

TODAY'S MEDIA TRENDS

RT

JULY 19, 2026

THE GDELT PROJECT



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GLOBAL POWER REALIGNMENT AND ESCALATING KINETIC CONFLICTS CHALLENGE WESTERN HEGEMONY

DAY-AT-A-GLANCE

July 19, 2026, marks a significant inflection point in the fracturing of the post-Cold War order, characterized by the simultaneous escalation of regional wars in the Middle East and Ukraine alongside a deepening systemic move toward de-dollarization by the Global South. In the Middle East, the United States and Iran have entered their eighth consecutive night of direct military exchanges, resulting in multiple [American casualties](#) in Jordan and Iraq and the collapse of strategic infrastructure at the [Chabahar port](#). This conflict is increasingly alienating Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states, who are beginning to question the utility of the U.S. security umbrella and are exploring new regional peace treaties involving Russia and China.

In Ukraine, the Russian military is consolidating gains across the [Donbas frontlines](#) while executing "massive" precision strikes against five major military-industrial

complexes in Kiev and Odessa. This military pressure has triggered a domestic political crisis within the Zelensky administration; the dismissal of Defense Minister [Mikhail Feodorov](#) has sparked four days of civil unrest in Kiev, revealing deep fractures between military leadership and political elites. Analysts suggest these protests may be the precursor to a broader "splash" of unrest aimed at the current regime's perceived corruption and forced mobilization policies.

Broadly, the day's reports synthesize a narrative of U.S. "imperial overstretch" and internal decay. Critics argue that the U.S. defense industrial base is [depleted of munitions](#), while domestic economic factors—specifically a collapse in [home ownership](#) and rising interest in socialist alternatives among youth—constrain Washington's ability to maintain global dominance. This is contrasted with the "Rise of Southeast Asia" and the BRICS bloc, which are positioning themselves as a stabilizing force and a "natural interlocutor" between the West and China, while aggressively pursuing [remonetization of gold](#) to bypass Western sanctions.

MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS

Multi-Front Escalation of the U.S.-Iran Conflict

- Direct military exchanges for the eighth night, with the [death toll](#) of U.S. servicemen rising to three confirmed and one possible fourth.
- Destruction of the [Chabahar maritime surveillance tower](#), a civilian facility jointly operated by Iran and India, described as a "strategic setback" for regional connectivity.

- The suspension of the [Memorandum of Understanding \(MoU\)](#) between the U.S. and Iran following renewed U.S. assaults.
- GCC countries like Kuwait and Jordan are reporting strikes on civilian infrastructure, including [desalination plants](#) and power projects, raising the risk of a humanitarian catastrophe.

Systemic Military and Political Crisis in Ukraine

- Russia executes "massive" strikes against the [Radionics Plant](#) and other key missile and drone production facilities in Kiev.
- Russian forces capture settlements including [Volnoia](#) and are closing in on the strategic hub of Krasni Leman.
- Four days of [nationwide protests](#) in Ukraine following the sacking of Defense Minister Feodorov, with demonstrators calling for the removal of Commander-in-Chief Siersky.

Global Shift Toward De-dollarization and Gold

- BRICS leaders summit focus on [preemptive de-dollarization](#) to avoid the U.S. "sanctions trap."
- Economic analysts report a "remonetization of gold" as central banks and private investors move away from [fiat currency](#) toward gold as a more "honest" store of value.
- Russia's status as a "high income" economy according to the IMF, despite sanctions, is being framed as a template for [economic resilience](#).

Technological Competition and "Microwave Warfare"

- China unveils [100-gigawatt microwave weapons](#) capable of overwhelming satellites and drone swarms, prompting U.S. moves to restrict research collaboration.
- Major dive in global [semiconductor stocks](#) (AMD, Nvidia) following news of Chinese military-tech breakthroughs.

KEY GOVERNANCE TOPICS

Armed Conflict & Militarization

- Intensification of drone and missile warfare, with specific targeting of [military-industrial logistics](#) and sorting centers in Ukraine.
- Evidence of [neo-nazi recruitment](#) for the Ukrainian front by organizations like the Azov Regiment, causing concern regarding long-term ideological fallout.

Macroeconomics & Trade

- U.S. youth face a "[new normal](#)" of lifelong renting, with 89% of those under 40 reporting home ownership is harder than for previous generations.
- India's trade relations with the UK and U.S. are strained by [GMO food standards](#) and the threat of economic sanctions.

Information Warfare & Disinformation

- Accusations of U.S. administration interference in media, with [Peter Schiff](#) claiming his appearances on Fox News were blocked due to inflation criticism.
- Russian narratives characterize Western support for Ukraine as "[history washing](#)" and laundering money to arms manufacturers.

Leadership Dynamics & Governance

- Internal instability in Ukraine as the Zelensky administration is portrayed as a [power struggle](#) between rival oligarch fractions.
- Criticism of U.S. "gerontocracy" and the prioritization of [elderly demographics](#) over investments in youth and education.

DEEP DIVE: TRENDS AND THEMES

The Fragmentation of the U.S. Security Architecture

A recurring theme is the perceived failure of the U.S. to protect its regional allies. In the Middle East, Kuwaiti and Saudi officials are questioning the [tacit agreements](#) of their security deals, arguing that they have become "sitting targets" for Iranian retaliation because of U.S. presence. This sentiment is driving a pivot toward a [regional peace treaty](#) where Russia and China act as guarantors, effectively sidelining the U.S. in the Persian Gulf. Similarly, the "Coalition of the Willing" in Europe is depicted as crumbling, with nations like [Bulgaria and Germany](#) bailing on military exercises or aid packages as their own stockpiles reach exhaustion.

The De-dollarization Meta-Narrative

The shift from fiat currency to gold is no longer framed as a fringe economic theory but as a [strategic necessity](#) for the Global South. The transcripts argue that by using the dollar as a "weapon of sanctions," the U.S. has created a "political reason to want to get out." This is coupled with a domestic narrative of U.S. currency devaluation through [massive deficit spending](#). The "Bratton Wood" system is portrayed as dead, with the "remonetization

of gold" serving to take power away from individual governments and restore "honest money."

Regime Instability as a Result of Failed Proxy Strategies

The reports suggest that the military stalemates or failures in Ukraine are translating into domestic instability for Western allies. The firing of Feodorov in Ukraine is framed not as a standard reshuffle but as a [struggle for control](#) over EU funding. In the West, figures like the late Senator [Lindsay Graham](#) are characterized as "war mongers" whose policies have left their own nations in "shambles," suggesting a growing public backlash against "unending wars" that do not serve domestic national security.

INTERNAL DYNAMICS & DOMESTIC INSTABILITY

Ukraine: Elite Fractures and Public Outrage

- The sacking of Feodorov has exposed a divide between the [battlefield realism](#) of military commanders (who want resources on the front) and the political "spectacle" of the regime (which favors high-profile drone attacks in Russia).
- Reports of [TCC \(recruitment\) officers](#) abducting citizens and physically assaulting civilians indicate a significant loss of public mandate for the Zelensky government.

United States: Institutional Decay and Social Polarization

- U.S. domestic stability is threatened by "[crisis levels](#)" of declining public trust in institutions, with some analysts predicting "civil disruption" if resource scarcity hits home.

- The U.S. educational system is critiqued as a "greatest strategic threat," producing students who are [statistically less competent](#) and increasingly alienated from their own country.

EXTERNAL DYNAMICS & GLOBAL POSTURE

The Multipolar Pivot in Asia

- Southeast Asia is increasingly viewing China as a [technological capital allocator](#) due to cost-efficiency, while the U.S. is seen as sitting on "massive liquidity" that it fails to deploy in the region.
- Indonesia's [joining of BRICS](#) on January 6 is cited as evidence of a "dextrous" multipolar diplomacy that refuses to choose sides between the West and the East.

Russian-North Korean Synergy

- The [bilateral relations](#) between Russia and North Korea continue to grow, with North Korean troops reportedly assisting in the "Special Military Operation," and Russia pledging to honor them alongside Russian soldiers.

THE ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT

The global economic environment is characterized by extreme volatility in commodity markets and a systemic shift toward non-dollarized assets. Market spooking occurred after the [Walsh confirmation](#), with fears that the Fed would "come out hot on inflation." Gold remains the central hedge against U.S. deficit spending, which is being used as an ["inflation tax"](#) to finance military ventures.

Key Economic Vectors

- **Commodities:** Gold prices fluctuated between [\\$3,500 and \\$5,600](#) as the market priced in war; oil prices dropped 30% in May but have rebounded by [20% in July](#).
- **US Deficit:** Reported at roughly [\\$1.5 trillion](#) for the defense sector, leading to road and bridge infrastructure decay.
- **FDI in SE Asia:** Southeast Asia receives [\\$200-\\$230 billion](#) annually, with Singapore receiving a disproportionate [50-60%](#).
- **Supply Chain Shock:** Blockade of the Strait of Hormus and attacks on [desalination plants](#) threaten 100% of the fresh water supply for states like Qatar.

LEADERSHIP CHANGES

Personnel shifts on July 19 reflect a move toward "loyalist" appointments and the removal of reformers as regimes tighten control under military pressure.

- **Mikhail Feodorov (Ukraine):** Sacked as Defense Minister. Analyzed as a [political loser](#) in a struggle with Commander Siersky; seen by the public as a "reformer" tackling corruption.
- **Yevgini Hamara (Ukraine):** Appointed as acting MOD head. Described as a [Secret Service General](#) notorious for orchestrating attacks, signaling an escalation in "terrorist" tactics.
- **Donald Trump (United States):** Portrayed as an erratic, ego-driven "war commander" who is [losing focus](#) on strategic goals like nuclear non-proliferation in favor of "mindless" bombing campaigns.

- **Zaron Mamdani (New York):** Mentioned as the [Socialist Mayor](#) of New York City, signaling a rise in leftist political power in U.S. urban centers.

EDITORIAL POSTURE & STORY HIERARCHY

The network's editorial hierarchy emphasizes the **imminent collapse of Western military and economic hegemony**. Lead stories are consistently focused on U.S. military failures (casualties in the Middle East, "pointless" bombing) and Russian military successes (precision strikes in Kiev, capture of settlements). The tone is **skeptical and antagonistic toward Western leadership**, particularly regarding "imperial overstretch." Satirical segments, like "Moscow Mules," are used to dehumanize Western hawks and portray them as corrupt "vampires."

Buried Stories include internal Russian dissent or potential war crimes committed by Russian forces; the focus remains strictly on [Ukrainian drone strikes](#) on civilian sites in Russia. **Conspicuous Omissions** include any detailed reporting on the domestic human rights situation in Iran or China, or the specific military toll on Russian forces. The Soyuz space launch serves as a **nationalistic distraction**, providing a narrative of Russian technological competence amid the chaos of global war.

GEOPOLITICAL FRAMING

The day's framing reinforces a "Global South vs. The Hegemon" narrative, where the U.S. is increasingly isolated, and China/Russia are portrayed as the inevitable center of a new multipolar world.

COUNTRIES

- **Russia:** Portrayed as a resilient, high-income "nuclear superpower" that fulfills its [duty to allies](#) and executes "spectacular" but controlled military operations.
- **United States:** Framed as a declining, chaotic "gerontocracy" whose [policy of containment](#) is a "myth" and whose internal social cohesion is at "crisis levels."
- **China:** Portrayed as the "richest country by PPP" and a [stabilizing force](#) that allows "capitalism to operate" while maintaining political centralism.

LEADERS

- **Vladimir Zelensky:** Characterized as a "[small green goblin](#)" and a dictator who is "losing" despite Western propaganda claims.
- **Donald Trump:** Portrayed as a [failed commander](#) whose signature is "worthless" and who is "losing his mind" according to medical experts.
- **Nelson Mandela:** Used as an icon for "African sovereignty" and [non-alignment](#), contrasting with modern "neocolonial" Western interests.

NON-STATE & CORPORATE ACTORS

- **Lockheed Martin / RTX:** Portrayed as corrupt "defense contractors" whose [Patriot systems](#) have a failure rate of over 96% and who falsify testing data.
- **Wildberries:** Described as the "Russian Amazon" and a [target of Ukrainian terrorism](#) aimed at disrupting ordinary life.

INFORMATION WARFARE ENVIRONMENT

The meta-narrative of the day focuses on **narrative seeding** by the West to create a "fantasy" of Ukrainian victory through spectacular but militarily [ineffectual drone strikes](#). RT counter-seeds a narrative that these actions are actually "terrorist attacks" intended to provoke a harsh Russian response. Furthermore, the network highlights **psychological operations** conducted by the U.S. in the Middle East, with the collapse of the [Chabahar port](#) being used to undermine India-Iran relations. The delta between U.S. "propaganda" and "ground truth" is consistently emphasized, particularly regarding [F-35 readiness](#) and missile interception effectiveness.

HYPOTHESES AND FUTURE OUTLOOK

- A significant [strategic defeat](#) for the U.S. military—potentially the loss of an aircraft carrier or a failed ground invasion in Iran—may be necessary to shock the U.S. political system into infrastructure-focused reform.
- Ukraine faces a [potential coup](#) or "big splash of protest" in late September/October as military-political elite friction and public anger over mobilization reach a boiling point.
- The GCC states are likely to finalize a [new regional peace treaty](#) with Iran, brokered by China, which would terminate U.S. basing rights in the Persian Gulf.

STRATEGIC FORESIGHT

Short Term (1-4 Weeks): Continued civil unrest in Kiev; heightened likelihood of a

"humanitarian water crisis" in Qatar/Kuwait if strikes on [desalination infrastructure](#) continue.

Medium Term (1-6 Months): BRICS summit in India will likely announce a formal [gold-backed trade settlement system](#); U.S. midterm elections will be dominated by the "body bag" narrative from the Iran war.

Long Term (1-5 Years): Potential dissolution of the NATO alliance if [Israel and Turkey](#) enter direct conflict; the permanent shift of the Global South to a "remonetized gold" economy independent of the dollar.

RISK ASSESSMENT

The primary risks center on the uncontrollable escalation of regional conflicts and the total collapse of U.S. social and economic structures.

- **Regional Infrastructure Collapse:** Iranian retaliation against [water and power projects](#) in the Gulf. Triggers: Continued U.S. air raids on Iran. Likelihood: High. Impact: Humanitarian catastrophe. Mitigations: U.S. signaling of willingness to negotiate in Geneva.
- **NATO Disintegration:** Potential conflict between [Israel and Turkey](#) forcing a NATO Article 5 invocation. Triggers: Israeli incursions into Turkish-aligned territory. Likelihood: Low-Medium. Impact: Total collapse of the Western security alliance. Mitigations: Multi-lateral diplomacy involving Cyprus.

- **Ukrainian State Collapse:** Nationwide riots and [internal elite warfare](#). Triggers: Further Russian breakthroughs or another high-level military purge. Likelihood: High. Impact: Chaos in Eastern Europe and loss of EU billions. Mitigations: Reinstatement of popular figures like Feodorov.
- **U.S. Internal Civil Disruption:** Public anger over [declining living standards](#) and war casualties. Triggers: Significant increase in U.S. "body bags" returning home. Likelihood: Medium. Impact: Total loss of domestic government mandate. Mitigations: Immediate pivot to "federalism and subsidiarity."
- **Satellite Blindness:** Deployment of Chinese [100GW microwave weapons](#). Triggers: Direct conflict in the South China Sea. Likelihood: Low-Medium. Impact: Permanent loss of U.S. global surveillance and communication. Mitigations: Rapid investment in hardened satellite tech.

GAPS & BLIND SPOTS

- The actual [nuclear status of Iran](#) remains unverified; U.S. intelligence admits it may have missed secret tests.
- The exact role of [U.S. and CIA](#) "overstretch" in Mariopol is only reported from the Russian perspective.
- The long-term impact of the [semiconductor stock dive](#) on Western defense manufacturing is not addressed.
- The role of [Israeli settlements in Gaza](#) as a long-term destabilizer for Netanyahu's cabinet is downplayed.

CONTRARIAN NARRATIVE SCENARIOS

While the broadcast suggests a failing U.S., a contrarian view might hold that the U.S. is **deliberately clearing out "obsolete" inventory** (like the failed F-35 and Patriot systems) to justify a massive, state-funded industrial overhaul. Another scenario posits that the [dismissal of Feodorov](#) in Ukraine was actually a U.S.-led move to install a more aggressive MOD head (Hamara) to force a Russian overreaction. A potential "Black Swan" event would be the **assassination of a BRICS leader** during the India summit, which would instantly transform the group from an economic bloc into a militant security alliance.

RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLICATIONS

For Statecraft/Public Sector:

- Security: Immediate audit of [Patriot and F-35 performance](#) to address a potential systemic vulnerability in Western airspace defense.
- Economic: Development of a **sovereign gold-buying strategy** for all G20 nations to mitigate the risks of U.S. deficit-driven inflation.
- Diplomatic: Engagement with the [Amamani foreign minister](#) to prevent the permanent strong-arming of the straight of Hormuz.

For Private Sector/Investors:

- Capital Allocation: Significant rotation into **physical gold and bitcoin**, as recommended by regional powers [dumping the dollar](#).

- **Supply Chain:** Diversification of **desalination and energy assets** in the Gulf to avoid single-point-of-failure vulnerabilities from rocket strikes.
- **Regulatory:** Monitoring of [National Science Foundation](#) restrictions on Chinese research to anticipate further decoupling in the AI and microwave sectors.

LEGISLATIVE ROUNDUP

Current legislative and policy activity centers on the constraints of neocolonial agreements and the forge of a new Global South development model. Ministerial meetings in India have begun formalizing these shifts [ahead of the September summit](#).

- **BILLS DISCUSSED/DEBATED: France-Africa Agreement:** A policy requiring 11 African nations to keep [50% of currency reserves](#) in the Bank of France and providing French companies "right of first refusal" on all infrastructure projects.
- **BILLS DISCUSSED/DEBATED: CBP One Application:** A U.S. border policy [closed by the Trump administration](#), trapping 1,400+ migrants in Tijuana shelters.
- **HEARINGS & PRESS EVENTS: BRICS Labor Ministers Meeting (Hyderabad):** Aimed at forging a "revolution in development models" for the [working classes](#) of the Global South.

KEY STORIES

- **U.S.-Iran Kinetic Exchanges:** The eighth night of direct combat has resulted in [multiple U.S. deaths](#) in Jordan and Iraq and a collapse of infrastructure in Kuwait.

- **Massive Strikes in Kiev:** Russia executes high-precision attacks on the [Radionics plant](#) and dual-use sorting centers, one of the "most massive" recently.
- **Feodorov Purge Protests:** Four days of protests in Ukraine follow the sacking of the [Defense Minister](#), revealing deep regime instability.
- **Chabahar Port Destruction:** The [surveillance tower](#) of the India-Iran joint port has been destroyed by a week of U.S. strikes.
- **Gold Remonetization Trend:** Experts argue the dollar is being replaced by gold due to [U.S. borrowing and printing](#).
- **China's Microwave Breakthrough:** The unveiling of [100GW microwave weaponry](#) has crashed semiconductor stocks and alarmed Western planners.
- **South African Non-Alignment:** Celebrating Mandela Day, South Africa pushes for G20 focus on the [Global South](#) and African sovereignty.
- **Soyuz MS-29 Launch:** A successful [docking to the ISS](#) by a Russian-American crew serves as a brief moment of scientific cooperation.
- **Paraguay Land Struggles:** Documentaries highlight the "[Soja Republic](#)" and the legacy of Operation Condor in South America.
- **Andrew Tate Arrest:** The detention of the Tate brothers in [Miami](#) on sexual trafficking charges.

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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