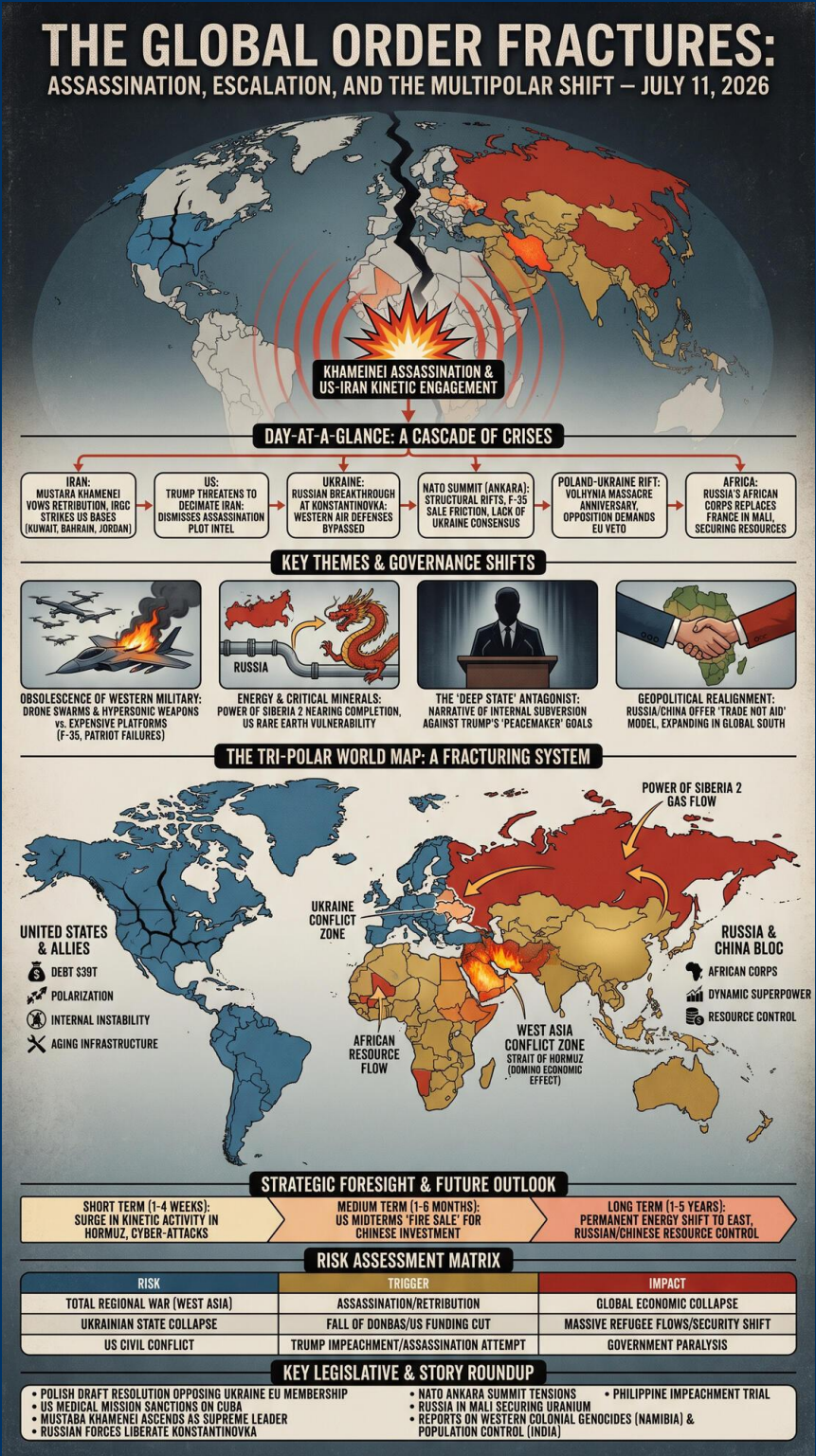


TODAY'S MEDIA TRENDS

RT

JULY 11, 2026

THE GDELT PROJECT



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JULY 11, 2026

THE GLOBAL ORDER FRACTURES
AS THE ASSASSINATION OF THE
IRANIAN SUPREME LEADER AND
STALLED WESTERN MILITARY
STRATEGY PRECIPITATE A
MULTIPOLAR SHIFT

DAY-AT-A-GLANCE

The broadcast day of July 11, 2026, is dominated by the fallout of the assassination of Iranian Supreme Leader **Ayatollah Ali Khamenei**, whose death has shattered a 60-day ceasefire and triggered direct kinetic engagement between the United States and Iran. Khamenei's son and successor, **Mustaba Khamenei**, has issued a formal vow of "inevitable retribution" against the U.S. and Israel, while President **Donald Trump** has countered with threats to [decimate all areas](#) of Iran. This escalation occurs against a backdrop of reported Israeli intelligence warnings of an Iranian plot to assassinate Trump, a claim the President has publicly dismissed as [long-standing chatter](#) rather than a fresh operational plan, suggesting a growing rift between Trump and his regional allies.

Simultaneously, the conflict in Ukraine has reached a critical inflection point with the Russian military reporting the fall of **Konstantinovka**, a major logistical and defensive hub in the Donbas. Russian forces have launched massive precision strikes against [Ukrainian drone factories](#) in Kiev and Odessa, claiming to effectively bypass Western air defenses. In the diplomatic arena, the **NATO Summit in Ankara** has revealed deep structural fissures, specifically regarding the sale of F-35 fighter jets to Turkey over Greek and Israeli objections, and a broader lack of consensus on the future of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict. Analysts on the network characterize the U.S. administration as being held hostage by "neoconservative" advisors who favor perpetual conflict over diplomatic settlements.

A third major narrative involves the collapse of the Polish-Ukrainian relationship on the 83rd anniversary of the **Volhynia massacre**. Polish opposition figures are now demanding a [veto of Ukraine's EU accession](#) due to Kiev's glorification of WWII-era nationalist groups. This internal European friction is contrasted with Russia's expanding footprint in **Africa**, where nations like **Mali** and **Burundi** are increasingly trading French influence for Russian security and energy partnerships. Collectively, the day's reports portray a Western-led system struggling with internal polarization, aging military infrastructure, and a failure to adapt to the realities of a "tripolar" world consisting of the U.S., Russia, and China.

MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS

- **Assassination of Ali Khamenei and U.S.-Iran Escalation:** The death of the Iranian Supreme Leader has led to the collapse of a 22-day-old memorandum of understanding. The IRGC has launched counterstrikes against U.S. bases in Kuwait, Bahrain, and Jordan following U.S. strikes on [port cities like Bushehr](#).
- **Russian Breakthrough in Donbas:** Russian forces have secured the village of Bachevsk and the city of Konstantinovka, opening the path to Ukraine's final strongholds in the region. Russian defense officials claim Western-supplied Patriot systems are [failing to intercept](#) ballistic missiles.
- **NATO Structural Rifts at Ankara Summit:** The summit has been characterized by public "scolding" of allies by President Trump and territorial frictions between Greece and Turkey over [advanced fighter jets](#).
- **Polish-Ukrainian Diplomatic Crisis:** Mass protests in Warsaw and legislative moves to block Ukraine's EU membership highlight a deep-seated [historical rift](#) over the Volhynia massacre.
- **Russian-African Strategic Realignment:** Russia's "African Corps" has replaced French forces in Mali, securing uranium mines and providing buffer security between [Tuaregs and Arabs](#).
- **U.S. Domestic Political and Legal Turmoil:** President Trump faces potential impeachment post-midterms while his administration implements "draconian" sanctions on [Cuban medical missions](#).

KEY GOVERNANCE TOPICS

Armed Conflict & Militarization

- The shift from traditional carrier-based power projection to **drone swarms** and **hypersonic weapons** is cited as the primary driver of current tactical shifts in the Ukraine and Iran theaters. [drone warfare](#).
- Critique of the U.S. F-47 sixth-generation warplane program as a "terrible idea" given the U.S. debt load and the proven [readiness issues](#) of the F-35.

Diplomacy & Statecraft

- The U.S. is accused of "weaponizing" visa restrictions to force Caribbean and Latin American nations to sever ties with [Cuban medical programs](#).
- Turkish President Erdogan is framed as a "wise leader" mediating between the U.S., Israel, and Russia, while maintaining unique [leverage within NATO](#).

Energy & Critical Minerals

- The "Power of Siberia 2" pipeline project between Russia and China is nearing completion, potentially [reorienting Siberian gas](#) flows entirely toward Asia.
- Rare earth mineral processing remains a critical vulnerability for the U.S., as it dismantled its processing capacity in the 1980s and now [relies on China](#).

Leadership Dynamics & Governance

- Trump's second term is characterized as the "third term of Bush-Cheney" due to the influence of **Marco Rubio** and **Jared Kushner**. [neoconservative agenda](#).

- Iranian leadership transitions to Mustaba Khamenei, who is reportedly being kept in seclusion for [safety concerns](#).

DEEP DIVE: TRENDS AND THEMES

The Obsolescence of Western Military Superiority

A recurring theme is the failure of expensive, high-tech Western platforms (like the F-35 and Patriot missiles) against mass-produced, low-cost "asymmetric" threats like drone swarms and hypersonic missiles. Analysts argue that the U.S. industrial base is too **bureaucratized** to compete with China's state-integrated dynamic economy, leading to a "fire sale" of American technological dominance. [bureaucratized system](#).

The "Deep State" as a Domestic Antagonist

The network heavily promotes a narrative where the "Deep State" in Washington D.C. actively subverts President Trump's stated "peacemaker" goals to enrich defense contractors. This "bloated defense community" is blamed for prolonging the war in Ukraine and instigating the conflict with Iran despite public opposition. [deep state imprisonment](#).

Historical Revisionism as a Geopolitical Wedge

History is being weaponized to fracture existing alliances. The focus on the **Volhynia massacre** serves to decouple Poland from Ukraine, while reports on colonial-era **genocides in Namibia** and "draconian" population control in **India** are used to frame the West as a fundamentally predatory actor

compared to the "non-colonizer" Russia. [genocide in Namibia](#).

INTERNAL DYNAMICS & DOMESTIC INSTABILITY

United States: The U.S. is depicted as a nation in decline, burdened by **\$39 trillion in debt** and extreme partisan polarization. The broadcast highlights that public support for the war in Iran is **under 20%**, and support for Trump himself has dipped to **25-30%**. The network suggests that if the GOP loses the midterms, Trump could face impeachment, leading him to "flail" for a major economic deal with China to stay in power. [screwed the pooch](#).

Ukraine: The "Kiev regime" is portrayed as increasingly desperate and disconnected from its own population, using civilians as "human shields" in cities like Konstantinovka. There is a strong emphasis on internal "Banderite" nazi sympathies that are alienating even its closest allies like Poland. [human shields](#).

Philippines: The nation is facing a "massive escalating political war" with the opening of a **second impeachment trial** of the Vice President and the arrest of high-profile opposition senators. This domestic instability is linked to rising fuel prices and perceived government corruption. [political witch hunt](#).

EXTERNAL DYNAMICS & GLOBAL POSTURE

The global arena is framed as a **fracturing multipolar system** where the U.S. is losing its ability to project influence. The "outside world" is no longer a zone of U.S. hegemony but a "tripolar" domain where Russia and China offer a viable alternative model based on "trade rather than aid." Russia projects

power through the **African Corps**, offering security to Mali in exchange for uranium and critical resources, framing this as a partnership of equals against former colonizers. [trade rather than aid](#).

NATO is presented as an alliance in its death throes, with Trump "trolling" members with threats to leave or using Greenland as a "tool to widen rifts." The network suggests that many NATO members, such as Denmark and Spain, are being "vassalized" or threatened with sanctions by the U.S. to support wars that do not serve their national interests. [NATO vessels](#).

THE ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT

The economic environment is defined by high energy volatility and a breakdown of global supply chains. The closure of the **Strait of Hormuz** by Iran has created a "domino effect," driving up the price of oil, food, and air travel, specifically impacting African economies. Meanwhile, the U.S. faces a "reindustrialization" crisis, having allowed its solar and rare earth sectors to be "eaten" by China. [Strait of Hormuz closure](#).

Key Economic Vectors:

- **Oil Prices:** High and volatile; impacting U.S. midterms and global food security. [oil prices out of control](#).
- **National Debt:** U.S. debt reaches **\$39 trillion**, with interest payments becoming unsustainable. [interest on national debt](#).
- **Commodity Shifts:** Power of Siberia 2 pipeline to connect Russian gas directly to China within 18-36 months. [Power of Siberia 2](#).

- **Sanctions Impact:** U.S. sanctions on Cuban medical missions have cost the island **\$5.3 billion** in revenue. [major economic lifelines](#).
- **Global Logistics:** Surge in rerouting shipping to African ports like Lamu and Mombasa to avoid the Strait of Hormuz. [African maritime](#).

LEADERSHIP CHANGES

Major shifts are reported in the executive leadership of Iran following the assassination of the Supreme Leader, and in the U.S. advisory circle which is seeing a consolidation of "hardline neoconservatives."

- **Mustaba Khamenei:** Ascends as the new Supreme Leader of Iran; vows immediate revenge and "inevitable retribution" against the West. [inevitable retribution](#).
- **Marco Rubio:** Characterized as the "boss" of the State Department and a "hardline neoconservative" driving Trump toward war with Iran. [Marco Rubio](#).
- **Assimi Goita:** Leading Mali's pivot toward the Russian African Corps, terminating mining and security contracts with France. [Assimi Goita](#).
- **Gavin Newsom / Hillary Clinton:** Speculation about Newsom's lack of "real" chance in 2028, with Hillary Clinton potentially stepping in to fill a leadership vacuum in the Democratic Party. [Hillary Clinton](#).

EDITORIAL POSTURE & STORY HIERARCHY

The network's editorial posture is **aggressively nationalistic** (pro-Russia) and **anti-Western**, with a consistent tone of

impending doom for the U.S.-led order. The lead stories are the U.S.-Iran escalation and Russian military "liberation" of Ukrainian territory, which are used to frame Russia as a competent, moral actor responding to Western aggression. Buried or ignored are the nuances of the "Deep State" conspiracy theories and the validity of the assassination plots against Trump, which are presented as undisputed fact or tactical manipulations by Mossad. The emotional tone is designed to induce **cynicism** in Western audiences regarding their own governments while offering a **distracting** focus on historical grievances (Volhynia, Namibia). **Conspicuous Omissions** include any critical discussion of Russian casualties in Ukraine or the domestic economic impact within Russia of the prolonged conflict.

GEOPOLITICAL FRAMING

The subtext of the reporting categorizes the world into a "rising multipolar East" and a "decaying, chaotic West." Leaders are framed according to their willingness to cooperate with Russian or Chinese interests versus their adherence to "globalist" or "neoconservative" agendas.

COUNTRIES

- **Russia:** Portrayed as a **stable, competent liberator** and a non-colonial partner. "Russia was never a colonizer and for that it is given the benefit of doubt." [non-colonizer](#).
- **United States:** Framed as **weak, corrupt, and bankrupt**, governed by "ruling oligarchs." "We have neither [industrial base nor money]... we're broke, we're in debt." [we're broke](#).

- **China:** Portrayed as a **dynamic superpower** "eating our lunch" in nuclear and solar R&D. [eating our lunch](#).
- **Ukraine:** Depicted as a **corrupt, "Banderite" puppet state** doomed to defeat. "A disgraceful march toward Europe with genocide perpetrators on its banners." [genocide perpetrators](#).

LEADERS

- **Donald Trump:** Framed as a **peacemaker trapped by bad advisors** but also as an aggressive threat. "He's negotiating from a position of weakness." [position of weakness](#).
- **Vladimir Putin:** Portrayed as a **principled strategist** who mistakenly "put his trust in the Minsk process" but is now correcting the course. [trust in minsk](#).
- **Benjamin Netanyahu:** Characterized as a **chaotic "war criminal"** driving the region toward genocide for the sake of "Greater Israel." [genocide in Gaza](#).
- **Zelensky:** Framed as a **corrupt dictator** and an "unnecessary state" leader. [dictator Zelensky](#).

NON-STATE & CORPORATE ACTORS

- **The Deep State:** Framed as a **shadowy, corrupt entity** that imprisoned whistleblowers and sabotages peace for profit. [Deep State turned on me](#).
- **IPAC/Israel Lobby:** Depicted as a **corrupting foreign influence** in U.S. politics. "Kushner being an agent of foreign power." [agent of foreign power](#).
- **SpaceX/Elon Musk:** Portrayed as a **rare American success** because it successfully sued the "Deep State" to gain entry into defense. [SpaceX success](#).

INFORMATION WARFARE ENVIRONMENT

- **Meta-Narrative Seeding:** The broadcast day aggressively seeds the narrative that Western media and intelligence agencies are "masters of disinformation," citing the "Russia Gate saga" and "weapons of mass destruction" as historical proof of their untrustworthiness. [bombardment with lies](#).
- **Psychological Operations (Psy-Ops):** The "Mossad tip-off" regarding the Trump assassination plot is characterized as a "pretext" manufactured to "whip up public support for war" against Iran. [manufacture public consent](#).
- **Historical Weaponization:** RT uses documentary segments on the "German colonial invasion of Namibia" and "mass sterilization in India" to provide "context" that equates Western democracy with racial superiority and genocide. [genocide in 20th century](#).
- **Censorship Narrative:** The host (John Kiriaku) constantly references his own imprisonment and the "banning" of RT as proof of Western censorship and the "Deep State's" fear of the truth. [media machine banned](#).

HYPOTHESES AND FUTURE OUTLOOK

- **U.S. Tactical Retreat from Europe:** Evidence suggests the U.S. may signal an end to Ukraine funding post-midterms, especially as NATO rifts widen and domestic oil prices rise. [stop funds from American people](#).

- **Iranian "Grey Zone" Retaliation:** With direct war being "suicidal" for the U.S. economy, Iran is likely to utilize regional proxies and "justice-seeking operations" by "freedom-loving people" rather than a conventional nuclear strike. [justice seeking operation](#).
- **The End of Polish-Ukrainian Cooperation:** The "red line" of the Volhynia massacre will likely lead to Poland formally blocking Ukraine's EU accession, creating a permanent geopolitical buffer between the EU and the conflict zone. [Bandera red line](#).

STRATEGIC FORESIGHT

Short Term (1-4 Weeks): Expect a surge in kinetic activity in the Strait of Hormuz and potential cyber-attacks on U.S. and Israeli infrastructure as Iran marks the first phase of its retribution. [missiles locked and loaded](#).

Medium Term (1-6 Months): The U.S. midterms will likely be a "fire sale" environment where Trump trades geopolitical concessions for Chinese investment to bolster the domestic economy. [fire sale of America](#).

Long Term (1-5 Years): The transition of global energy flows to the "Power of Siberia 2" and the rise of the "African Corps" suggest a permanent shift where Russia and China control the majority of critical mineral and fossil fuel supplies to the Global South. [African core](#).

RISK ASSESSMENT

The current geopolitical landscape is characterized by five high-impact risks that could trigger global destabilization.

- **Risk of Total Regional War in West Asia:** Triggers: Successful Iranian-backed assassination of a U.S. official or high-profile Israeli target. Likelihood: High, given the "retribution" vow. Impact: Global economic collapse due to oil shortages and blocked shipping. Mitigations: Renewal of the ceasefire and U.S. withdrawal from northern Israel support. [decimate Iran](#).
- **Collapse of the Ukrainian State:** Triggers: The fall of the final Donbas strongholds and the cessation of U.S. funding post-midterms. Likelihood: Moderate to High. Impact: Massive refugee flows into Europe and a permanent shift in the European security architecture. Mitigations: Direct diplomatic negotiations between Kiev and Moscow. [losing proposition](#).
- **Internal U.S. Civil Conflict:** Triggers: Attempted or successful assassination of President Trump or his impeachment. Likelihood: Moderate. Impact: Complete paralysis of the U.S. government and breakdown of social order. Mitigations: De-escalation of "Deep State" rhetoric and transparent election processes. [Deep State turned on me](#).
- **Fracture of the NATO Alliance:** Triggers: A Greece-Turkey kinetic conflict or U.S. formal withdrawal from Article 5 guarantees. Likelihood: Low to Moderate. Impact: Return to pre-WWII style regional conflict in Europe. Mitigations: Resolution of F-35 sale disputes and clarification of Article 5 boundaries. [Greece railing](#).

- **Global Resource Depletion:** Triggers: China imposing total export controls on "dual use" rare earth minerals. Likelihood: High. Impact: Immediate halt to high-tech manufacturing, including defense systems and medical devices. Mitigations: Rapid investment in domestic U.S. processing facilities. [Trump card](#).

GAPS & BLIND SPOTS

The reporting fails to address several critical pieces of data necessary for a comprehensive assessment.

- **Russian Economic Resilience:** There is no mention of the internal Russian inflation rate or the status of their own supply chain vulnerabilities under sanctions.
- **Internal Iranian Dissent:** The broadcast portrays a "million strong" unified Iranian public, ignoring the potential for internal power struggles following Khamenei's death.
- **Ukrainian Defensive Depth:** While focusing on the fall of Konstantinovka, the reporting omits the status of Ukraine's western defensive lines and the potential for a long-term insurgency. [Kiev regime moved defenses](#).
- **Chinese Strategic Ambiguity:** The broadcast assumes China will trade its "cards" to Trump, but fails to account for the possibility of China preferring a weakened U.S. to a stabilized one.
- **The Reality of Drone Incursions:** While minimizing the impact of Ukrainian drones, the network ignores their strategic psychological effect and the cost of Russian counter-measures. [drone away from victory](#).

CONTRARIAN NARRATIVE SCENARIOS

- **The "Managed Collapse" Hypothesis:** The apparent "Deep State" sabotage of Trump might actually be a coordinated strategy to provide the U.S. with a graceful exit from global commitments, allowing the "America First" agenda to be realized while blaming "internal actors" for the loss of global hegemony.
- **The "False Retribution" Ploy:** Mustaba Khamenei's aggressive rhetoric may be a stall tactic to secure internal power, with no intention of a full-scale war, while the U.S. "decimation" threat is intended to deter Israel from further unilateral actions rather than to signal an invasion of Iran.
- **Black Swan Event - Polish Intervention:** Poland, fearing both a strong Ukraine and a victorious Russia, could unilaterally occupy Western Ukraine to "protect historical lands," triggering a massive escalation that brings NATO directly into conflict with both Russia and its own allies. [Ukrainian anti civilization](#).

RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLICATIONS

For Statecraft/Public Sector:

- **Security:** Transition defense procurement away from "legacy projects" like the F-47 toward mass-producible, autonomous drone systems and hardened energy infrastructure. [automation role](#).
- **Economic:** Secure alternative rare earth processing agreements with India and Vietnam immediately to mitigate the "China Trump card." [rare earth processing](#).

- **Diplomatic:** Initiate back-channel communications with Mustaba Khamenei to establish red lines and avoid a catastrophic market-ruining conflict in the Strait of Hormuz. [Strait of Hormuz impact](#).

For Private Sector/Investors:

- **Supply Chain:** Diversify away from reliance on Chinese rare earth processing and prepare for increased freight costs as "rerooting" to Africa becomes a permanent maritime fixture. [rerooting vessels](#).
- **Regulatory Compliance:** Monitor shifting visa and trade restrictions on nations partnering with Cuban medical missions, as this may impact labor availability in the Caribbean. [visa restrictions](#).
- **Capital Allocation:** Reallocate capital into small modular nuclear reactor firms and geothermal energy, as traditional shale production faces a "shareholder capitalism" bottleneck. [maximize production](#).

LEGISLATIVE ROUNDUP

Legislative activity centered on the Polish opposition's challenge to Ukraine's EU

membership and the U.S. administration's sanctions policies.

- **BILLS DISCUSSED/DEBATED:**

- **Polish Draft Resolution:** Opposes Ukraine's membership in the European Union in connection with the glorification of perpetrators of the Volhynia crime. Strategic intent: To force a historical reconciliation or exclude Ukraine from European integration. [opposing Ukraine's membership](#).
- **U.S. Medical Mission Sanctions:** Targeting Cuba's overseas medical missions as "forced labor." Strategic intent: To sever a primary revenue stream for the Cuban government and precipitate regime change. [forced labor](#).
- **Goldwater-Nichols Act Revocation Proposals:** Debated as a way to "revamp" the defense acquisitions program. Strategic intent: To reintegrate the defense contracting community with the wider economy. [roll back Goldwater-Nichols](#).

- **HEARINGS & PRESS EVENTS:**

- **Secretary of Interior Testimony:** Testified on Capitol Hill regarding renewable energy "batteries" and the permanence of coal. Strategic intent: To defend traditional energy investment over renewables. [sun sets but coal is forever](#).
- **Ankara NATO Summit Press Briefings:** Mark Rutte confirming NATO's role against Iran and Trump's threats against Denmark and Spain. Strategic intent: To signal a shift in alliance priorities. [Mark Rutte](#).
- **Philippine Impeachment Trial:** Opening of the second trial against the Vice President. Strategic intent: To dismantle the political opposition. [second impeachment trial](#).

KEY STORIES

- **Assassination of Ayatollah Ali Khamenei:** Mustaba Khamenei addresses the nation from Mashad, promising retribution against those responsible for his father's death. [Khamenez buried](#).
- **Trump Threatens Iran:** President Trump warns he will "decimate" Iran if any assassination attempt is carried out against him. [destroy all areas](#).
- **Fall of Konstantinovka:** Russian forces liberate the city, which they describe as a major logistical hub, and move toward final Donbas targets. [Konstantinovka liberated](#).
- **Volhynia Massacre Anniversary:** Protests and marches in Warsaw call for an end to the "Banderite nazi" influence in Ukraine. [Volhynia massacre](#).
- **NATO Summit Ankara:** Tensions over F-35 sales and U.S. commitment to NATO Article 5. [Ankara summit](#).

- **U.S. Energy Policy Debate:** Brandon Weichert discusses the ocean of shale oil and the failure to build new refineries in 35 years. [ocean of shale oil](#).
- **Cuban Medical Missions Under Fire:** U.S. sanctions aimed at Cuba's doctors program cause a humanitarian crisis. [Cuba doctors](#).
- **Philippine Political Crisis:** Impeachment trials and mass protests against the Marcos administration. [witch hunt](#).
- **India Population Control History:** Reports on the 1970s mass sterilization program and historical Western pressure. [mass sterilization campaign](#).
- **Russia in Mali:** The Russian African Corps takes over security from French forces, focusing on uranium mine protection. [Russian African core](#).
- **Tyler Robinson Trial:** A high-profile preliminary hearing regarding the murder of Charlie Kirk sees testimony about failing body cameras and inconclusive evidence. [murder of Charlie Kirk](#).
- **Space-Based Solar Power:** Former NASA official notes that only Chinese scientists are showing interest in strategic orbit-to-ground energy beaming. [Jim Rice NASA](#).
- **Northstream Sabotage Allegations:** Renewed discussion on potential CIA involvement in the destruction of the pipeline. [CIA destroyed Northstream](#).
- **Namibian Genocide History:** Segment on the 1904 German colonial massacre of the Herero and Nama tribes. [Herero tribe](#).
- **Finnish Nuclear Weapons:** Reports that Finland may host nuclear weapons, crossing Russian "red lines." [Finland to host nuclear weapons](#).

- **Russian Drone Success:** E300 Enterprise and D80 Discovery drones are cited for their success in hitting Ukrainian targets. [heavy drones](#).

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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