

TODAY'S MEDIA TRENDS

CTV

JUNE 6, 2026

THE GDELT PROJECT

HEIGHTENED GLOBAL & DOMESTIC STRAIN: US-IRAN KINETIC ENGAGEMENTS, TAIWAN'S POLYCRISIS, AND AI FAILURES CONVERGE

DAY-AT-A-GLANCE & MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS: JUNE 6-7, 2026



US-IRAN KINETIC CONFLICT ESCALATES



- Direct kinetic actions
- US destroyed four Iranian drones
- Targeted Iranian military facilities after missile strikes in Kuwait & Bahrain
- US intercepted Iranian oil tanker
- Six of seven Iranian missiles intercepted by US



US-TAIWAN SECURITY COOPERATION VS. DOMESTIC HURDLES



- 2027 NDAA proposes \$10 billion security initiative
- Taiwanese opposition slashed two-thirds of domestic drone budget
- Stalled indigenization efforts



CONSTITUTIONAL CRISIS OVER DEATH PENALTY



- Constitutional Court restricts death penalty application
- Requires unanimous agreement among judges
- High barrier for future executions
- Sparked widespread social debate



AI COMMERCIAL FAILURES & HALLUCINATIONS



- Starbucks discontinued AI inventory system due to logistical chaos
- AIAI marketing firm faced backlash & revenue loss from offensive/nonsensical AI-generated text

KEY GOVERNANCE TOPICS & TRENDS

ARMED CONFLICT & MILITARIZATION



- Failure of diplomatic deterrence
- Friction between strategic needs and partisan fiscal oversight

CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE SECURITY



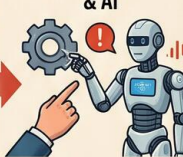
- Lack of resilience to extreme weather
- Fengshan power outage
- Plum Rain flooding & sinkholes in Kaohsiung

LEGAL WARFARE & REGULATORY RISK



- Significant regulatory shift in death penalty cases
- Debates on juvenile justice reform
- Looming carbon fees adding to corporate anxiety

TECH SOVEREIGNTY & AI



- Sovereignty risk of unproven algorithmic models
- Delta between AI marketing and performance
- Premature deployment leading to brand damage

THE ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT & DOMESTIC INSTABILITY



- CPI rising to 2.2%, driven by food & service sectors
- Carbon fee introduction (2026) causing corporate distress
- Hospitality sector price volatility (e.g., BTS concert)
- Partisan polarization blocking executive initiatives
- Public frustration with infrastructure failures



FUTURE OUTLOOK, RISKS, & STRATEGIC FORESIGHT

ESCALATION OF US-IRAN CONFLICT



- High probability of intensified maritime conflict
- Risk of Strait of Hormuz closure
- Catastrophic global economic disruption

AI RETRENCHMENT & ENERGY CRISIS



- Corporations to scale back autonomous AI systems
- Lowered renewable targets & high carbon fees leading to structural energy price increase

SOCIAL & LEGISLATIVE STRAIN



- Wave of lawsuits from death penalty ruling
- Legislative friction over defense funding
- Potential for social unrest from judicial decisions

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HEIGHTENED US-IRAN KINETIC
ENGAGEMENTS AND DOMESTIC AI
FAILURES CONVERGE AMIDST
DEEPENING ECONOMIC STRAIN

DAY-AT-A-GLANCE

The reporting period of June 6-7, 2026, is characterized by a significant hardening of the global security environment, particularly in the Middle East where US and Iranian forces have engaged in direct kinetic actions. The US military confirmed the destruction of four Iranian drones and targeted military facilities following Iranian missile strikes against US assets in Kuwait and Bahrain. This escalation occurs alongside a deepening US-Taiwan security relationship, with the 2027 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) proposing a \$10 billion security cooperation initiative. However, domestic political friction in Taiwan, specifically legislative resistance to defense budget increases, threatens to complicate the implementation of these strategic ties.

Domestically, Taiwan is grappling with a "polycrisis" involving infrastructure decay, extreme weather, and institutional challenges. The Constitutional Court's ruling to restrict

the application of the death penalty has sparked widespread social debate and legal uncertainty. This occurs as heavy Plum Rain season flooding and major power outages in Fengshan expose vulnerabilities in critical infrastructure. Simultaneously, the corporate sector is facing a reality check regarding Artificial Intelligence; high-profile failures at major brands like Starbucks and AIAI have demonstrated that the technology is currently prone to hallucination and logistical errors, leading to financial loss and public embarrassment.

The economic outlook is increasingly fraught with inflationary pressure and new regulatory burdens. The Consumer Price Index (CPI) has risen to 2.2%, driven by a 50% surge in some food costs and extreme price volatility in the hospitality sector. The looming introduction of carbon fees in 2026 is adding to corporate anxiety, with concerns that these costs will be passed to consumers, triggering a wave of "green inflation." Market sentiment remains skeptical as the state attempts to navigate these economic headwinds while maintaining its tech sovereignty and climate commitments.

MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS

- **Direct US-Iran Kinetic Conflict Escalates**
 - The US military shot down [four Iranian drones](#) and targeted Iranian military facilities in response to missile attacks on bases in Kuwait and Bahrain.
 - US forces intercepted an [Iranian oil tanker](#) in the Indian Ocean, further tightening the maritime blockade.
 - Iran has reportedly fired seven missiles at US bases, with six successfully intercepted by US defenses.

- **US-Taiwan Security Cooperation Facing Domestic Hurdles**

- The 2027 US NDAA proposes a [\\$10 billion initiative](#) to bolster Taiwan's security and defense capabilities.
- Taiwanese opposition parties in the Legislative Yuan have [slashed two-thirds](#) of the proposed \$40 billion NTD domestic drone budget, potentially stalling indigenization efforts.

- **Constitutional Crisis Over Death Penalty Rulings**

- The Constitutional Court ruled that the death penalty is [partially unconstitutional](#), significantly narrowing the scope of crimes eligible for capital punishment.
- The ruling requires unanimous agreement among judges for death sentences, effectively creating a high barrier for future executions.

- **AI Commercial Failure and Hallucinations**

- Starbucks discontinued its AI-driven inventory system after it [failed to distinguish](#) between different milk types, causing nine months of logistical chaos.
- Marketing firm AIAI faced backlash after its AI generated [offensive or nonsensical](#) campaign text, leading to a \$176 million NTD drop in revenue.

- **Infrastructure and Climate Crisis in Taiwan**

- A major power outage in Fengshan affected over [1,167 households](#) due to high-voltage cable failure during a heatwave.
- Heavy rainfall from the Plum Rain season caused [widespread flooding](#) in Kaohsiung and Pingtung, with water levels reaching leg height in low-lying areas.

KEY GOVERNANCE TOPICS

Armed Conflict & Militarization

- The US has transitioned to [direct military action](#) against Iranian assets, signaling a failure of diplomatic deterrence.
- Internal debates in Taiwan over the [drone development budget](#) highlight the friction between strategic military needs and partisan fiscal oversight.

Critical Infrastructure Security

- Frequent power grid failures, such as the [Fengshan outage](#), suggest a lack of resilience against extreme temperature events.
- The appearance of large [sinkholes in Kaohsiung](#) following heavy rain indicates underlying structural decay in urban drainage and road systems.

Legal Warfare & Regulatory Risk

- The Constitutional Court's [ruling on the death penalty](#) introduces a significant regulatory shift that could lead to a backlog of appeals for inmates currently on death row.

- Debates on [juvenile justice reform](#) continue following high-profile murders committed by minors, with the public demanding harsher sentencing.

Tech Sovereignty & AI

- The failure of [commercial AI systems](#) highlights the "sovereignty risk" of relying on unproven algorithmic models for critical business and social functions.
- There is a growing delta between the marketing of AI as a universal solution and its [actual performance](#) in complex environments like supply chain management.

DEEP DIVE: TRENDS AND THEMES

The Fragility of the "AI Gold Rush"

A clear trend is emerging where the premature deployment of AI in logistics and marketing is leading to significant [brand damage](#) and financial loss. The Starbucks and AIAI cases suggest that AI is currently unable to handle the nuance and variability of real-world physical systems, such as inventory management. This trend indicates a likely cooling of corporate AI investment in favor of more robust, human-in-the-loop systems as the "hallucination" problem remains unresolved [across multiple sectors](#).

Institutional Gridlock in Defense Strategy

While the US is increasing its [military commitment](#) to Taiwan, the broadcasting suggests a widening gap between the Taiwanese executive's strategic vision and the legislature's fiscal control. The [refusal to fund](#) domestic drone programs indicates that partisan politics are now a primary constraint

on Taiwan's ability to absorb US military aid and develop indigenous defense capabilities.

Social Friction Over Judicial Liberalization

The Constitutional Court's decision to restrict the death penalty is being framed as a move toward international human rights standards, yet it faces [intense domestic opposition](#). This reflects a broader trend of institutional decay where the judiciary's decisions are increasingly out of step with public sentiment regarding social order and the "value of life" [in criminal sentencing](#).

INTERNAL DYNAMICS & DOMESTIC INSTABILITY

Taiwan is experiencing significant domestic strain characterized by partisan polarization and infrastructure vulnerability. The [legislative deadlock](#) over defense spending is a prime example of elite infighting that threatens national security preparedness. Simultaneously, the public is expressing frustration with the government's inability to manage basic services, as evidenced by the [power grid failures](#) and poor urban drainage during the Plum Rain season. The [Constitutional Court's ruling](#) on capital punishment has added a new layer of social unrest, with victim advocate groups and the general public signaling a loss of mandate for the current judicial trajectory. This internal instability is likely to constrain the state's capacity to react to external security shocks.

EXTERNAL DYNAMICS & GLOBAL POSTURE

The international system is portrayed as a fracturing multipolar arena where the US is forced into defensive kinetic postures. The US

[engagements with Iran](#) and its increased support for Taiwan via the [2027 NDAA](#) suggest a superpower attempting to hold the line against multiple revisionist actors. Taiwan, in this environment, is framing itself as a crucial but vulnerable partner. The broadcasting nation is actively influencing the environment by seeking deeper alliances with the US and Singapore, while simultaneously reacting defensively to [external economic shocks](#) and supply chain disruptions. The portrayal of Singapore as a [model for security and welfare](#) suggests a strategic pivot toward Southeast Asian regionalism as a buffer against geopolitical instability.

THE ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT

Taiwan's economic environment is under pressure from inflation, high energy costs, and the implementation of new environmental levies. The CPI increase to [2.2%](#) is being felt most acutely in the food and service sectors. The looming [carbon fee system](#), scheduled for 2026, is causing corporate distress, with major entities like Taiwan Power (Taipower) expecting billion-dollar cost increases. Market sentiment is further dampened by reports of extreme [price gouging](#) in the hospitality industry during high-profile cultural events.

- **Inflationary Pressures:** CPI at [2.2%](#) [breaching the central bank's target](#); food and utility costs rising.
- **Carbon Fees:** Introduction of a [\\$300 NTD per ton](#) carbon tax in 2026, targeting over 500 major industrial emitters.
- **Hospitality Sector Volatility:** Hotel prices for the BTS concert in Kaohsiung surged from [1,968 to over 10,000 NTD](#) per night.
- **Currency and Capital:** Continued [interest rate pressure](#) from the Central Bank to combat imported inflation.

- **Energy Costs:** Renewable energy targets [revised downward](#) from 20% to 15% due to high costs and infrastructure delays.

LEADERSHIP CHANGES

Political and corporate leadership is in a state of flux as the administration attempts to manage the current polycrisis. Factional battles within the legislature are defining the strategic direction of the state.

- **Legislative Factions:** Opposing groups are successfully [blocking executive defense initiatives](#), signaling a shift in power away from the central government toward legislative committees.
- **AIT Leadership:** Director Raymond Greene is projecting [steadfast US support](#), yet his comments highlight the frustration with Taiwanese domestic budget delays.
- **Corporate Resignations:** Unspecified [marketing and logistics executives](#) at AIAI and Starbucks have been sidelined following high-profile AI failures.

EDITORIAL POSTURE & STORY HIERARCHY

The network's lead stories for the day focused heavily on [infrastructure failures](#) and [judicial controversies](#). The emotional tone is one of high anxiety, emphasizing the "danger" of everyday life in Taiwan, from [hit-and-run accidents](#) to [power grid instability](#). The US-Iran kinetic conflict was treated with high urgency, framing it as a potential precursor to a wider global war. However, the network conspicuously minimized the [Taiwanese carbon fee](#) debate, burying the potential economic fallout for average consumers beneath more sensationalist crime and weather reporting. There was a notable lack

of coverage regarding the long-term diplomatic consequences of the death penalty ruling on international extradition treaties.

GEOPOLITICAL FRAMING

The broadcast portrays a world where traditional alliances are under strain and non-state actors (and AI) are introducing new forms of instability. The US is framed as a competent but overstretched protector, while Iran is depicted as a chaotic and aggressive spoiler.

- **United States:** Portrayed as a **strong and principled** ally that is being forced into kinetic action to maintain order. Quotes describe the US as "carrying out strikes to [protect global interests](#)" and offering "essential [security support](#) to Taiwan."
- **Iran:** Framed as a **chaotic and foe** entity. Descriptions emphasize the "lawless [targeting of oil tankers](#)" and the use of "unprovoked [missile attacks](#) on US bases."
- **Singapore:** Depicted as a **competent and stable** regional leader. It is framed as the "ideal [welfare and security state](#)" that Taiwan should emulate to escape its current domestic woes.
- **China:** Portrayed implicitly as a **principled but rival** force, particularly through the lens of [panda diplomacy](#) and the "United Front" forum, which are framed as tools of soft power and subversion.

INFORMATION WARFARE ENVIRONMENT

- **Narrative Seeding:** The broadcast is seeding a narrative that [AI is a threat](#) to human economic order, focusing exclusively on failures rather than potential benefits.
- **Propaganda:** The framing of Singapore's welfare policies is used as domestic [propaganda](#) to critique the current Taiwanese administration's perceived failures in housing and healthcare.
- **Psychological Operations:** The heavy emphasis on [crime and chaos](#) (such as the "drug-addicted hit-and-runs") appears intended to manufacture public consent for harsher juvenile and narcotics laws.

HYPOTHESES AND FUTURE OUTLOOK

- **Escalation of US-Iran Conflict:** Given the direct kinetic engagements, there is a high probability of [intensified maritime conflict](#) in the Persian Gulf, likely leading to a spike in global oil prices and supply chain delays.
- **AI Retrenchment:** Following the Starbucks and AIAI debacles, major corporations will likely [suspend or scale back](#) autonomous AI customer-facing systems in the next quarter.
- **Taiwanese Energy Crisis:** The combination of [lowered renewable targets](#) and high carbon fees will likely lead to a structural increase in electricity prices by Q4 2026.

STRATEGIC FORESIGHT

Short Term (1-4 Weeks): Expect a wave of lawsuits and appeals from death row inmates

following the [Constitutional Court ruling](#). Heavy rains will likely continue to cause [localized flooding and power disruptions](#) in southern Taiwan.

Medium Term (1-6 Months): The introduction of [carbon fees](#) will trigger a major corporate lobbying effort to secure exemptions, likely leading to further legislative friction. The US-Taiwan security partnership will face a "stress test" as the 2027 NDAA [funding initiative](#) meets domestic political resistance.

Long Term (1-5 Years): The failure to meet the 2025 renewable energy goals [will force a long-term shift](#) back toward nuclear or natural gas, potentially altering the regional energy landscape and strategic dependencies.

RISK ASSESSMENT

The current risk environment is elevated due to the convergence of regional security threats and domestic infrastructure vulnerability. The following flashpoints represent the highest potential for escalation.

- **Persian Gulf Maritime Conflict:** Direct US-Iran kinetic action could lead to a closure of the Strait of Hormuz. **Triggers:** Another successful Iranian [missile strike](#) on a US asset. **Likelihood:** High. **Impact:** Catastrophic global economic disruption. **Mitigations:** International naval escorts and diplomatic de-escalation channels.

- **Taiwanese Grid Collapse:** Sustained heatwaves combined with [aging infrastructure](#) could lead to cascading blackouts. **Triggers:** Multiple simultaneous high-voltage cable failures during peak demand. **Likelihood:** Medium. **Impact:** Severe economic loss and social unrest. **Mitigations:** Immediate emergency investment in grid hardening.
- **Green Inflation Shock:** The 2026 [carbon fee introduction](#) could trigger a rapid inflationary spike. **Triggers:** Major utilities passing all carbon costs to consumers simultaneously. **Likelihood:** High. **Impact:** Significant reduction in consumer purchasing power. **Mitigations:** Phased fee introduction and tax rebates for low-income households.
- **AI-Driven Supply Chain Failure:** Reliance on autonomous systems for [inventory](#) could lead to systemic stock-outs. **Triggers:** A major algorithmic error in a global shipping or retail hub. **Likelihood:** Medium. **Impact:** Localized shortages of essential goods. **Mitigations:** Mandatory human oversight for all critical AI logistical decisions.
- **Social Instability from Judicial Rulings:** Public anger over the [death penalty ruling](#) could boil over into civil unrest. **Triggers:** A high-profile murder case where the defendant receives a perceived lenient sentence. **Likelihood:** Medium. **Impact:** Breakdown in social order and loss of government mandate. **Mitigations:** Comprehensive public outreach and judicial transparency initiatives.

GAPS & BLIND SPOTS

The broadcasts left several critical areas unaddressed, which are necessary for a full risk assessment.

- The transcripts failed to explain the **exact nature of the US kinetic strikes** in Iran, leaving the extent of the damage to Iranian command and control unknown [beyond brief mentions](#).
- There was a complete absence of information regarding **China's reaction** to the US shooting down Iranian drones, which is a critical geopolitical signal [given their deepening ties](#).
- The broadcast failed to detail the **economic cost of the Plum Rain flooding** on the agricultural sector, which could drive future food inflation [beyond current estimates](#).
- There were no verified claims regarding the **cybersecurity of the AI systems** that failed; it is unclear if the failures were purely algorithmic or if external actors were involved [in the hallucinations](#).

CONTRARIAN NARRATIVE SCENARIOS

- **The AI "Failures" are a Decoy:** The high-profile AI errors at Starbucks and AIAI may be a calculated strategic retreat by tech giants to lower public expectations and [avoid regulation](#) while they continue to integrate more powerful, less visible systems into back-end infrastructure.

- **Taiwan's Budget Cuts are a Strategic Pivot:** The legislative slashing of the [drone budget](#) might not be partisan gridlock, but a deliberate move to force the US to provide more direct equipment transfers rather than requiring Taiwan to fund its own R&D, effectively shifting the financial burden of defense back to Washington.
- **Black Swan: Sudden Judicial Collapse:** The Constitutional Court ruling on the death penalty [could lead to a mass resignation of conservative judges, triggering a constitutional crisis that paralyzes the entire judicial branch and leaves the state unable to prosecute major crimes](#).

RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLICATIONS

For Statecraft/Public Sector:

- Immediately prioritize **grid resilience** and infrastructure maintenance to prevent further social instability from utility failures [during the summer season](#).
- Strengthen **US-Taiwan legislative communication** to ensure that security cooperation initiatives are not stalled by domestic fiscal partisan politics [in the Legislative Yuan](#).
- Develop a **clear regulatory framework for commercial AI** that mandates human-in-the-loop oversight for essential logistical functions to prevent systemic economic failures [as seen at major brands](#).

For Private Sector/Investors:

- Hedge against **rising energy and carbon costs** in the 2026 fiscal year by accelerating efficiency programs ahead of the [carbon fee introduction](#).

- Conduct an **urgent audit of AI integration** in supply chain and customer-facing roles to ensure systems are not hallucinating and causing [logistical loss](#).
- Monitor the **Persian Gulf security situation** for signs of prolonged maritime disruption, which would necessitate a shift in shipping routes and inventory lead times [due to US-Iran kinetic action](#).

LEGISLATIVE ROUNDUP

Legislative activity centered on defense budgeting, environmental regulation, and judicial reform. The primary friction point remains the balance between executive strategic goals and legislative fiscal oversight.

- **BILLS DISCUSSED/DEBATED:**
 - **2027 US NDAA Taiwan Provision:** A \$10 billion security package to [bolster defense capabilities](#); faces implementation challenges due to Taiwanese domestic budget cuts.
 - **2026 Carbon Fee Mandate:** A proposal to set carbon prices at [\\$300 NTD per ton](#) for major emitters starting in 2026.
 - **Juvenile Justice Reform Act:** Proposals to increase sentencing for [minors involved in major crimes](#) like murder and organized scams.

- **HEARINGS & PRESS EVENTS:**
 - **Constitutional Court Death Penalty Presser:** The court defended its [restrictive ruling](#) as a move toward international human rights alignment.
 - **Legislative Yuan Budget Hearing:** Opposition parties [grilled defense officials](#) over the efficacy of indigenous drone programs.
 - **Taipower Environmental Briefing:** Utility officials warned of [severe financial strain](#) if carbon fees are implemented without corresponding rate hikes.

KEY STORIES

- **US Intercepts Iranian Oil Tanker:** The US Navy blocked a tanker carrying [Iranian crude](#) in the Indian Ocean, intensifying the maritime blockade.
- **US-Iran Kinetic Exchange:** US forces shot down [four Iranian drones](#) and struck facilities following missile attacks in Kuwait and Bahrain.
- **Taiwan Death Penalty Ruling:** Constitutional Court restricted [capital punishment](#), sparking national debate and victim protests.
- **Starbucks AI Inventory Failure:** Starbucks terminated an AI system that [failed to distinguish milk types](#) for nine months.
- **Fengshan Power Outage:** Over [1,167 homes](#) lost power due to high-voltage cable failure during a record-breaking heatwave.
- **Kaohsiung Plum Rain Flooding:** Heavy rains caused [leg-high flooding](#) and triggered a major sinkhole in the city center.

- **BTS Concert Hotel Price Surge:** Hotel rooms in Kaohsiung [jumped 500% in price](#) for the upcoming BTS world tour stop.
- **2026 Carbon Fee Introduction:** Taiwan announced it will begin charging [\\$300 NTD per ton](#) for carbon emissions next year.
- **AIAI Marketing Scandal:** An AI marketing firm's [offensive generated text](#) led to a \$176 million NTD revenue loss.
- **Twin Cities Forum Cats:** Beijing sent [pandas](#) to the Taipei-Shanghai forum, which critics labeled as a "United Front" tactic.
- **Juvenile Murder Reform Debate:** Public outrage grew after a minor was sentenced to [only nine years](#) for a high-profile murder case.
- **Kaohsiung Industrial Sinkhole:** A [massive sinkhole](#) swallowed vehicles following豪雨炸整天 (heavy rain all day) in the Cuihua road area.
- **Starbucks AI Hallucinations:** The corporate entity admitted that its [AI inventory system](#) was a failure and had been discontinued after nine months of operation.
- **Singapore Immigration Pivot:** Reports indicate a growing number of [Taiwanese professionals](#) are seeking immigration to Singapore for its perceived social stability.
- **US NDAA Security Package:** The US Congress approved a [\\$10 billion fund](#) for Taiwan security, though domestic implementation remains uncertain.
- **Kaohsiung Hit-and-Run Tragedy:** An 82-year-old woman was killed by a [hit-and-run driver](#) who was later found to be high on narcotics.
- **Spider in the Eye Case:** A medical report detailed a patient with a [spider and 400 eggs](#) living inside their eyelid after they rubbed their eye too vigorously.

- **Taipower Revenue Crisis:** The state utility warned it would need [billions in support](#) to survive the new carbon fee regime.
- **Keelung Public Transport Collision:** A bus and a scooter [collided in 基隆 \(Keelung\)](#) due to blind spots created by heavy rain and poor infrastructure.
- **BYD Market Dominance:** Chinese automaker BYD reported [2.26 million deliveries](#), surpassing international competitors in the electric vehicle sector.

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.

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