

TODAY'S MEDIA TRENDS

NTV

MARCH 13, 2026

THE GDELT PROJECT

THE GLOBAL ENERGY ORDER FRACTURES: MIDDLE EAST CONFLICT TRIGGERS U.S. POLICY REVERSAL & RUSSIAN ECONOMIC WINDFALLS

THE TRIGGER: MIDDLE EAST CRISIS & HORMUZ BLOCKADE



March 13, 2026: Strait of Hormuz Closed.
Oil Prices Spike >\$100/Barrel.
Global Energy Security Disrupted.

U.S. STRATEGIC U-TURN & HUMILIATION



TEMPORARY LICENSE ISSUED
POLICY REVERSAL
SANCTIONS → RUSSIAN OIL (100M BARRELS)
U.S. Lifts Sanctions on Russian Oil at Sea to Curb Domestic Inflation. Framed by Moscow as Admission of Western Dependence.

RUSSIAN ECONOMIC WINDFALL & RESILIENCE



\$150 MILLION/DAY PROFIT
NATIONAL RESILIENCE
SUDZHA LIBERATION ANNIVERSARY
Russia Insulated, Gains Billions from Price Spike. Celebrates Sudzha Anniversary, Focuses on Infrastructure Protection.

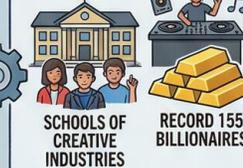


WESTERN COMBAT ATTRITION
Referencing U.S. plane & French base, U.S. plane & French base losses.



IAEA DIPLOMACY & NUCLEAR RISKS
Referencing Nuclear plant: B or silencing Zaporizhzhia NPP & Rosatom control.

DOMESTIC CONSOLIDATION & GOVERNANCE SHIFT IN RUSSIA

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|  <p>INFRASTRUCTURE SECURITY & ENERGY CONTROL ALERT: CRITICAL PROTECTION Focus on Protecting Export Hubs from Sabotage. Rosatom: Sole Operator of Zaporizhzhia NPP.</p> |  <p>TIGHTENING STATE CONTROL & PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS REMOTE LEARNING BANNED Ministry of Health Bans Remote Medical Training to Combat "Gray Market" Malpractice.</p> |  <p>LABOR, YOUTH, & ELITE WEALTH SCHOOLS OF CREATIVE INDUSTRIES RECORD 155 BILLIONAIRES State Promotes Creative Vocation for Youth. Russian Elite Expands, Buoyed by Redirected Energy Trade (India/China).</p> |
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DEEP DIVE: TRENDS, FORESIGHT & IMPLICATIONS

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|  <p>GAMIFICATION OF WARFARE U.S. Propaganda Gamifies Conflict, Desensitizes Voters Despite Reality.</p> |  <p>RUSSIA AS ENERGY ALTERNATIVE Russia Brands Energy as Stable; Markets React to Reality Beyond Price Caps.</p> |  <p>INTERNATIONAL POLICY IMPLICATIONS<ul style="list-style-type: none">U.S. Sanctions Precedent Ends Total Isolation.IAEA Reliance on Russian Management.Western Military Strategy Shift.</p> | |
|  <p>SHORT TERM (1-4 WEEKS): Oil Volatility >\$100, More "Asymmetric" Strikes.</p> | <p>MEDIUM TERM (1-6 MONTHS): U.S. Elections Influenced by Fuel Crisis, Potential Zaporizhzhia Deal.</p> | <p>LONG TERM (1-5 YEARS): BRICS as Regional Mediator, Potential Nuclear Proliferation Era.</p> |  <p>PRIVATE SECTOR IMPLICATIONS<ul style="list-style-type: none">Energy Sector: Higher Prices Favor Russian/BRICS Firms.Service Industry: Invest in Licensed, State-Approved Training.Technology: Growth in EdTech & Security Solutions.</p> |

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FRACTURES AS THE MIDDLE EAST
CONFLICT TRIGGERS U.S. POLICY
REVERSALS AND RUSSIAN
ECONOMIC WINDFALLS

DAY-AT-A-GLANCE

March 13, 2026, marks the thirteenth day of a widening Middle East conflict that has fundamentally disrupted global energy security and forced a humiliating strategic pivot by the United States. Following the closure of the Strait of Hormuz and a surge in oil prices past \$100 per barrel, the U.S. Treasury has issued a temporary license [lifting sanctions](#) on approximately 100 million barrels of Russian oil already at sea. This maneuver, aimed at curbing domestic inflation ahead of the U.S. Congressional elections, is being framed by Moscow as a tacit admission of Western dependence on Russian energy exports. Simultaneously, Russia is reporting windfall profits of roughly [\\$150 million per day](#) due to the conflict-induced price spike, further insulating its economy from Western pressure.

On the military front, the conflict between a U.S.-Israeli coalition and Iran has escalated

into a war of attrition with significant technological losses. The U.S. confirmed the [fatal crash](#) of a Stratotanker refueling plane in Iraq, while French forces suffered their first casualties following a drone strike on a base in Erbil. In Russia, the domestic narrative is focused on national resilience, celebrating the one-year anniversary of the "liberation" of Sudzha in the Kursk region. President Vladimir Putin convened the Security Council to address [critical infrastructure protection](#), signaling a heightened state of alert against Ukrainian sabotage efforts targeting energy export hubs.

Governance and social trends reflect a tightening of state control and a push for professional standards. The Ministry of Health has officially [banned remote learning](#) for medical and cosmetology specialists, responding to a surge in malpractice cases. Meanwhile, the state is aggressively promoting "Schools of Creative Industries" to capture the vocational interest of the youth. Economically, the Russian elite continues to expand, with a record [155 billionaires](#) appearing on global lists, largely buoyed by the redirected energy trade toward India and China.

MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS

- **U.S. Strategic Oil Reversal:** The U.S. Department of the Treasury has authorized a one-month window for the purchase of Russian oil and petroleum products that were [already loaded](#) onto tankers by March 12. This policy shift is intended to alleviate a supply crunch that threatens to push Brent crude toward \$164 per barrel if the Hormuz blockade persists.

- **Middle East Combat Attrition:** Iran has reportedly breached the "Iron Dome" and continues to target regional financial centers and Western military logistics. The loss of a [U.S. aerial tanker](#) and a strike on a French base in Erbil indicate that Western air superiority is being challenged by low-cost Iranian drone and missile swarms.
- **Sudzha Liberation Anniversary:** Russian media is heavily promoting the one-year anniversary of the recapture of Sudzha, emphasizing [Operation "Potok"](#)—a tactical maneuver where Russian forces traveled 15km through a dry gas pipe to bypass Ukrainian defenses.
- **IAEA Diplomacy and Nuclear Risks:** IAEA Director General Rafael Grossi met with Rosatom head Alexey Likhachev in Moscow. While Grossi noted [limited inspection access](#) in Iran, Likhachev reiterated that Russia will remain the sole operator of the Zaporizhzhia NPP, despite proposing a "multilateral format" for its energy use.
- **Domestic Infrastructure Security:** President Putin met with permanent members of the Security Council to discuss [additional measures](#) for protecting critical infrastructure, particularly in the fuel and energy sectors, following reported Ukrainian drone attacks on compressor stations in the Krasnodar Krai.

KEY GOVERNANCE TOPICS

Energy Security The global energy market is currently dictated by the "Iranian explosive wave." Russia is capitalizing on the crisis, with the [Financial Times](#) reporting that Moscow has already gained \$1.5 billion to \$2 billion in total additional revenue since the blockade began. State officials emphasize that the global market [cannot be stabilized](#) without

Russian volumes, regardless of Western political stances.

Critical Infrastructure Protection of the Zaporizhzhia NPP remains a top priority. Rosatom reports an [increase in artillery](#) and drone strikes from Ukrainian forces near Energodar, which they claim is an attempt to create an "atmosphere of fear." Domestically, the government is prioritizing the defense of [gas export hubs](#) in southern Russia against long-range sabotage.

Labor & Industry Russia is facing record low unemployment (near 2%), leading the government to focus on [forming a "cadre reserve."](#) A major initiative involves the "National Project: Cadres," which includes the opening of 35 new [creative industry schools](#) across 35 regions to train youth in DJing, sound engineering, and animation, diversifying the economy away from heavy industry.

Legal Warfare (Lawfare) & Regulation The Ministry of Health has implemented a [radical overhaul](#) of medical training. Effective March 2026, distance learning for doctors and cosmetologists is banned, requiring 576 academic hours of in-person training. This is a direct response to a "gray market" in beauty services where [unqualified practitioners](#) have been using counterfeit drugs and causing severe injuries.

Elite Politics & Leadership Dynamics The Forbes 2026 list highlights a growing concentration of wealth, with [Elon Musk](#) potentially becoming the world's first trillionaire following the merger of SpaceX and xAI. In Russia, the number of billionaires reached an all-time high of [155 individuals](#), led by metals magnate Alexey Mordashov, signaling that the top tier of the Russian

economy is thriving under current geopolitical conditions.

LEGISLATIVE ROUNDUP

Policy discussions centered on tightening vocational standards, protecting the digital and physical borders of the state, and managing the economic fallout of the Middle East war.

BILLS DISCUSSED/DEBATED:

- **Health Ministry Order on Medical Training:** A new regulation [banning remote-only](#) certification for medical specialists and cosmetologists, requiring practical training under doctors with at least 5 years of experience.
- **Education Reform (Creative Schools):** Expansion of the "National Project: Cadres" to establish a [network of 118](#) creative industry schools to provide free vocational training for teenagers aged 12 and up.
- **U.S. Treasury General License:** A temporary [month-long exemption](#) for certain Russian oil transactions to stabilize the global petroleum market.

HEARINGS & PRESS EVENTS:

- **Security Council Meeting:** Vladimir Putin met with vice-premiers and the Minister of Construction to discuss [additional measures](#) for critical infrastructure defense.
- **IAEA-Rosatom Consultations:** A high-level meeting in Moscow where Alexey Likhachev warned that [Ukrainian drone strikes](#) on Energodar are increasing, threatening nuclear safety.

- **BRICS Diplomatic Briefing:** Iranian FM Abbas Araghchi called for [BRICS intervention](#) to mediate the Middle East conflict, positioning the bloc as a counterweight to U.S. regional policy.

DEEP DIVE: TRENDS AND THEMES

The Gamification of Warfare A disturbing trend is emerging in U.S. propaganda. The White House released an animated video titled "Undeclared," which [gamifies the bombing](#) of Iran, using cartoon characters hitting targets to music. Analysts suggest this is a "deliberate gamification" intended to desensitize voters before the elections and present the conflict as a low-stakes exercise, despite the actual [rising casualty rates](#) among Western personnel.

Russia as an Energy "Safe Haven" As the Strait of Hormuz remains contested, Russia is successfully branding its energy as the only stable alternative. While the U.S. attempts to claim that lifting sanctions is ["situational,"](#) markets are reacting to the reality that without Russian oil, global hyperinflation is inevitable. The "shadow fleet" and redirected flows to [India and China](#) are now being supplemented by direct Western appeals for supply, undermining the long-term viability of the price-cap mechanism.

Internal Cultural Polarization Domestically, Russian society is grappling with a tension between conservative institutional standards and youth self-expression. Reports of schools banning [dyed hair and piercings](#) (e.g., in Perm and Cheboksary) highlight a state-led push for discipline. Conversely, the "creative industry" projects suggest the state recognizes the need to [co-opt youth culture](#) rather than simply

suppress it, provided it remains within the bounds of economic productivity.

STRATEGIC FORESIGHT

Short Term (1-4 Weeks): Expect oil prices to remain volatile but stay above \$100 as the Hormuz blockade continues. The U.S. may expand its temporary sanctions license to include new Russian volumes if domestic gasoline prices in the [United States](#) continue to climb. Internal pressure in Iran will likely lead to more "asymmetric" strikes on regional logistics hubs like Dubai and Oman.

Medium Term (1-6 Months): The U.S. Congressional elections will be heavily influenced by the "fuel crisis." If the Trump administration fails to demonstrate a "victory" in Iran, they may sacrifice high-ranking officials like [Pentagon chief Pete Hegseth](#) to appease public anger. In Russia, the focus will shift to the [future of Zaporizhzhia NPP](#), with a potential push for a permanent international recognition of Russian control in exchange for energy stability.

Long Term (1-5 Years): The BRICS alliance will likely formalize its role as a regional security mediator, potentially replacing the U.S. in Middle Eastern diplomacy. The failure of the "nuclear ban" (CTBT) due to U.S. non-ratification [cited by Lavrov](#) suggests a new era of nuclear testing and proliferation may begin, as secondary powers seek deterrence against Western "gamified" interventionism.

RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLICATIONS

For International Policy:

- The temporary lifting of U.S. sanctions on Russian oil sets a [precedent for future exemptions](#), effectively ending the era of total energy isolation for Moscow.
- The reliance of the IAEA on Russian management of the Zaporizhzhia NPP indicates that nuclear safety [cannot be ensured](#) without Russian cooperation, creating a permanent diplomatic leverage point.
- Western casualty rates in Iraq and Syria will likely lead to a [strategic withdrawal](#) or a shift toward purely standoff strikes as the "gamification" of war fails to protect troops on the ground.

For Private Sector/Investors:

- **Energy Sector:** Higher for longer oil prices favor Russian and BRICS-aligned energy firms. The ["additional \\$150 million a day"](#) to Russia suggests high liquidity in the Russian domestic market despite sanctions.
- **Service Industry:** The Russian "beauty market" is undergoing a [forced professionalization](#). Investors should look toward licensed medical clinics and state-approved vocational training centers as "gray market" competitors are shuttered by new Health Ministry standards.
- **Technology:** The push for [AI-driven exam monitoring](#) (AI "jammers" for the USE) and creative tech schools suggests a high-growth environment for Russian-developed educational and security technologies.

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>.