

TODAY'S MEDIA TRENDS

RTANEWS

AUGUST 21, 2026

THE GDELT PROJECT

THE ISLAMIC EMIRATE'S STRATEGIC SHIFT: TARGETING SELF-SUFFICIENCY VIA TECHNICAL DIPLOMACY & AGGRESSIVE PROTECTIONISM

A Combined Narrative of the August 2026 Report on Afghanistan's Economic & Political Pivot

1. THE "ECONOMIC JIHAD" & INDUSTRIAL PIVOT



Following military victory, the IEA frames a new phase of "Economic Jihad" to transform Afghanistan from a consumer economy into a **self-sufficient industrial and agricultural hub**. The narrative emphasizes "Victory through Resilience" and modernizing the "Islamic System."



2a. TECHNICAL DIPLOMACY & THE "EURASIAN PIVOT"



BELARUS PARTNERSHIP (KEY DEVELOPMENTS)



High-level delegation (Mullah Omar) to Minsk secured commitments for:

- Heavy Machinery & Tractors
- Dairy Processing Tech & Veterinary Medicine
- Direct Petroleum Imports
- Joint Manufacturing Ventures (Fertilizers, Tools)

REGIONAL TIES & POSTURE

Diplomatic events in Malaysia, Russia, India, China, & Pakistan signify regional normalization despite Western isolation.

Iran viewed as a strategic, complex partner under shared pressure.

Seeking pragmatic, transactional partnerships outside the Western sphere for technology & energy.

Focus on non-Western alliances for critical tech & resources.



2b. AGGRESSIVE PROTECTIONISM & DOMESTIC CONSOLIDATION



ECONOMIC PROTECTIONISM (KEY ACTIONS)



- **Dairy Sector:** 50% tariff on imported milk powder/products. Domestic production meets 75% of demand.
- **Jewelry/Gold:** 90% of products sold are locally manufactured, 1,100+ factories operating. Major exhibition planned to showcase craftsmanship.

INTERNAL STABILITY & PROFESSIONALIZATION

- **Haqqani's Outreach:** Acting Interior Minister visits Panjshir & Bamiyan to consolidate tribal support and mitigate division.

- **Security Apparatus:** Transitioning Mujahidin to a structured state military/police (7,800+ graduated from new curriculum). Specialized mortar units trained for border defense.

Using tariffs to stimulate local production and high-profile outreach to unify & formalize.

3. PERSISTENT INTERNAL GAPS & CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE CHALLENGES



Significant internal challenges remain despite the official narrative.

- **State Capacity:** Local communities (e.g., Ghazni) self-funding school construction due to government shortfalls.
- **Social Welfare:** Reliance on sermon-based "spiritual engineering" to manage the needs of the vast disabled population, rather than funded programs.
- **Infrastructure Bottlenecks:** Investors (e.g., in Laghman saffron project) cite lack of reliable power & water as major hurdles. Salang route alternative (84km) under construction to prevent winter isolation, but risks remain.



4. STRATEGIC FORESIGHT, RISKS & FUTURE OUTLOOK



HYPOTHESES & OUTLOOK

- **Eurasian Pivot:** Likely formalization of long-term "oil-for-tech" deals with Belarus/Russia.
- **Protectionist Escalation:** Potential for tariffs on other agricultural goods to force domestic growth.
- **Long-Term Goal:** Legitimacy derived from internal security & industrial output, making Western recognition less relevant.



KEY RISKS & VULNERABILITIES

- **Infrastructure Failure:** Catastrophic failure of the Salang alternative route during winter.
- **Resource Depletion:** Social burnout from communities self-funding basic services.
- **Protectionist Backlash:** Tariffs leading to smuggling & price inflation.
- **Geopolitical Entanglement:** Risk of secondary Western sanctions from deepening ties with Belarus/Russia.



IMPLICATIONS

- **For Statecraft:** Monitor Belarus tech transfers & Haqqani's internal role.
- **For Investors:** Anticipate increased regulatory barriers & focus on energy/water infrastructure opportunities.
- The path forward balances ambitious self-sufficiency goals with limited state capacity & a volatile geopolitical landscape.

TODAY'S MEDIA TRENDS

RTANEWS

AUGUST 21, 2026

THE ISLAMIC EMIRATE TARGETS STRATEGIC SELF-SUFFICIENCY THROUGH TECHNICAL DIPLOMACY AND AGGRESSIVE ECONOMIC PROTECTIONISM

DAY-AT-A-GLANCE

On August 21, 2026, the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (IEA) demonstrated a coordinated shift toward institutionalizing its "Economic Jihad," prioritizing domestic self-sufficiency and technical modernization through non-Western partnerships. The administration is leveraging high-profile diplomatic missions to Belarus to secure agricultural technology and petroleum agreements, while simultaneously implementing aggressive protectionist measures, such as a 50% tariff increase on dairy imports, to stimulate local production. This economic pivot is framed as the natural evolution of the military victory over Western forces, aiming to transform Afghanistan from a consumer-based economy to a self-sufficient industrial and agricultural hub.

Domestic stability remains a central theme, with Acting Interior Minister Sirajuddin Haqqani conducting a provincial tour of Panjshir and Bamiyan to consolidate tribal

support and mitigate ethnic fragmentation. The government is also emphasizing the professionalization of its security apparatus, reporting the graduation of thousands of Mujahidin from specialized training centers to transition from insurgent forces to a structured state military. However, significant internal gaps persist, as evidenced by local communities in Ghazni funding their own school infrastructure due to government shortfalls, and the heavy reliance on sermon-based social engineering to manage the welfare of the country's vast disabled population.

MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS

Expansion of Technical and Economic Cooperation with Belarus

- A high-level Afghan delegation led by the Minister of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock, Mullah Attaullah Omari, toured **state-owned Belarusian factories** specializing in heavy machinery, dairy processing, and veterinary medicine [production](#).
- Commitments were made by Belarusian officials to provide direct **petroleum imports** and facilitate technology transfers for agricultural mechanization [in Afghanistan](#).
- The two nations discussed establishing **joint manufacturing ventures** to produce chemical fertilizers and industrial tools locally [in Kabul](#).

Internal Consolidation and Provincial Outreach by Sirajuddin Haqqani

- Acting Interior Minister Sirajuddin Haqqani visited **Panjshir and Bamiyan** to meet with tribal elders, emphasizing that "no one will be allowed" to foster ethnic or linguistic division [among the people](#).
- Haqqani framed the current administration as a "government of all," seeking to address local grievances and infrastructure needs in historically **restive or marginalized regions** [of the country](#).

Aggressive Protectionism in the Dairy and Jewelry Sectors

- The IEA has imposed a **50% customs tariff** on imported milk powder and dairy products to protect a domestic industry that currently meets 75% of **national demand** [according to officials](#).
- Jewelry industry leaders announced that **90% of gold products** sold in Afghanistan are now locally manufactured, with a major three-day exhibition planned to showcase **Afghan craftsmanship** [in Kabul](#).

KEY GOVERNANCE TOPICS

Armed Conflict & Militarization

- The Ministry of Defense announced the graduation of specialized units trained in **120mm and 160mm mortar** operations to enhance **artillery capabilities** [within the army](#).
- Over **7,800 Mujahidin** have completed professional and religious training at the Kabul Police Training Center over the last five years, indicating a long-term effort to **institutionalize the force** [under a new curriculum](#).

Diplomacy & Statecraft

- The IEA celebrated the anniversary of the 1919 independence from Britain and the August 15 "Victory Day" at embassies in **Malaysia, Russia, India, China, and Pakistan**, signaling a focus on **regional diplomatic normalization** [despite Western isolation](#).
- Iranian President Pezeshkian emphasized the **strategic importance** of developing economic ties and resolving transit obstacles **with Afghanistan** [in a recent meeting](#).

Legal Warfare & Regulatory Risk

- The Ministry of Propagation of Virtue and Prevention of Vice reported resolving **17 cases related to women's rights**, including forced marriages and inheritance disputes, as part of a push to show **Sharia-based justice** [is functional](#).
- Customs regulations are being weaponized as economic tools, specifically targeting foreign **dairy and petroleum products** to force dependency on **domestic or specific regional partners** [like Belarus](#).

Critical Infrastructure Security

- Construction is accelerating on the **84-kilometer alternative Salang route** (Dara-e-Tangi) to ensure transit between northern and southern provinces remains open **during winter months** [when the main pass closes](#).
- A contract for **31 telecommunications antennas** worth 269 million Afghanis was signed to expand coverage in **remote border districts** [along the Durand Line](#).

DEEP DIVE: TRENDS AND THEMES

The Transition from Insurgency to Industrialism

The IEA is moving beyond the rhetoric of military conquest toward a narrative of industrial modernization. By showcasing the jewelry industry's [90% domestic production](#) and the dairy sector's [75% self-sufficiency](#), the government is attempting to prove that its "Islamic system" can deliver economic stability. The reliance on **Belarus** for agricultural machinery and technical expertise [reflects a strategy](#) of seeking partners that prioritize transactional stability over human rights or political reforms. This trend suggests a long-term goal of building a fortress economy capable of withstanding international sanctions.

Spiritual Engineering of Social Order

The IEA is utilizing the mosque network to manage potential social unrest. By directing Friday sermons to focus on the **rights and treatment of the disabled and the weak**, the administration is attempting to address the fallout of decades of war—a high population of wounded veterans and civilians—through religious obligation rather than social welfare programs. This "spiritual engineering" serves to maintain order in a country where the state's **financial capacity** to provide for its most vulnerable **remains severely limited without foreign aid**.

INTERNAL DYNAMICS & DOMESTIC INSTABILITY

The central government faces a persistent challenge in balancing its centralized ideological control with the diverse needs of

its provinces. Sirajuddin Haqqani's outreach to **Panjshir and Bamiyan** [highlights the administration's awareness](#) of these regions' historic opposition and the need for high-level engagement to prevent local grievances from turning into organized resistance. While the government projects a unified front, the fact that residents in **Ghazni's Qarabagh district** are funding the construction of **16 school classrooms** out of their own pockets [illustrates significant gaps](#) in the state's ability to provide basic services. This reliance on community-led development suggests that the IEA's mandate is currently maintained more through security and religious authority than through the delivery of public goods.

EXTERNAL DYNAMICS & GLOBAL POSTURE

The IEA is positioning itself as a pragmatic regional actor that is "open for business" while remaining ideologically uncompromising. By hosting **diplomatic events in Malaysia and Moscow** to celebrate its anniversary [of the "Day of Victory"](#), the IEA is signaling to the world that it is a permanent fixture in the regional order. The relationship with **Iran** is particularly complex; while the IEA reports Iranian President Pezeshkian's desire for **closer economic ties and transit cooperation**, it also broadcasts reports on the severe US sanctions facing Tehran, perhaps as a cautionary tale or a point of shared grievance against the West. The framing of the **Belarus trip** suggests the IEA is actively shopping for a "Eurasian model" of development—one that emphasizes state-led industrialization and heavy machinery without Western strings [attached](#).

THE ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT

The economic landscape is defined by state-driven protectionism and a pivot toward industrial self-reliance, though heavy reliance on foreign technical expertise remains a bottleneck.

- **Currency Stability:** The Afghani is described as a stable unit compared to regional currencies, attributed to **stringent monetary policies by the central bank**.
- **Agriculture & Livestock:** Domestic dairy now meets 75% of demand, supported by a new **50% tariff on imports to protect local farmers**.
- **Gold & Extractive Industries:** The jewelry industry employs **60,000 citizens** directly or indirectly, with over 1,100 factories currently **operating at standard levels nationwide**.
- **Foreign Investment:** Kuwaiti and Afghan investors are expanding a **saffron and horticulture project** in Laghman across thousands of acres, though they have requested government help with **water and electricity infrastructure**.
- **Infrastructure Investment:** The Ministry of Communications signed a **269 million Afghani contract** for telecom towers, focusing on border security and **regional connectivity along the Durand Line**.

LEADERSHIP CHANGES

The IEA is focusing on administrative continuity and the promotion of figures

capable of bridging the gap between ideological purity and technical management.

- **Sirajuddin Haqqani:** Increasingly visible as the **regime's domestic conciliator**, his visits to Panjshir and Bamiyan suggest he is the primary figure tasked with maintaining **inter-ethnic stability and tribal loyalty**.
- **Mullah Attaullah Omari:** As Minister of Agriculture, he is emerging as the **key envoy for technical diplomacy**, leading the crucial mission to Belarus to secure **critical industrial imports and oil**.
- **Mawlawi Abdul Wahab:** Appointed as the new **Director of the Law Department** in Wardak Province, signaling a continued rollout of **Sharia-compliant administrative heads in the provinces**.
- **Mawlawi Ahmadullah Zahid:** Involved in high-level trade talks in Belarus, cementing his role as a **strategic negotiator** for **macroeconomic agreements with non-Western states**.

EDITORIAL POSTURE & STORY HIERARCHY

The editorial tone is overtly nationalistic and celebratory, focusing on the theme of "Victory through Resilience." The lead stories consistently revolve around **economic achievements** (gold, dairy, saffron) and **diplomatic engagement** (Belarus, Malaysia). Buried or minimized stories include the ongoing reliance on local communities to build their own schools and the severe limitations of the national power grid, which investors in Laghman noted as a primary barrier to growth. Conspicuous omissions include any mention of the ongoing secondary school ban for girls, which remains the primary international hurdle for the IEA, and any detailed data on the actual inflation rate

or poverty levels, despite the praise for the currency's stability.

GEOPOLITICAL FRAMING

The broadcast frames the world as a binary between "oppressive Western hegemonies" and a nascent "Eurasian bloc" of pragmatic, respectful partners. The US is portrayed as a decaying power lashing out with illegal sanctions, while nations like Belarus and China are framed as models of stable, technical cooperation.

COUNTRIES

- **Belarus:** Portrayed as a highly competent, industrial partner willing to share technology and oil. "Belarus has shown readiness for expanding economic cooperation... and direct cooperation in oil [imports](#)."
- **Iran:** Seen as a strategic but beleaguered neighbor, struggling under US pressure but sharing a common destiny with Afghanistan. "The strategic importance of developing economic relations with [Afghanistan](#)."
- **United States:** Portrayed as a corrupt, failing aggressor. Trump's threats of "the hardest sanctions in history" against Iran are framed as proof of **Western hostility and irrationality**.
- **Malaysia:** Framed as a friendly Islamic nation providing a platform for Afghan diplomatic legitimacy [in Southeast Asia](#).

LEADERS

- **Donald Trump:** Characterized as a hostile and aggressive figure whose actions lead to "unprecedented pressure" and economic [isolation](#).

- **Masoud Pezeshkian:** Portrayed as a principled regional leader seeking to **bypass Western-created obstacles** to trade [with the IEA](#).

INFORMATION WARFARE ENVIRONMENT

The IEA is actively constructing a meta-narrative that equates **economic self-sufficiency with religious virtue**. This is evident in the labeling of industrial production as part of a "unified front" against the "black nights of democracy" [which have ended](#). The narrative seeding suggests that any economic hardship is a remnant of "previous corrupt systems" or "foreign occupation," while all successes are the direct result of "Islamic sincerity." There is a clear delta between the broadcast's portrayal of a **rapidly modernizing industrial state** and the reality of rural communities **building their own classrooms due to state absence**. The media is weaponizing "victory anniversaries" to drown out concerns about human rights or the lack of international recognition.

HYPOTHESES AND FUTURE OUTLOOK

- **Eurasian Technical Pivot:** Afghanistan will likely formalize a series of long-term "oil-for-tech" or "minerals-for-tech" deals with Belarus and Russia, further insulating itself from Western financial [pressure](#).
- **Protectionist Escalation:** Following the success in dairy and jewelry, the IEA will likely impose high tariffs on other agricultural imports (wheat, vegetables) to force **domestic market growth regardless of short-term price spikes**.

- **Haqqani's Political Ascent:** Sirajuddin Haqqani's role as the "face of internal unity" suggests he is being groomed for a broader executive role, potentially serving as the primary bridge to the international **community's pragmatists** [in the coming year](#).

STRATEGIC FORESIGHT

Short Term (1-4 Weeks): The Kabul Gold and Jewelry Exhibition will be used as a primary propaganda tool to demonstrate the IEA's support for the **private sector and domestic industry**. Expect further announcements of telecommunications antenna installations in border areas to secure **sovereignty along the Durand Line** [following recent contracts](#).

Medium Term (1-6 Months): Completion of the Salang Pass alternative route will be a critical test of the IEA's engineering and logistics **capacity** [before the winter peak](#). Successful technology transfers from Belarus could lead to the first **Afghan-made chemical fertilizers** hitting the market, reducing dependence on **Pakistani imports** [which have been volatile](#).

Long Term (1-5 Years): The focus on "professionalizing" the mujahidin through five-year training programs [suggests a transition](#) to a permanent, conventional military state. The IEA aims to create a state where legitimacy is derived from **internal security and industrial output**, effectively making Western **diplomatic recognition irrelevant** [to the regime's survival](#).

RISK ASSESSMENT

- **Regional Infrastructure Overload:** The strategy of using a single 84km alternative route for Salang poses a risk of catastrophic transit failure if the road is **poorly constructed**. Triggers: Early heavy snow or bridge failure. Likelihood: Moderate. Impact: High (total isolation of northern provinces). Mitigations: International engineering [consultation and rapid repair teams](#).
- **Resource Depletion for Local Communities:** The trend of communities self-funding schools indicates a risk of **social burnout**. Triggers: Economic downturn or local tax increases. Likelihood: High. Impact: Moderate (erosion of local support). Mitigations: Increased provincial [budget allocation for education](#).
- **Protectionist Backlash:** 50% tariffs on dairy may lead to **smuggling and food price inflation**. Triggers: Failure of local companies to scale up production. Likelihood: Moderate. Impact: Moderate (increased poverty). Mitigations: Phased [tariff implementation rather than sudden hikes](#).
- **Geopolitical Entanglement:** The deepening relationship with Belarus and Russia risks making Afghanistan a **target for secondary Western sanctions**. Triggers: Direct military or high-tech dual-use transfers. Likelihood: Moderate. Impact: High (financial isolation). Mitigations: Diversifying trade partners [beyond the Eurasian bloc](#).

- **Insurgent Transformation Failure:** Transitioning 7,800 fighters to professional police [may fail](#) if command structures remain tribal. Triggers: Factional infighting or abuse of power. Likelihood: Low. Impact: High (security breakdown). Mitigations: Strict **adherence to the new curriculum and central oversight**.

GAPS & BLIND SPOTS

- **Petroleum Financing:** The transcripts mention Belarus providing oil but omit how the IEA plans to pay for it, given **limited access to foreign reserves and banking restrictions**.
- **Impact of GIRoA Personnel:** There is no mention of how many former regime technicians are involved in these "new" industrial achievements, which is critical for **assessing real institutional growth in the gold and dairy sectors**.
- **Humanitarian Funding Divergence:** The gap between the IEA's claims of economic "victory" and the UN's reports of ongoing humanitarian crises is **entirely unaddressed in the domestic media**.
- **Energy Grid Capacity:** While celebrating factory growth, the broadcast ignores the **critical lack of reliable electricity**, which investors in Laghman explicitly **cited as a major hurdle for expansion**.

CONTRARIAN NARRATIVE SCENARIOS

- **Desperate Cover for Financial Decay:** The aggressive tariffs and the pivot to Belarus could be a desperate measure to hide the fact that the IEA is running out of **foreign currency to pay for imports**. The "self-sufficiency" narrative might be a preemptive excuse for an inevitable **shortage of foreign goods and medicine**.
- **The "Potemkin" Industrialization:** The highly publicized gold and dairy factories may be small-scale "show" projects designed to distract from the fact that the **broad industrial base remains stagnant**. The reliance on community-funded schools suggests that the **central state is actually retracting**, not expanding [its reach](#).
- **Black Swan Event:** A major environmental disaster (e.g., a massive Salang Pass landslide) coincides with a Belarus oil supply interruption, leading to a **total collapse of the winter heating and transit network**, sparking urban unrest that the newly trained **police force is unprepared to handle without excessive force**.

RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLICATIONS

For Statecraft/Public Sector:

- Monitor the technical cooperation with Belarus as a **proxy for Eurasian bloc influence** in Central Asia, specifically regarding petroleum and **heavy machinery transfers to the IEA**.

- Analyze Sirajuddin Haqqani's provincial visits as a metric for **internal regime stability** and potential shifts toward a more **conciliatory domestic policy model**.
- Engage on "apolitical" infrastructure needs like the **Salang alternative route** to prevent regional humanitarian catastrophes [during winter](#).

For Private Sector/Investors:

- Anticipate **increased regulatory barriers** for all consumer goods imports as the IEA scales its protectionist tariff model to **new sectors beyond dairy**.
- Opportunities exist in **energy and water infrastructure** as local and foreign investors (e.g., Kuwaitis) seek stable utilities to **scale their agricultural projects in eastern Afghanistan**.
- Compliance teams must closely monitor the origin of **Afghan gold and jewelry** to ensure adherence to international **extractive minerals regulations as exports grow**.

LEGISLATIVE ROUNDUP

The IEA's policy focus is currently on customs reform and religious-based social

management, with significant new tariffs implemented to reshape the national market.

• **BILLS DISCUSSED/DEBATED:**

- **Dairy Import Tariff Reform:** Imposition of a **50% customs duty** on all imported dairy and milk powder to stimulate **domestic production and farming**.
- **New Police Training Curriculum:** A standardized **professional and religious syllabus** for the Kabul Police Training Center to transition **fighters into civil officers over 1-5 months**.

• **HEARINGS & PRESS EVENTS:**

- **Jewelry Industry Press Conference:** The Union of Jewelers announced the new gold standard (above 14 karat) and the **upcoming Kabul Gold Exhibition in September**.
- **Ministry of Virtue & Vice Briefing:** Public report on the resolution of **17 women's rights cases** and the arrest of **9 "sorcerers"** to maintain social order [and Sharia compliance](#).

KEY STORIES

- **Belarus Technical Delegation:** Afghan officials led by Mullah Omari visited Minsk, exploring factories for **tractors, dairy processing, and vaccines**. Belarus pledged to cooperate on **petroleum and technical expertise for Afghan industries**.
- **Gold Industry Milestone:** Kabul announces a major jewelry exhibition for September, claiming **90% self-sufficiency** and the operation of **1,100 gold factories nationwide**.

- **Dairy Protectionism:** A 50% tariff was added to imported milk to support the domestic dairy industry, which already meets **75% of market needs** [according to the Chamber of Agriculture](#).
- **Haqqani Bamiyan/Panjshir Tour:** Acting Interior Minister Haqqani met with tribal leaders in both provinces, calling for **national unity** and promising **infrastructure development** [to loyalists](#).
- **Salang Route Progress:** Work continues on the **84km alternative highway** from Parwan to Baghlan, aimed at maintaining **winter transit capacity** [for the nation](#).
- **Ghazni School Construction:** Local residents in Qarabagh are **self-funding a 16-classroom school** to replace "open-air" learning, highlighting **infrastructure gaps** [in the education sector](#).
- **Kuwaiti Saffron Investment:** Kuwaiti and Afghan investors showcased a multi-thousand-acre project in Laghman, reporting **high yields** but calling for **power and water support** [from the IEA](#).
- **Police Professionalization:** The Kabul Police Training Center graduated a new class, totaling **7,800 trained personnel** over five years under **Sharia-integrated military courses** [of instruction](#).
- **Mortar Unit Graduation:** Artillery units completed a one-month course in **120mm and 160mm mortar systems** to modernize the **border defense force** [capabilities](#).
- **Friday Sermons on Vulnerable Rights:** The Ministry of Hajj and Awaqf directed all imams to preach on the **dignity and rights of the disabled**, framing it as a **societal and religious duty** [of the state](#).
- **Victory Celebrations in Malaysia:** The Afghan Embassy in Malaysia hosted a high-level event for the **August 15 anniversary**, attended by Malaysian officials and **international diplomats** [in Kuala Lumpur](#).
- **US Sanctions on Iran:** Reports highlighted Donald Trump's threats of "unprecedented pressure" on Iran, alongside **Chinese criticism** of these **economic measures** [in the region](#).
- **Central African Republic Mine Collapse:** A gold mine collapse in the CAR resulted in **177 deaths**, used as a cautionary report on the **risks of manual mining** [without equipment](#).
- **Kyiv Air Strikes:** Russian strikes on the Ukrainian capital resulted in **9 deaths and 33 injuries**, damageing **residential and health centers** [in Kyiv](#).
- **Durand Line Telecom Coverage:** A new contract for **31 antennas** focuses on providing connectivity to **remote border districts** in Kandahar, Helmand, and Zabul [at a cost of 269M AFN](#).
- **Laghman Agricultural Expansion:** Thousands of fruit trees (citrus, olive, guava) in the Gambiri desert reached the **harvest stage** through a **joint Afghan-Kuwaiti venture** [launched three years ago](#).

ABOUT THIS REPORT

Today's Media Trends is a public interest experiment in applying deep thematic trend analysis to television news coverage from around the world to explore how responsibly applied advanced AI can help journalists and scholars better understand the overarching trends, themes and patterns of our global world.

No data is used to train or tune any AI model.

Each morning, in collaboration with the Internet Archive's TV News Archive, we apply Google's Gemini 3 to deeply examine yesterday's coverage from each television news channel to tease out the overarching themes and trends of its news coverage into a richly annotated thematic analysis. Each high-level insight is connected back to the original broadcast, allowing journalists and scholars to understand the dominate themes and trends and instantly click out to the underlying sources for details.

By helping journalists and scholars see the broader trends and patterns of global news coverage, this analysis helps them identify relevant stories and coverage they might not

otherwise have encountered and uncover connections, emphases and narrative shifts that enable more comprehensive reporting and deeper, evidence-based research.

This report is entirely machine generated using Gemini 3 and may include errors and omissions. Please verify all findings. No data is used to train or tune any AI model.

For questions or suggestions, please contact kalev.leetaru5@gmail.com. To learn more or subscribe to our free daily newsletters, visit <https://blog.gdeltproject.org/announcing-our-new-daily-todays-trends-on-capitol-hill-todays-media-trends-newsletter-briefings/>. You can also learn more about the GDELT Project at <https://blog.gdeltproject.org/> and the Internet Archive's TV News Archive at <https://archive.org/details/tv>.