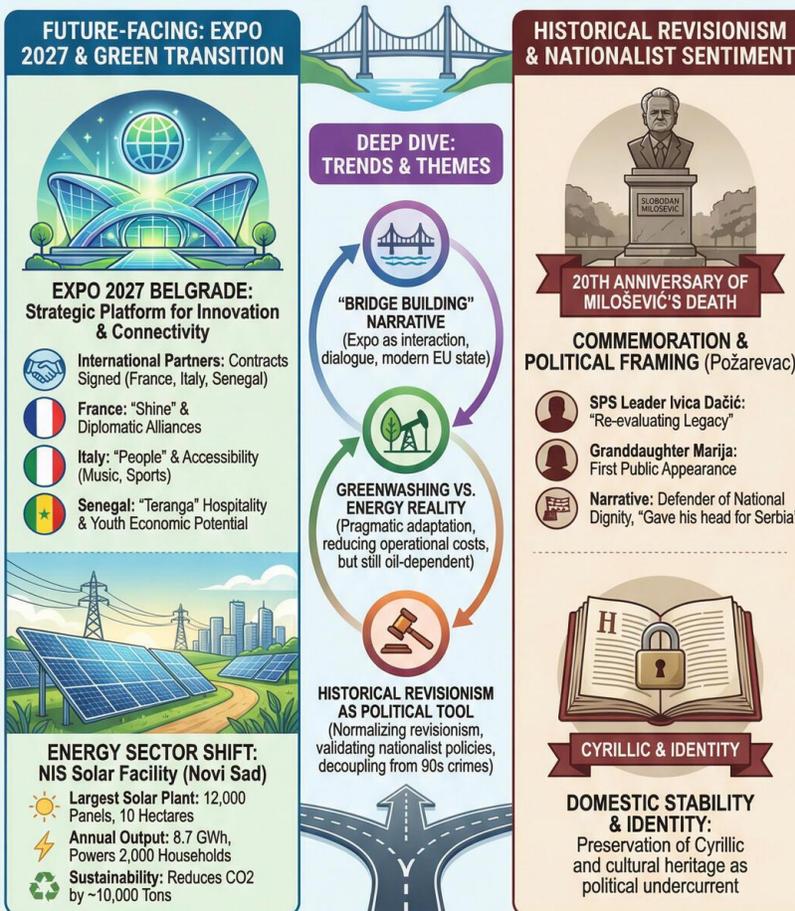
RTS1

MARCH 11, 2026

THE GDELT PROJECT

SERBIA'S DICHOTOMY: FUTURE-FACING INNOVATION VS. HISTORICAL REVISIONISM

DAY-AT-A-GLANCE: March 11, 2026 - A study in stark contrast, balancing aspirations for 2027 with unresolved 1990s legacies.



STRATEGIC FORESIGHT (1-5 YEARS)



RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLICATIONS

- | | |
|---|---|
| FOR INTERNATIONAL POLICY: | FOR PRIVATE SECTOR/INVESTORS: |
| Monitor "Soft Power" (Avoid democratic backsliding) | Investigate Expo Infrastructure (Hospitality, Tech, Sports) |
| Engage with Energy Transition (Offer expertise) | Assess "Reputation Spillover" Risk (State-linked entities) |
| Remain Vigilant on Rehabilitation (Impacts Rule of Law) | Note Renewable Capacity (Vojvodina for Green Offsets). |

TODAY'S MEDIA TRENDS

RTS1

MARCH 11, 2026

SERBIA NAVIGATES A DICHOTOMY OF FUTURE-FACING INNOVATION AND HISTORICAL REVISIONISM

DAY-AT-A-GLANCE

On March 11, 2026, the Serbian state narrative focused on a stark juxtaposition between the country's aspirations for 2027 and the unresolved legacies of its 1990s leadership. The signing of official contracts for [participation in Expo 2027](#) by major international partners, including France, Italy, and Senegal, serves as the primary vehicle for the government's efforts to project soft power and attract foreign investment. This diplomatic momentum is being framed not merely as an exhibition, but as a "strategic platform" for economic integration and international dialogue, positioning Belgrade as a hub for innovation and business connectivity.

Simultaneously, the domestic political landscape remains anchored in nationalist sentiment, as evidenced by the high-profile commemoration of the 20th anniversary of Slobodan Milošević's death. The presence of his granddaughter and the rhetoric employed by Socialist Party of Serbia (SPS) leader Ivica

Dačić suggest a concerted effort toward historical revisionism. By framing Milošević as a [defender of national dignity](#) who "gave his head for Serbia," the ruling coalition's junior partner is attempting to tap into contemporary frustrations and grievances to rehabilitate the image of the wartime president. This duality—pursuing modern European integration through Expo while glorifying the leader of a pariah state—indicates a complex internal struggle for Serbian identity and future orientation.

In the energy sector, the commissioning of a massive solar facility by NIS (Naftna Industrija Srbije) highlights a pragmatic shift toward the green transition within the country's critical infrastructure. This development, one of the largest of its kind in Serbia, demonstrates a commitment to diversifying energy sources and reducing carbon footprints, even as the country navigates a difficult geopolitical environment. The project's ability to [power 2,000 households](#) signals a tangible, albeit incremental, step toward localized energy security and environmental compliance.

MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS

International Commitments to Expo 2027

- Serbia has formalized participation agreements with key global partners, including France, Italy, and Senegal, for the [upcoming Expo 2027](#) in Belgrade.
- France intends to leverage the event as a significant opportunity to "shine" and project its influence, citing a long history of military and diplomatic alliances with Serbia.

- Italy's pavilion will focus on "people" and accessibility, integrating themes of music and sports to showcase regional diversity and facilitate person-to-person diplomacy.
- Senegal will utilize the "Teranga" concept of hospitality to bridge cultural gaps and highlight the economic potential of its youth population.

Expansion of Renewable Energy Infrastructure

- NIS has operationalized a new solar photovoltaic power plant at its oil derivatives warehouse in Novi Sad, marking a significant entry into large-scale renewables.
- The facility consists of [12,000 solar panels](#) covering 10 hectares, making it one of the largest solar installations in the country.
- The plant is projected to produce 8.7 GWh annually, reducing carbon dioxide emissions by approximately 10,000 tons and enhancing the sustainability profile of Serbia's energy sector.

Political Commemoration and Historical Revisionism

- The 20th anniversary of Slobodan Milošević's death was observed in Požarevac, attended by his granddaughter, Marija, in her first public appearance.
- SPS leader Ivica Dačić used the occasion to suggest that citizens are [re-evaluating Milošević's legacy](#) due to the persistence of the same national challenges he faced.
- The narrative emphasized Milošević's role in the Dayton Peace Agreement and UN Resolution 1244, positioning him as a martyr for national sovereignty rather than a convicted war crimes suspect.

KEY GOVERNANCE TOPICS

Diplomatic Engagement & Regional Influence

- Serbia is using the Expo 2027 platform to cement its role as a regional leader in "business connectivity" and [international cooperation](#) during a period of economic uncertainty.
- The engagement with France and Italy underscores a strategy of balancing ties with major EU powers to bolster Belgrade's international standing.

Energy Security & Critical Infrastructure

- The launch of the [NIS solar plant](#) represents a strategic pivot toward reducing reliance on traditional fossil fuels and diversifying the energy mix.
- Decentralizing energy production to sites like the Novi Sad warehouse increases the resilience of national fuel and power supplies.

Elite Politics & Succession

- The public introduction of [Milošević's granddaughter](#) suggests the potential for the symbolic "Milošević brand" to be utilized in future SPS or nationalist political maneuvering.
- Dačić's defense of Milošević reflects the SPS's ongoing efforts to maintain its core identity while serving as a junior partner in the current government coalition.

Domestic Stability & Social Order

- Concerns regarding the preservation of national identity, specifically the [protection of the Cyrillic alphabet](#) and cultural heritage, remain a potent political undercurrent in urban centers like Belgrade.

LEGISLATIVE ROUNDUP

While no formal legislative bills were debated in this specific broadcast, the government has focused on executing international contracts and administrative agreements related to the hosting of Expo 2027 and the development of energy projects. These agreements function as quasi-treaties that bind the state to specific developmental and diplomatic timelines.

HEARINGS & PRESS EVENTS

- Signing Ceremony for Expo 2027: Official event where [participation contracts](#) were signed with international representatives.
- Milošević Memorial Press Statements: Ivica Dačić and the SPS issued statements regarding the legacy of the former president and the ongoing relevance of Resolution 1244.
- NIS Project Announcement: A formal corporate and state announcement regarding the operational status of the [Novi Sad solar facility](#).

DEEP DIVE: TRENDS AND THEMES

The "Bridge Building" Narrative

A recurring theme is the framing of Belgrade as a bridge between nations, particularly through the lens of Expo 2027. The state is

actively promoting a narrative of "innovation, interaction, and dialogue" to counter perceptions of regional instability. By focusing on youth, culture, and business connectivity, the government is attempting to rebrand Serbia as a modern, forward-thinking European state. However, this narrative is constantly tested by the underlying tension of ethnic and national identity, as seen in the fragmented mention of [preserving the Cyrillic alphabet](#) and historical grievances.

Greenwashing vs. Energy Reality

The NIS solar project represents a significant trend toward industrial greening. While NIS remains primarily an oil and gas entity, its investment in [12,000 solar panels](#) suggests a pragmatic adaptation to EU environmental standards and a desire to lower operational costs through renewables. This "green transition" is essential for Serbian companies to remain competitive and compliant with European carbon border adjustments, even if the primary energy security of the country remains tied to traditional sources.

Historical Revisionism as Political Tool

The 20th anniversary of Slobodan Milošević's death reveals a trend of "normalized" revisionism. Ivica Dačić's assertion that the public is [reconsidering their opinions](#) of Milošević is a strategic move to validate current nationalist policies. By linking Milošević to foundational documents like the Dayton Agreement and Resolution 1244, the SPS is attempting to decouple his legacy from the war crimes and economic collapse of the 1990s, instead framing him as a misunderstood protector of the state. This trend suggests that nationalist sentiment remains a core component of the Serbian

political consensus, regardless of its pro-EU aspirations.

STRATEGIC FORESIGHT

Short Term (1-4 Weeks)

Expect continued diplomatic outreach as more nations are pressured or incentivized to sign on for Expo 2027. Domestically, there may be minor nationalist rallies or media cycles following the Milošević anniversary, potentially used to distract from current economic pressures or the "slight drop in temperature" and [short-term rain](#) expected in the weather forecast.

Medium Term (1-6 Months)

The construction phase for Expo 2027 will likely see a surge in public-private partnerships. We may see more "green" initiatives from state-adjacent corporations like NIS as they attempt to modernize before the 2027 deadline. The SPS will likely continue to test the waters with Marija Milošević's public image to gauge its value as a political asset.

Long Term (1-5 Years)

Expo 2027 will serve as a litmus test for Serbia's ability to host major international events and integrate into European logistical networks. The ongoing rehabilitation of 1990s figures could lead to a widening ideological gap between Serbia and its Western partners, even as economic ties deepen. If the "martyr" narrative for Milošević becomes mainstream, it could complicate regional reconciliation efforts in Bosnia and Kosovo.

RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLICATIONS

For International Policy

- Monitor the usage of "soft power" events like Expo 2027 to ensure they are not used as a cover for democratic backsliding or the further entrenchment of nationalist historical narratives.
- Engage with Serbia's energy transition projects to encourage a shift away from [traditional fuel dependencies](#), potentially offering technical expertise to match the NIS solar expansion.
- Remain vigilant regarding the rehabilitation of war-era figures, as this directly impacts regional stability and the "Rule of Law" criteria for EU accession.

For Private Sector/Investors

- Investigate opportunities within the [Expo 2027 infrastructure](#) pipeline, particularly in the hospitality, technology, and sports sectors, as highlighted by the Italian and Senegalese participation plans.
- Assess the risk of "reputation spillover" when partnering with Serbian state-linked entities that are simultaneously involved in the promotion of controversial historical figures.
- Note the growing capacity for renewable energy in the Vojvodina region (Novi Sad) as a potential factor for siting future industrial or data center projects requiring [green energy offsets](#).

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.gdeltproject.org/> and the Internet Archive's TV News Archive at <https://archive.org/details/tv>.