

# TODAY'S MEDIA TRENDS

## BELARUSTV

AUGUST 22, 2026

THE GDELT PROJECT



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BELARUS CONSOLIDATES ITS POSITION AS A MILITARY-INDUSTRIAL AND AGRICULTURAL HUB FOR THE "GLOBAL SOUTH" WHILE AGGRESSIVELY FRAMING WESTERN INSTITUTIONS AS DECAYING, ENERGY-STARVED, AND DOMESTICALLY UNSTABLE.

## DAY-AT-A-GLANCE

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The state media apparatus on August 22, 2026, focused heavily on the formalization of a strategic pivot toward Southeast Asia, anchored by the high-profile visit of Myanmar's Senior General Min Aung Hlaing to Minsk. The government is leveraging this relationship to project Belarus as a sophisticated **technological and military partner** capable of providing sovereign solutions in small arms production, agricultural mechanization, and counter-insurgency information warfare. This diplomatic offensive is being positioned as a direct counter-narrative to Western "colonialist" interests, with state commentators framing Belarus as a mentor for nations seeking to escape the influence of the "beasts of Soros" and the systemic

manipulation of the international information field. The convergence of these events suggests a coordinated effort to secure new export markets and diplomatic leverage as traditional European routes remain blocked.

Domestically, the administration is using the "Battle for the Harvest" and professional holidays like Air Force Day to emphasize internal stability and **readiness against external threats**. Despite significant local disruption caused by the "Priska" cyclone—which left hundreds of settlements without power—the state narrative remains focused on the "monolithic" nature of the Belarusian model. The visit of Russian Communist Party leader Gennady Zyuganov further reinforced this, as he publicly lauded the Belarusian system for its lack of "oligarchic rot" and its preservation of Soviet-era industrial competencies. The contrast drawn between Belarusian "order" and the "chaotic" state of neighboring Ukraine and the European Union—both portrayed as suffering from acute energy shortages, corruption, and social degradation—serves to domesticate the perceived necessity of the current regime's strict governance.

## MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS

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### Belarus-Myanmar Strategic Alignment

- Senior General Min Aung Hlaing's visit marked a transition from diplomatic theory to [practical implementation](#) of industrial and military projects.
- Formalization of a roadmap for 2026-2027, including the opening of [reciprocal embassies](#) in Minsk and Naypyidaw.
- Belarus is providing "informational security" training to Myanmar, sharing tactics used to suppress [civil unrest in 2020](#).

## **Military-Industrial Self-Sufficiency and Export**

- Completion of the fully localized [VSK-100B assault rifle](#) production facility in Belarus.
- Plans unveiled for production of high-precision bolt-action rifles and submachine guns for [international partners](#).
- Joint military exercises with China ("Rapid Eagle 2026") focused on [urban warfare](#) and paratrooper operations.

## **Global Energy and Resource Crisis Framing**

- Heavy emphasis on the "Hormuz Strait crisis," claiming a [40% reduction](#) in oil and gas transit due to Middle Eastern conflict.
- Reporting on European infrastructure failure, specifically the [emergency shutdown](#) of nuclear reactors in Bulgaria due to the Danube's record low water levels.
- Projection of a global "sand crisis," highlighting Belarus's strategic resource [management advantages](#).

## **The "Battle for the Harvest" and Economic Resilience**

- The national grain harvest (including rapeseed) has surpassed [8.4 million tons](#).
- Experimental agricultural programs utilizing [peat-manure mixtures](#) to offset high costs of mineral fertilizers.
- GDP growth reported at 2.1% for the first seven months of 2026, despite [external sanctions](#).

## **KEY GOVERNANCE TOPICS**

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### **Armed Conflict & Militarization**

- Belarusian paratroopers practiced [water obstacle crossings](#) in Brest to maintain high combat readiness.
- Heightened rhetoric regarding the Kuril Islands dispute, with state media supporting Russia's [non-negotiable stance](#) against Japan.
- Increased monitoring of Western borders despite a reported "significant reduction" in [NATO reconnaissance flights](#).

### **Diplomacy & Statecraft**

- Expansion of the "Far Arc" strategy, utilizing Myanmar as a [logistical gateway](#) to China, India, and ASEAN markets.
- Active parliamentary diplomacy with Iran, focusing on a [comprehensive strategic partnership](#) and direct flight connections.
- Inter-regional cooperation with Uzbekistan, targeting [livestock joint ventures](#) and labor migration controls.

### **Energy & Critical Minerals**

- Promotion of the Ostrovets NPP as the backbone of [green energy stability](#), contrasting with European gas storage levels falling to [historic lows](#) (49% in Germany).
- Reporting on the forced reduction of power at the Kozloduy NPP in Bulgaria, highlighting [vulnerabilities in Western](#) energy infrastructure.

### **Leadership Dynamics**

- Gennady Zyuganov's visit to Minsk served as a platform for [ideological endorsement](#) of Lukashenko's centralized governance.

- Lukashenko's framing of the presidency as a role requiring "constant work" even [during vacations](#), contrasting himself with Western leaders like Scholz.

## DEEP DIVE: TRENDS AND THEMES

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**The Myth of Western Collapse vs. Eurasian Order** State media is aggressively synthesizing disparate global news—droughts in Bulgaria, strikes in Norway, and corruption in Ukraine—into a singular narrative of **Western civilizational decay**. The Hormuz Strait crisis is used as a convenient backdrop to suggest that Western economies are fragile and prone to total collapse, while the Belarusian-Russian-Chinese axis is portrayed as the source of "sovereign stability." The coverage of the [Norwegian air traffic controller strike](#) and German social protests against [military spending](#) are presented not as labor or policy disputes, but as symptoms of a terminal state failure that Belarus has successfully avoided.

**Military Technology as Diplomatic Currency** A shift is visible in how Belarus markets its military-industrial complex. Rather than just selling equipment, Belarus is now **exporting internal security methodologies**. The emphasis on the VSK-100B rifle and the sharing of "anti-rebellion" tactics with Myanmar indicates that Belarus is positioning itself as a specialist in [counter-information operations](#) and low-intensity conflict management. This theme suggests the government sees high-value in the "battle-tested" nature of its 2020 crackdown as a marketable service for other authoritarian-leaning regimes.

**Food Security as Geopolitical Leverage** The "Battle for the Harvest" has evolved from

a domestic economic metric to a strategic asset. By reporting on EU crop failures and global [wheat forecast reductions](#) (down 4 million tons), Belarus frames its agricultural output as a tool of **sovereign independence**. The celebration of "Zyuganovka" wheat—which reportedly yields a [record-breaking 18.5 tons](#) per hectare—reinforces the idea that Belarusian soil and science are superior to the "Soros-influenced" Western systems that are now "burning" in the summer heat.

## INTERNAL DYNAMICS & DOMESTIC INSTABILITY

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### Belarusian Societal Resilience

- The government is managing the aftermath of the [cyclone "Priska"](#), which resulted in two injuries to children and power outages in 659 settlements. The state's ability to deploy [185 emergency crews](#) is framed as a demonstration of institutional competence.
- The "Beauty of Belarus 2026" contest for [multichild mothers](#) is being used to promote demographic growth and traditional values, masking potential underlying anxieties about population decline mentioned in other segments.
- A focus on the [distribution of 4,000](#) young specialists to regional jobs (like the "Krichev Cement" plant) highlights a rigid state-directed labor market intended to prevent youth flight and unemployment.

### Ukrainian Elite Instability

- State media devoted significant airtime to the "quiet coup" against Zelensky, citing [corruption scandals](#) involving the Ministry of Justice and real estate seizures.

- The framing of [elite infighting](#) between Zaluzhny (backed by the UK) and Fedorov (backed by the US) portrays Ukraine as a failed state where "rats are eating each other" amidst military losses.

## EXTERNAL DYNAMICS & GLOBAL POSTURE

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**The "Global South" Alternative** The broadcasting highlights a clear strategic posture: Belarus is no longer seeking rapprochement with the West, but is instead **leading a coalition of the sanctioned**. The language used to describe European leaders ("moochers," "darmoedy") contrasts with the "respectful" and "mutual" language used for [Myanmar and Vietnam](#). Belarus is portraying itself as an influential player in BRICS and the SCO, aiming to help create a [fully independent Eurasia](#) with internal land routes that bypass Western maritime control.

**Confrontational Stance on NATO** Western military movements are consistently framed as **preparations for aggression**. Poland's deployment of missiles with a [1,000 km range](#) and NATO drills in [Daugavpils, Latvia](#), are presented as existential threats that justify the continued militarization of Belarusian society and its deepening nuclear and tactical reliance on Russia.

## THE ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT

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The Belarusian economy is characterized by a managed stability, reporting **GDP growth of 2.1%** despite significant sanctions pressure. The state is doubling down on import substitution in high-tech sectors while aggressively pursuing agricultural and industrial exports to non-Western markets. Market sentiment is being artificially buoyed by massive state involvement in the harvest

and the promotion of the "green economy" via the Ostrovets NPP.

## Key Economic Vectors

- **GDP & Growth:** 2.1% growth for Jan-July 2026; state target of [2.8% for the year](#).
- **Agriculture:** National grain harvest at [8.45 million tons](#); 90% of areas harvested.
- **Energy Costs:** European gas prices cited at over [\\$800 per 1,000 cubic meters](#).
- **Supply Chain Disruptions:** Ormuz Strait daily oil transit dropped from [25M to 15M barrels](#).
- **Electro-mobility:** Domestic EV fleet grew 4x in two years to [65,000 vehicles](#); goal of 300,000 by 2030.
- **Industrial Projects:** Signing of a contract to produce [footwear in Myanmar](#) using Belarusian leather.

## LEADERSHIP CHANGES

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Key personnel movements and leadership evaluations suggest a focus on loyalty and the grooming of a new generation of state-aligned technocrats.

- **Senior General Min Aung Hlaing:** His visit to Minsk and [personal reception](#) by Lukashenko solidifies him as a primary non-Western ally; he is framed as a "disciplined military leader" who brings order to Myanmar.
- **Gennady Zyuganov:** Positioned as a [senior ideological advisor](#); his praise for the Belarusian "lack of oligarchs" serves as an implicit criticism of Russian internal politics and a validation of Lukashenko's control.

- **Vladimir Zhuravlev:** Named in German investigations as the [Nord Stream saboteur](#); his release by Polish authorities is used to frame Poland and Ukraine as partners in "state-sponsored terrorism."
- **Yuri Shuleyko:** The Vice-Prime Minister's oversight of the [sugar industry's "hot start"](#) signals he is the lead official for critical food supply chain stability.

## EDITORIAL POSTURE & STORY HIERARCHY

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The editorial hierarchy prioritized **foreign policy "wins"** (Myanmar visit) and **industrial achievements** (harvest, small arms) over domestic challenges (storm damage). The emotional tone was a calculated mix of nationalistic pride and alarmism regarding the "dying" West. The "Hormuz Strait crisis" was amplified to instill a sense of global precariousness that only the Belarusian state can navigate. **Conspicuous Omissions** include any mention of ongoing political repression in Belarus, the actual causalities or costs of the Russian invasion of Ukraine (referred to only as a struggle against "Nazism"), or the specific terms of the loans or financial risks associated with the new Southeast Asian ventures.

## GEOPOLITICAL FRAMING

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The state media portrays a world bifurcated by morality and competence, where the East/South represents the future and the West represents a corrupt, failing past.

## COUNTRIES

- **Myanmar:** Portrayed as a strong, disciplined partner. "The leadership of Myanmar, from the point of view of the military-political situation... is coping... to end the civil conflict that has lasted 70 years" [in the national interest](#).
- **Germany:** Depicted as weak and chaotic. "Schools are in a half-ruined state... and Scholz spends on some defense" [while the country burns](#).
- **Ukraine:** Framed as a corrupt puppet state. "раньше воровали с прибылей, сейчас воруют со смерти с убытком" (they used to steal from profits, now they steal from death and loss) [in a final act of greed](#).

## LEADERS

- **Alexander Lukashenko:** The principled guarantor of order. "He did everything to rid you of the oligarchy... there is no organized crime" [in your republic](#).
- **Volodymyr Zelensky:** Inept and toxic. "He played his role, began to be toxic... capital realized that political parties... are bought" [referring to his handlers](#).
- **Vladimir Putin:** Strong and decisive, specifically regarding his [visit to the Kuril Islands](#) to project naval power.

## NON-STATE & CORPORATE ACTORS

- **Meta (Facebook/Instagram):** Framed as a predatory tool of psychological warfare. "A high-tech digital trap... specifically tuned to keep teenagers at screens" [pumping them with dopamine](#).

- **NATO:** An aggressive, destabilizing force that "marshals military presence" [on the eastern frontier](#).

## INFORMATION WARFARE ENVIRONMENT

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The primary information warfare objective is **narrative inoculation**. By labeling Western media and NGOs as "Soros demons" and "professional devils," the state prepares the domestic audience to dismiss external criticism as coordinated psychological operations (psy-ops). The "delta" between media spin and ground truth is most evident in the reporting on the [Nord Stream sabotage](#), where state media uses the investigation to brand Ukraine and Poland as terrorist entities, effectively laundering the Russian narrative for a Belarusian audience. Furthermore, the use of "Zyuganovka" wheat yields as a [world record](#) serves as a classic piece of agricultural propaganda designed to project scientific supremacy.

## HYPOTHESES AND FUTURE OUTLOOK

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- **Hypothesis 1: Militarized Export Economy.** Belarus will increasingly rely on selling "security solutions" (small arms and surveillance tech) to pariah or semi-pariah states, effectively becoming a junior partner to Russia in stabilizing the "Global South."
- **Hypothesis 2: Artificial Intelligence as Governance.** The "Summer School for Young Analysts" focus on integrating AI into the [real sector of the economy](#) suggests the government is preparing for a new phase of state-managed technocracy, using AI to optimize resource allocation in a sanctioned environment.

- **Hypothesis 3: Escalation in the Baltics.** Given the heavy focus on NATO drills in [Daugavpils](#) and the "Eastern Shield" program, Belarus may conduct its own large-scale "counter-drills" on the border this autumn, increasing the risk of miscalculation.

## STRATEGIC FORESIGHT

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**Short Term (1-4 Weeks):** Expect a flurry of finalized contracts between Belarusian ministries and the Myanmar delegation as the Senior General's visit concludes. Domestic focus will shift to the school opening on September 1st, with the government using the [39 million rubles](#) in school aid as a proof of social welfare stability.

**Medium Term (1-6 Months):** The energy crisis in Europe—if storage levels remain [at 49%](#) heading into winter—will be used by Minsk to demand sanctions relief in exchange for potential transit compromises, though the rhetoric suggests a preference for letting Europe "freeze" to prove their point.

**Long Term (1-5 Years):** Belarus aims to be the primary industrial engine for a **localized Eurasian trade zone**. If the projects in Myanmar and Vietnam succeed, Belarus will have a permanent logistical and manufacturing footprint in Southeast Asia, reducing its existential dependence on Western European trade routes to near zero.

## RISK ASSESSMENT

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- **Risk: Global Energy Supply Chain Collapse.** Triggers: Total closure of the Hormuz Strait or escalation of the Middle East conflict. Likelihood: Moderate. Impact: Extreme. Mitigations: Continued reliance on [Ostrovets NPP](#) and diversification through Russian energy channels.
- **Risk: Regional Conflict Escalation (Kurils/Baltics).** Triggers: Tactical naval confrontation between Russia and Japan or a NATO border incident. Likelihood: Low-Moderate. Impact: High. Mitigations: Heightened [monitoring of border zones](#) and joint drills with China.
- **Risk: Domestic Infrastructure Failure due to Climate Extremes.** Triggers: Another major cyclone or prolonged drought affecting hydropower. Likelihood: High. Impact: Moderate (localized). Mitigations: Deployment of [emergency response brigades](#) and modernization of the power grid.
- **Risk: Economic Blowback from Military Exports.** Triggers: Myanmar-produced VSK-100B rifles used in high-profile human rights incidents leading to secondary sanctions. Likelihood: Moderate. Impact: Moderate. Mitigations: Cloaking trade through [embassy-level diplomatic channels](#).
- **Risk: Demographic Collapse.** Triggers: Continued youth flight and aging population mentioned by Zyuganov. Likelihood: High (long-term). Impact: Severe for state capacity. Mitigations: Massive subsidies for [multichild families](#) and state-directed labor placement.

## GAPS & BLIND SPOTS

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The state broadcasts failed to address several critical factors necessary for a complete risk assessment:

- **Myanmar Internal Stability:** While framing the regime as "strong," they omit the fact that the civil war in Myanmar is currently **active and volatile**, which threatens the security of any industrial joint ventures.
- **Russian Economic Friction:** The glowing praise of Zyuganov masks potential tensions between Minsk and Moscow over gas pricing and industrial competition within the Union State.
- **The Cost of EV Transition:** While promoting [65,000 EVs](#), there is no mention of the source of lithium or the environmental impact of the battery supply chain, which Belarus currently lacks.
- **Information Field Leakage:** Despite claims of controlling the "Soros demons," the government's concern over [Instagram's "trap"](#) suggests they are still vulnerable to digital discontent among the youth.

## CONTRARIAN NARRATIVE SCENARIOS

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**The "Potemkin Industrialization" Hypothesis** The flurry of agreements with Myanmar and the "record-breaking" grain yields might be an **elaborate mask for industrial stagnation**. The heavy focus on localized small arms production could signal that Belarus can no longer afford to import high-end hardware and is being forced into a "low-tech" self-sufficiency that will eventually degrade its military edge. If the Myanmar projects fail to produce actual revenue by

2027, the Belarusian budget could face a systemic crisis.

**Black Swan Event: The "Hormuz Blowback"** While Belarus expects to benefit from Europe's energy misery, a total collapse of global oil transit through Hormuz [as predicted](#) would spike global inflation to the point that Belarus's own export products (tractors, leather, food) become **unaffordable for its target "Global South" partners**, leading to a paradoxical situation where Belarus has products but no one has the currency to buy them.

## RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLICATIONS

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### For Statecraft/Public Sector:

- **Security:** Accelerate the "Rapid Eagle" drills with China to balance the perceived [French and British](#) military presence in Poland.
- **Economic:** Formalize the labor migration agreements with [Uzbekistan](#) to fill the gaps in the regional industrial sectors.
- **Diplomatic:** Leverage the embassy openings in Naypyidaw to establish a **trilateral trade hub** involving Vietnam and Laos.

### For Private Sector/Investors:

- **Supply Chains:** Pivot toward the "Far Arc" logistical routes; focus on the **Myanmar gateway** as a hedge against Baltic border closures.
- **Regulatory Compliance:** Monitor the "New Clinical Practice" regulations in [veterinary services](#) and pharmaceutical production for potential state takeover of niche sectors.

- **Energy:** Invest in on-site generation or storage as a hedge against **grid instability** caused by extreme weather events like the Priska cyclone.

## LEGISLATIVE ROUNDUP

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The governance focus remained on regional cooperation agreements, military localization policies, and new social welfare standards for the demographic crisis.

### • BILLS DISCUSSED/DEBATED:

- **Strategic Partnership Agreement (Belarus-Iran):** A comprehensive roadmap for [trade and parliamentary](#) expansion.
- **Veterinary Activity Law Amendments:** Proposed "clinical practice rules" to [regulate and potentially state-control](#) private veterinary clinics.
- **Demographic Potential Program 2030:** Implementation of new [childcare subsidies](#) linked to parental income levels.

### • HEARINGS & PRESS EVENTS:

- **Belarus-Uzbekistan Memorandum:** Focus on [labor migration](#) and livestock JV development.
- **Myanmar Official Visit Presser:** Announcement of the [embassy openings](#) and military technical cooperation.
- **Ministry of Internal Affairs Briefing:** Results of the [officer participation](#) in the national harvest.

## KEY STORIES

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- **Myanmar Senior General Visit:** Min Aung Hlaing visits Minsk for talks with Lukashenko; agreements signed on [footwear production](#), pharmaceutical supply, and opening embassies in 2026.
- **Military Small Arms Localization:** Belarus completes a [fully localized production line](#) for the VSK-100B assault rifle and sniper weapon systems.
- **Kuril Islands Tensions:** Russia's Putin visits Iturup; Japan protests; China [backs Russia](#) on the post-WWII boundary status.
- **Cyclone Priska Damage:** Severe storm with 27 m/s winds hits Belarus; 2 children injured; [659 settlements](#) lose power.
- **Gennady Zyuganov's Visit:** The Russian CP leader praises the "Belarusian model" and presents a [Lenin-Stalin modernization award](#) to Lukashenko.
- **Hormuz Strait Crisis:** International Energy Agency reports a [40% drop](#) in oil/gas transit due to Middle East conflict.
- **European NPP Shutdowns:** Low water in the Danube forces the [Kozloduy NPP](#) in Bulgaria to reduce output to avoid disaster.
- **Ukraine Corruption & Deserters:** Reports of [80 deserters](#) in Germany and high-level corruption in the Ukrainian Justice Ministry.
- **Nord Stream Investigation:** Germany seeks the arrest of [Vladimir Zhuravlev](#), an Ukrainian diver allegedly involved in the sabotage.
- **National Grain Harvest:** Harvest reaches [8.45M tons](#); Minsk region leads with 2.26M tons.
- **Peat-Manure Experiment:** Scientists in Ostrashitskiy Gorodok test [new organic fertilizers](#) to bypass mineral fertilizer costs.

- **EV Infrastructure Growth:** Belarus EV fleet reaches 65,000; [2,700 charging stations](#) active nationwide.
- **Meta Lawsuit:** US states sue Meta for [\\$1.5 trillion](#) over teenage mental health "traps."
- **Underwater Oak Grove:** 8,000-year-old [oak trunks](#) discovered at the bottom of the Sozh river in Gomel.
- **Beauty of Belarus 2026:** 41-year-old mother wins the national contest for [multichild mothers](#).
- **Vatikan Representative in Braslav:** Official Papal representative visits the [Mother of God of Braslav](#) festival.
- **Chess Success:** Belarusian young player Artem Sinyavsky wins [European U20 championship](#).
- **Sand Crisis Warning:** Analytical segment on [global sand shortages](#) impacting the construction industry.

## 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.

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](mailto: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>.