

# TODAY'S MEDIA TRENDS

## PRESSTV

JULY 7, 2026

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

### IRAN PROJECTS STRATEGIC RESILIENCE & REGIONAL HEGEMONY

(during multi-city funeral rites for assassinated leader Ali Khamenei)

**JULY 7, 2026: DAY-AT-A-GLANCE.** A pivotal moment for the state's 'Revolution 2.0' narrative. The extended mourning period for Ali Khamenei (assassinated Feb 2026) is used to cement the transition to his son, Mujtaba Khamenei, while projecting absolute national unity and 'strategic patience' for future 'calculated mobilization'. The funeral's extension to Iraqi holy cities demonstrates the 'unbreakable bond' of the Axis of Resistance amid a high-stakes standoff with the US.

#### 1. THE NARRATIVE ARC: ASSASSINATION TO TRANSITION



State transforms tragedy into a permanent psychological deterrent. Funeral turnout framed as a 'referendum' on legitimacy. Mujtaba portrayed as a 'modest' and 'learned' leader.

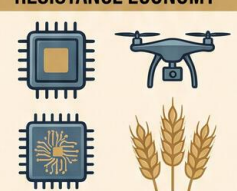
#### 2. KEY PILLARS OF RESILIENCE & POWER

##### INSTITUTIONALIZED MARTYRDOM & UNITY



Cleansing of dissent through shared emotion. 'Red flag of revenge' signals future retaliation mandate. 'Martyrdom culture' insulates regime.

##### TECH SOVEREIGNTY & RESISTANCE ECONOMY



90% Military Self-Sufficiency claimed. Global leader in Nanotechnology & AI. A. 'Knowledge Economy' (234k engineers/yr) and Food Independence as shields against sanctions.

##### REGIONAL HEGEMONY & GLOBAL PIVOT



Najaf/Karbala rites integrate security spheres. Strategic pivot to 'Eurasian Axis' & Global South. US-led order viewed as in 'terminal decline'.

#### 3. EXTERNAL CONFRONTATION & FUTURE OUTLOOK

##### THE US-IRAN STANDOFF



US revokes oil waivers, violates Islamabad MOU. Trump threatens infrastructure. US framed as unreliable and 'declining empire'.



Iran asserts control over Strait of Hormuz ('grab the American neck'). 'Missile cities' ready for 'fallout war'. Diplomatic stalling while preparing deterrence.

##### STRATEGIC FORESIGHT & RISKS



**SHORT TERM (1-4 Weeks):** Reactionary strikes expected post-mourning.



**MEDIUM TERM (1-6 Months):** New non-Western treaties (China/Russia) to bypass US.



**LONG TERM (1-5 Years):** Goal of Iranian-led unipolar sphere in West Asia.



**HIGH RISK:** Strait of Hormuz Closure (Global Energy Shock).



**MODERATE RISK:** Regional Spillover (e.g., Damascus explosions near foreign leaders).



**BLIND SPOT:** Actual economic health vs. 'nanotech' claims; unverified Damascus attack details.

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## IRAN PROJECTS STRATEGIC RESILIENCE AND REGIONAL HEGEMONY DURING THE MULTI- CITY FUNERAL RITES FOR ASSASSINATED LEADER ALI KHAMENEI

### DAY-AT-A-GLANCE

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July 7, 2026, marks a pivotal moment in the Iranian state's narrative of "Revolution 2.0," as the country observes the fifth day of funeral processions for **Sayyid Ali Khamenei**, who was reportedly assassinated on February 28, 2026, in a joint [US-Israeli strike](#). The state is leveraging this period of extended mourning to cement the transition of power to his son, **Mujtaba Khamenei**, while projecting an image of absolute national unity and "strategic patience" in the wake of the recent "12-day war" and the "Ramadan War." The broadcast portrays a nation that has moved past the shock of the assassination into a phase of **calculated mobilization**, using the transfer of the leader's body to the Iraqi holy cities of Najaf and Karbala to demonstrate the "unbreakable bond" of the Axis of Resistance.

Simultaneously, the Iranian administration is engaged in a high-stakes **diplomatic and economic standoff** with the United States. Tehran has accused the US of violating the "Islamabad Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)" after Washington revoked oil sanction waivers. Iranian officials are signaling that negotiations will not proceed as long as US President **Donald Trump** continues to issue [infrastructure threats](#) against the country. The convergence of these events suggests that Iran is utilizing its internal "martyrdom culture" to insulate the regime from external pressure, while showcasing its technological and military self-sufficiency as the primary deterrent against further aggression.

### MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS

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#### The Transnational Funeral Procession

- The body of the late Supreme Leader was moved from Qom to **Najaf International Airport** for rites in Iraq's shrine cities, received by high-level [Iraqi and Iranian officials](#).
- Participation estimates for the Tehran and Qom legs of the funeral range from **8 million to over 20 million**, including delegations from over 100 countries such as [Saudi Arabia and Qatar](#).
- The burial is scheduled for Thursday at the **Imam Riza shrine** in Mashhad.

#### Escalation of the US-Iran Diplomatic Standoff

- Iran has condemned the US Treasury's decision to [revoke a license](#) that temporarily lifted oil sanctions, calling it a violation of Clause 10 of the Islamabad MOU.

- President Trump has threatened to target Iran's **bridges and energy infrastructure** if a final deal is not reached, while Iran asserts it maintains full control over the [Strait of Hormuz](#).

### **Regional Instability: Damascus Explosions**

- At least **18 people were injured** in twin explosions in Damascus near a hotel where French President **Emmanuel Macron** was staying during an official visit to the [Al-Sham regime](#).

### **Palestinian Governance Shift**

- Hamas has announced the **dissolution of its emergency government** in Gaza, signaling a readiness to hand over administrative authority to a national committee under the [ceasefire agreement](#).

## **KEY GOVERNANCE TOPICS**

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**Armed Conflict & Militarization:** Iran claims to have reached **90% military self-sufficiency**, producing over a thousand types of munitions domestically. This is framed as a direct result of the late leader's emphasis on "scientific strength" as a [foundation for defense](#).

**Tech Sovereignty & AI:** The state highlights its position as a global leader in **nanotechnology** (ranking 5th globally) and the graduation of **234,000 engineers annually**, which is second only to the [United States](#). This "knowledge economy" is presented as the primary shield against sanctions.

**Information Warfare & Disinformation:** State media is aggressively countering Western narratives that portrayed the late

leader as unpopular. The massive turnout is framed as a "**referendum**" on the Islamic Republic's legitimacy, intended to "shock" [Western observers](#).

**Global Health & Biosecurity:** Retrospective analysis of the late leader's COVID-19 policies (refusing **Pfizer vaccines**) is used to justify [medical sovereignty](#), claiming the policy fostered the development of indigenous Iranian vaccines and protected the population from "hegemonic abuse."

## **DEEP DIVE: TRENDS AND THEMES**

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### **The Institutionalization of Martyrdom as Political Deterrence**

The state is successfully transforming the "tragedy" of the Supreme Leader's assassination into a permanent **psychological deterrent**. By showcasing millions of people "voting with their feet," the regime signals to the West that "decapitation strikes" do not result in systemic collapse but rather [radicalize and unify](#) the population. The presence of the "red flag of revenge" throughout the processions indicates that the state has been given a public mandate for future **retaliation** against US and Israeli assets.

### **Strategic Pivot to the Global South and Multi-Polarity**

A recurring theme is the belief that the unipolar US-led world order is in **terminal decline**. Iran is positioning itself as the vanguard of a new "Eurasian axis" and a leader of the "Global South." The participation of Saudi and Qatari delegations in the funeral rites, despite regional tensions, is framed as a realization by regional powers that [US security guarantees](#) are unreliable. The

narrative emphasizes that the future lies in "strategic independence" and **indigenous spheres of production** that bypass Western-controlled institutions like the IMF.

## INTERNAL DYNAMICS & DOMESTIC INSTABILITY

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The broadcast presents an image of **absolute domestic stability** during a leadership transition that Western analysts predicted would cause chaos. The "Principalist, Reformist, and Moderate" factions are portrayed as having taken turns in governance while leaving the [broader structure intact](#). However, there are subtle admissions of past "misgivings" among the population regarding government policies. The state is now using the high emotional stakes of the funeral to perform a "**cleansing**" of dissent, where even former critics are said to feel "guilty" and are now [rallying around the flag](#).

The grooming of **Mujtaba Khamenei** is framed as a continuation of a "holistic" and "learned" leadership style. The focus on his son's supposed **modest lifestyle**—living in a house with no refrigerator and eating "leftover eggplant"—is a clear attempt to contrast the regime's leadership with the "corrupt and decadent" [Western elites](#) and ensure support from the lower economic classes who have suffered under sanctions.

## EXTERNAL DYNAMICS & GLOBAL POSTURE

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The "outside world" is framed as a **hostile threat matrix** led by the "Zio-Western Empire," which is countered by the "Axis of Resistance." Iran is projecting power by extending its leader's funeral into Iraq,

essentially treating the region as a [single strategic theater](#). This "transnational mourning" serves to dare the US and Israel to intervene, with the "Strategic Patience" policy being redefined as "preparing for the cold manner of revenge."

The portrayal of **Russia and China** is that of essential economic and military partners who helped Iran avoid a "Libyan-style" collapse. Iran's posture is [defensively proactive](#); it uses diplomacy (the Islamabad MOU) as a tool to gain time while simultaneously preparing its "missile cities" for a "**fallout war**" it deems "eminent."

## THE ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT

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The Iranian economy is described as having shifted from a "rentier" state to a "**resistance economy**" driven by knowledge-based firms and indigenous production. Despite the revocation of oil waivers, the narrative emphasizes that the US has "lost the checkbook" on regional dynamics.

### Key Economic Vectors:

- **Agriculture:** Iran claims to be nearly self-sufficient in food, producing **14 million tons of wheat** annually to prevent "starvation into submission" [by the US](#).
- **Energy:** Threat to the **Strait of Hormuz** remains the primary economic weapon, with Iran asserting it can "grab the American neck" on the strategic [waterway](#).
- **Science & Industry:** Iran ranks **15th globally** in scientific output and produces **11,000 nanotechnology papers annually**.
- **Human Capital:** The **literacy rate** reportedly doubled during Khamenei's tenure, creating a "brain-equipped" workforce [for the future](#).

## LEADERSHIP CHANGES

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The transition to a new era of leadership is the day's dominant underlying political story. The focus is on the **continuity of the ideological school** rather than the persona of the new leader.

- **Mujtaba Khamenei:** Characterized as the "new Supreme Leader," highly intelligent and trained in his father's "school." His status is framed as being "**in good hands**" by [Lebanese allies](#).
- **Masud Pezeshkian:** The President is portrayed as the **diplomatic face** of the funeral, coordinating the reception of foreign delegations and the [transfer of the body to Iraq](#).
- **Ismail Gani:** Commander of the IRGC Quds Force, active in **reinforcing the call for revenge** and strengthening ties with [Iraqi tribes](#).

## EDITORIAL POSTURE & STORY HIERARCHY

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The network maintains a **highly nationalistic and hagiographic** tone. The "Lead Story" is the multi-city funeral, which occupies nearly 90% of the airtime. The "Buried Stories" are the details of the actual **negotiations with Washington**, which are only mentioned in the context of US violations. Conspicuous by its absence is any mention of **civilian casualties** from the recent wars in Iran, other than the Supreme Leader's family members, or any discussion of **inflationary pressures** caused by the new sanctions environment.

## GEOPOLITICAL FRAMING

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The broadcast frames the world as a clear binary between the "Arrogant Powers" and the "Axis of Resistance."

### COUNTRIES

- **Iran:** Portrayed as a "superpower among Russia, China, and the US" and a "standard bearer for the [oppressed](#)."
- **United States:** Framed as a "declining empire" and a "**rootless country**" led by a "delusional" and "cursed" president [Donald Trump](#).
- **Iraq:** Depicted as a "brotherly nation" that is finally **asserting its sovereignty** by hosting the Iranian leader's [funeral rites](#).
- **Israel:** Characterized as a "cancerous tumor" and a "killing machine" that [lied to the world](#).

### LEADERS

- **Donald Trump:** Portrayed as "dumb," "openly corrupt," and linked to "**Epstein island**" [atrocities](#).
- **Emmanuel Macron:** Framed as a leader caught in the **crossfire of regional instability**, visiting Syria during a time of [explosions](#).
- **Benjamin Netanyahu:** Described as a "puppet" who overseen the "**backfired**" [assassination](#).

## INFORMATION WARFARE ENVIRONMENT

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The Iranian state is conducting a sophisticated **narrative-seeding operation**. By broadcasting images of "crying children" and millions of "mourners clad in black," they are creating a "**sea of emotion**" designed to

delegitimize any Western claims of a "color revolution." The **MOU negotiations** are being weaponized to show the "unreliability" of the US, while the "martyrdom" of the leader's family, including his **14-month-old granddaughter**, is used to frame the US as ["child killers"](#).

## HYPOTHESES AND FUTURE OUTLOOK

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- **The Rise of Mujtaba Khamenei:** The transition will likely result in a more **militarily aggressive** posture, as the new leader seeks to prove his credentials to the IRGC and the "Axis of Resistance."
- **Collapse of Diplomacy:** Given the revocation of oil waivers and Trump's threats, the Islamabad MOU is on the verge of **total collapse**, likely leading to Iranian "reciprocal measures" in the [Strait of Hormuz](#).
- **Regional Consolidation:** The funeral rites in Najaf and Karbala suggest a **de facto integration** of Iranian and Iraqi security spheres, making a US troop withdrawal from Iraq a **political certainty** in the [medium term](#).

## STRATEGIC FORESIGHT

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**Short Term (1-4 Weeks):** Expect **reactionary strikes** or asymmetric operations against US bases in the region as "revenge" for the assassination, triggered by the completion of the 40-day mourning period.

**Medium Term (1-6 Months):** Iran will likely formalize new **energy and military treaties** with China and Russia to bypass the revoked US MOU, potentially including the establishment of new [global institutions](#).

**Long Term (1-5 Years):** The "Revolution 2.0" framework will seek to transform West Asia into a **unipolar Iranian-led sphere**, utilizing its "Tech Sovereignty" to dominate the [regional knowledge economy](#).

## RISK ASSESSMENT

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- The **closure of the Strait of Hormuz** remains the highest global risk. **Triggers:** Continued US infrastructure threats or total oil embargo. **Likelihood:** High. **Impact:** Global energy shock and "fallout war." **Mitigations:** Immediate diplomatic de-escalation and restoration of [MOU waivers](#).
- **Assassination of Mujtaba Khamenei** or other high-ranking transition figures. **Triggers:** Israeli "decapitation" strategy escalation. **Likelihood:** Moderate. **Impact:** Total regional conflagration. **Mitigations:** Enhanced "missile city" protection and [underground command centers](#).
- **Regional Spillover from Damascus:** The targeting of foreign leaders (like Macron). **Triggers:** Proxy warfare escalation in Syria. **Likelihood:** Moderate. **Impact:** Direct NATO involvement. **Mitigations:** UN-led reform of regional [security structures](#).
- **Economic Collapse of Iraq:** Due to its reliance on the "US checkbook." **Triggers:** US retaliation for Iraq's hosting of Iranian funeral rites. **Likelihood:** High. **Impact:** Humanitarian crisis and ISIS resurgence. **Mitigations:** Iranian-led ["Hope Initiative"](#) funding.
- **Cyber-Warfare on Critical Infrastructure:** **Triggers:** Failure of the Islamabad MOU. **Likelihood:** Very High. **Impact:** Disruption of regional power grids and water [desalination plants](#).

## GAPS & BLIND SPOTS

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- The broadcast fails to address the **actual current health** of the Iranian economy under the newly revoked waivers, focusing instead on "nanotechnology" as a panacea.
- There is no verified data on the **Damascus explosions**; the "sources" remain unknown, leaving a gap in understanding if this was a state-actor hit or a militant operation.
- The narrative of "20 million mourners" is **statistically improbable** given Tehran's metro capacity and urban layout, suggesting significant state [exaggeration for psychological effect](#).
- The **internal succession politics** within the IRGC are ignored, focusing only on the "smooth" transition to Mujtaba Khamenei.

## CONTRARIAN NARRATIVE SCENARIOS

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**The "Potemkin" Funeral:** The massive turnouts might not be a sign of regime strength but a **desperate state-enforced mobilization** intended to mask deep internal fractures and a collapsing economy. If the crowd numbers are artificially inflated, the regime may be more vulnerable to a **"Black Swan" domestic uprising** if the "revenge" narrative fails to [materialize](#).

**The "Stalling" MOU:** Iran's vocal defense of the Islamabad MOU could be a **stalling tactic** to complete its own "military ring of fire" or nuclear objectives before the US can re-escalate, meaning the current "mourning period" is actually a [strategic window for mobilization](#).

## RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLICATIONS

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### For Statecraft/Public Sector:

- **Security:** Western powers must prepare for **asymmetric retaliation** in the Persian Gulf and Levant, as the "referendum for resistance" has emboldened proxy actors.
- **Economic:** The revocation of oil waivers will likely drive Iran **permanently into the Chinese economic sphere**, necessitating a re-evaluation of Western "sanctions diplomacy."
- **Diplomatic:** The UN must fast-track **structural reforms** to include "Global South" voices, or face irrelevance as Iran and its allies create [parallel institutions](#).

### For Private Sector/Investors:

- **Supply Chain:** Global firms must diversify away from the **Strait of Hormuz** and the "Hot Climate" ports of the UAE (Dubai/Abu Dhabi), as these are now [primary Iranian targets](#).
- **Compliance:** Rapidly shifting "Islamabad MOU" status requires **real-time regulatory monitoring** for all firms dealing in regional energy or critical minerals.
- **Opportunity:** The surge in Iranian **nanotechnology and engineering output** (234,000 graduates) suggests a long-term shift in regional tech R&D that may bypass Western patents.

## LEGISLATIVE ROUNDUP

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The day featured major policy declarations regarding **energy sovereignty and international law**, specifically focused on the legitimacy of the Islamabad MOU and the

"Freedom of Information Act" results regarding [Western vaccine testing](#).

## BILLS DISCUSSED/DEBATED:

- **The 14-Point Islamabad MOU:** A strategic agreement between Tehran and Washington intended to de-escalate the "12-day war." Clause 10 (Sanction Waivers) and Clause 5 (Hormuz Management) are currently in [legal dispute](#).
- **September Disarmament Deadline:** A proposed policy to disarm Iraqi resistance factions, which Iranian allies [dismiss as "unworkable."](#)

## HEARINGS & PRESS EVENTS:

- **Supreme Defense Council (Tehran):** Held emergency sessions to "correct the enemy's miscalculations" regarding [infrastructure strikes](#).
- **Hamas Press Conference (Deir al-Balah):** Announced the formal handover of administrative authority to a "National Committee" for [Gaza governance](#).

## KEY STORIES

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- **The Najaf Reception:** The body of Ali Khamenei arrived in Najaf, Iraq, for a multi-city ceremony attended by President Pezeshkian and Prime Minister Ali al-Zaidi, marking a **historical first** for an Iranian leader [in decades](#).
- **Damascus Explosions:** Twin IED attacks near French President Macron's hotel in Syria; **18 people injured**, Macron reported [unharm](#)ed.
- **MOU Breakdown:** Iran's Foreign Ministry condemns the US revocation of oil sanction waivers, stating that "Negotiations will not commence" as long as [threats continue](#).

- **Scientific Self-Sufficiency Claims:** Defense officials report Iran has achieved **90% independence** in munitions and is a global leader in [nuclear medicine](#).
- **Gaza Government Dissolution:** Hamas dissolves its emergency cabinet to facilitate the transition to a **technocratic committee** under the [ceasefire framework](#).
- **Strait of Hormuz Alert:** Iranian officials declare full sovereign authority over the waterway, warning that any US interference will trigger a [swift military response](#).
- **Trump Critical of NATO:** President Trump criticizes NATO allies for failing to assist in the recent **"war of aggression"** on [Iran](#).
- **UN Reform Bid:** Former UN Deputy Secretary Pino Arlacchi announces candidacy to succeed Guterres, calling for a **"multipolar" reform of the Security Council**.

## ABOUT THIS REPORT

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**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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