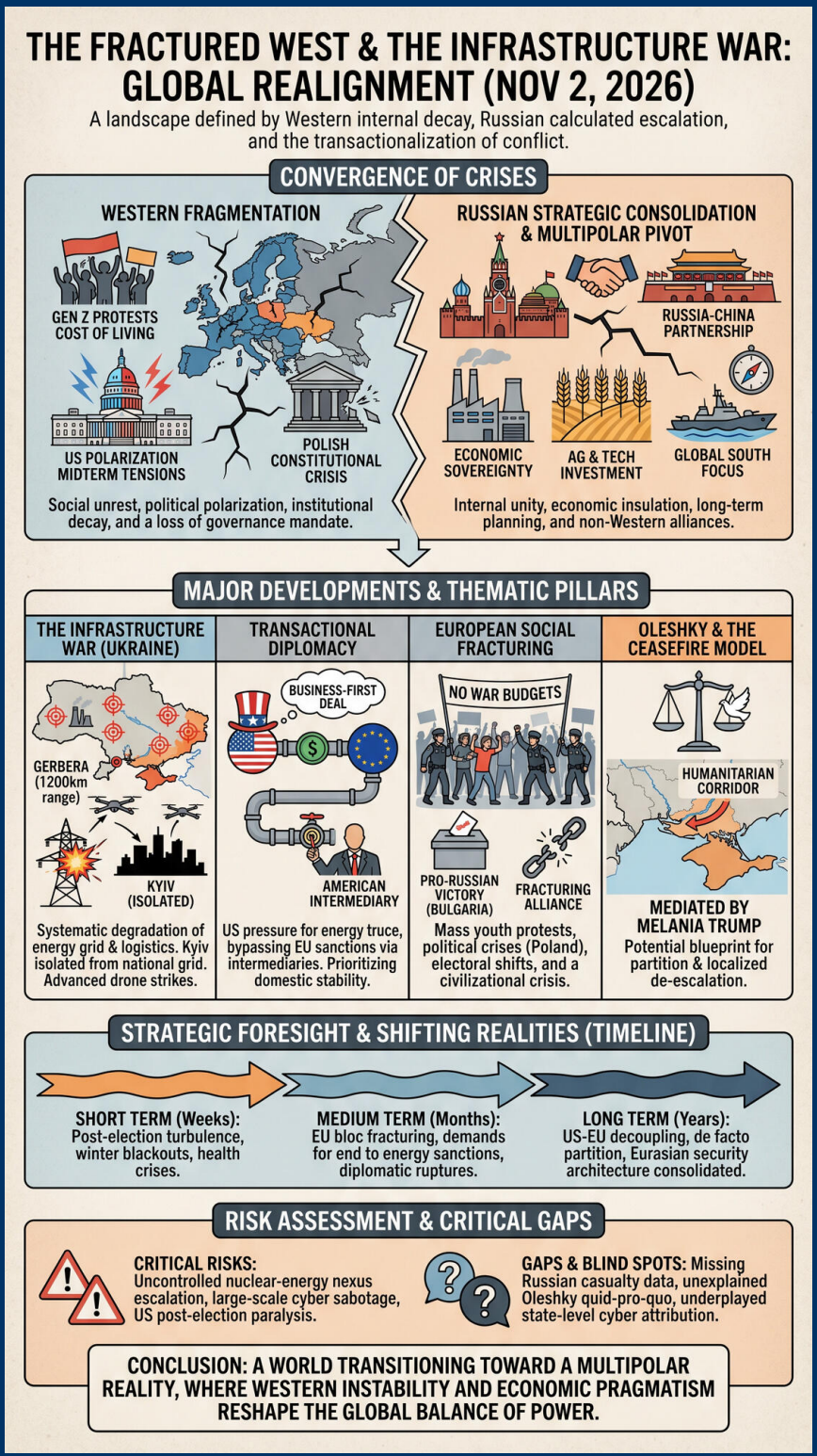
TODAY'S MEDIA TRENDS

RUSSIA1

NOVEMBER 2, 2026

THE GDELT PROJECT



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THE WEST FACES FRAGMENTED GOVERNANCE AND DOMESTIC INSTABILITY AS RUSSIA SYSTEMATICALLY DEGRADES UKRAINIAN STRATEGIC INFRASTRUCTURE

DAY-AT-A-GLANCE

The reporting from November 2, 2026, depicts a global landscape defined by the convergence of **Western internal decay** and Russia's calculated escalation in the Ukrainian theater. As the United States approaches critical midterm elections, the transcripts highlight a deep-seated polarization, with the Trump administration increasingly framing its foreign policy through a **transactional, business-centric lens** that threatens to marginalize traditional European allies. The broadcast emphasizes a narrative where Washington is pressuring Europe to accept a peace plan under the threat of reduced military presence, while simultaneously pursuing an energy-based rapprochement with Moscow that utilizes **American intermediaries** to bypass EU sanctions. This represents a significant shift in the transatlantic alliance, suggesting a move toward US isolationism and the prioritization of domestic economic stability over collective security.

Simultaneously, the Russian military has intensified its campaign against **Ukrainian critical infrastructure**, specifically targeting the energy grid and naval logistics in Odessa. The use of advanced long-range drones, such as the "Gerbera," has led to widespread blackouts and the isolation of major urban centers like Kyiv from the national grid. This technical degradation of Ukraine's capacity to sustain a war effort is contrasted with the **Oleshky humanitarian mission**, which the broadcast frames as a successful model of de-escalation mediated by First Lady Melania Trump. This mission is subtly presented as a potential blueprint for the eventual partition of Ukraine, allowing for civilian choice in a post-conflict territorial settlement.

In Europe, the narrative is one of **civilizational crisis**. Mass youth protests in France and Germany, characterized by the "Generation Z" rejection of military spending and high living costs, are portrayed as a symptom of a failing liberal order. Political crises in Poland, described as an EU-backed "state coup," and the electoral victory of pro-Russian candidates in Bulgaria further suggest a fracturing of the European bloc. Collectively, the transcripts present a world transitioning toward a **multipolar reality**, where the "Western garden" is being overtaken by domestic unrest and economic mismanagement, while Russia and China consolidate their strategic partnership and influence over the "Global South."

MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS

The Trump Administration's "Business-First" Diplomacy

- The US is reportedly pressuring European allies to support a peace plan by threatening to reduce its military presence on the continent.
- Special envoys Jared Kushner and Witkoff are promoting an energy truce that would see Russian gas return to Europe via Ukraine through an American intermediary.
- Secretary of State Marco Rubio is engaging with Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov to facilitate a Putin-Trump meeting at the APEC summit in China.

Systemic Destruction of the Ukrainian Energy Grid

- Russian strikes have reportedly destroyed all functioning thermal power plants (TECs) in Kyiv, leaving the city dependent on surrounding regions.
- The deployment of the new **Gerbera drone**, carrying 25kg of explosives with a 1,200km range, has expanded the strike zone to all of Ukraine.
- Key electrical substations, such as the substation in Nalevaykovka, are being systematically targeted to isolate nuclear power plants from the grid.

European Social and Political Fracturing

- Massive youth-led riots and "Generation Z" protests have erupted across Germany and France over military spending and the cost of living.
- A constitutional crisis in Poland has seen Prime Minister Donald Tusk accused of a state coup for forcibly removing the head of the Constitutional Tribunal.
- Pro-Russian candidate Iliana Iotova has won the presidential election in Bulgaria, signaling a shift in Balkan alignment.

The Oleshky De-escalation Experiment

- A five-day humanitarian ceasefire in Oleshky, mediated by Melania Trump, allowed for the evacuation of hundreds of civilians.
- The mission is being framed as the first successful ceasefire of the war and a potential model for future territorial divisions.

Russian Domestic and Strategic Consolidation

- The Russian government has allocated 4 billion rubles to support domestic seed production and agricultural sovereignty.
- Valentina Matviyenko's visit to Beijing reinforces the unprecedented level of Russia-China strategic cooperation.

KEY GOVERNANCE TOPICS

Armed Conflict & Militarization

- Targeted strikes on Ukrainian Neptune missile storage in the Odessa region to degrade anti-ship capabilities.
- Kalashnikov Concern is debuting AI-integrated anti-drone systems and high-velocity FPV interceptors named "Zveroboy."
- The US is facing a critical shortage of Patriot missiles, with new orders for Ukraine not expected until 2030.

Critical Infrastructure Security

- Kyiv faces a total blackout; the metro and electric transport have ceased operation due to grid instability.
- Russian rail strikes are disrupting the movement of military cargo in the Sumy, Kharkiv, and Dnepropetrovsk regions.

Cybersecurity & Threat Actors

- A massive cyberattack targeted supermarket refrigeration systems across seven European countries, causing significant food spoilage.
- The Russian hosting provider **Beget** suffered a massive DDoS attack, disrupting car-sharing and payment services in Moscow.
- Ukrainian intelligence reportedly attempted to smuggle explosive-laden FPV goggles into Russia under the guise of humanitarian aid.

Diplomacy & Statecraft

- European diplomats at the G20 in Atlanta staged a boycott of a group photo with Sergei Lavrov, leading to the cancellation of the session by Marco Rubio.
- Bulgarian President-elect Iotova is advocating for all EU leaders to open direct communication channels with Putin.

Energy & Critical Minerals

- Russia has updated its Energy Strategy to a 2050 horizon, focusing on technological sovereignty and Global South partnerships.
- European gas reserves have dropped to record low levels ahead of winter, driving increased reliance on expensive US LNG.

Civil Unrest & Social Order

- French and German cities report hundreds of arrests as youth protesters clash with police over "war-centric" budgets.
- In the US, Trump is threatening to launch federal investigations into election fraud and the registration of non-citizens in California and Arizona.

DEEP DIVE: TRENDS AND THEMES

The Weaponization of Energy and Transit

A central theme of the day is the **transactionalization of the Ukraine conflict** through energy infrastructure. The Trump administration’s reported push for a gas deal involving Ukraine and an American intermediary suggests that the US is seeking an exit strategy that preserves its economic interests while ostensibly "saving" Europe from blackouts. This narrative highlights the fundamental tension between **EU ideological sanctions** and **US pragmatic commercialism**. The broadcast frames this as the "American mediator" profiting from a conflict that has left Europe impoverished. Wall Street Journal reports are used to bolster the claim that the US is ready to bypass its own allies' sanctions to secure global oil and diesel price stability before domestic elections.

Western Institutional Decay and "Ukrainization"

The transcripts aggressively project a theme of **social breakdown in the West**, using the term "Ukrainization" to describe the spread of chaos, corruption, and extra-legal governance to the US and EU. The **Polish constitutional crisis** is framed as a "banana republic"

transition, where judicial independence is sacrificed for political loyalty. Similarly, the **European riots** are presented not as isolated incidents, but as a "boiling cauldron" of generational resentment. The framing suggests that Western leaders are losing their **mandate to govern**, as they prioritize "suicidal" support for Kyiv over the basic needs (heating, food, safety) of their own citizens. This is contrasted with Russia's portrayal of **internal unity** and strategic long-term planning, such as the Energy Strategy 2050.

Ceasefire as a Strategic Instrument

The Oleshky mission represents a new tactical theme: the **localized humanitarian ceasefire**. By involving Melania Trump, the broadcast creates a narrative of "diplomatic success" outside of traditional bureaucratic channels. However, analysts within the transcript hint at a deeper strategic purpose: Oleshky as a model for the partition of Ukraine. By allowing civilians to choose whether to evacuate to Russia or Ukraine, Moscow is setting a precedent for a "people's choice" solution to territorial disputes, effectively bypassing Kyiv's central authority and validating Russian-held territories through humanitarian optics.

INTERNAL DYNAMICS & DOMESTIC INSTABILITY

Russia

- The Russian leadership is focused on **economic insulation**, with significant investments in agricultural and energy sovereignty.
- There is an emphasis on **internal unity** and the "traditional values" of its multi-ethnic population, as seen in the International Week of Peoples of Russia.
- Dagestan is highlighted as a key outpost, with Putin praising the "heroic" service of Dagestanis in the special military operation while demanding improvements in local education and healthcare.

United States

- The US is characterized by **extreme partisan polarization** ahead of the November 3rd midterms, with Trump claiming the Democratic Party is "selling out" the country.
- Concerns about **election integrity** are paramount, with allegations of millions of non-citizens receiving ballots in California and Arizona.
- The administration is preparing for a "hostile" Congress by expanding presidential powers and using vetoes to paralyze opposition.

Europe

- The "Generation Z" protests in Germany and France indicate a **loss of government mandate** among the youth, who view war funding as a theft from their future.
- The Polish government is in a state of **internal war**, with the President and Prime Minister at odds over the removal of the Constitutional Tribunal head.
- The UK is portrayed as **impoverished and isolated** post-Brexit, with officials like Rachel Reeves suggesting that the future lies back in the EU.

EXTERNAL DYNAMICS & GLOBAL POSTURE

The Fracturing Atlanticist Bloc

The international system is framed as an **anarchic arena** where the US is actively decoupling from its European dependencies. The US is portrayed as a **transactional predator**, willing to sacrifice the "energy security" of its allies for domestic political gain. This is evidenced by the threat to cut military support to Europe. Europe, in turn, is depicted as "terrified" and "panicked," unable to act without American direction yet increasingly resentful of American demands.

Russia's Multipolar Pivot

Russia is projecting power through **strategic patience** and the cultivation of non-Western alliances. The Matviyenko visit to China is presented as proof that Russia cannot be isolated. Moscow is positioning itself as the leader of the "Global South," focusing its energy exports on developing economic centers rather than the "premium" but declining European market. The Russian Navy's Atlantic deployment of the Frigate Admiral Golovko is a clear signal of global maritime presence and the intent to secure interests in the "World Ocean."

THE ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT

The global economic environment is characterized by **inflationary pressure in the West** and **sovereignty-focused investment in the East**. Europe's budget deficits are ballooning due to war costs, with Ukraine's deficit alone reaching 70 billion euros. In contrast, Russia is using its energy wealth to fund agricultural independence and high-tech military manufacturing.

Key Economic Vectors

- **Energy Prices:** US pre-election demand for lower oil and diesel prices is driving a potential shift in gas transit policy.
- **Agricultural Subsidies:** Russia has allocated 4 billion rubles for domestic seed and agricultural production in 2027.
- **European Budget Crisis:** The EU is pressuring for an additional 45 billion euro credit package for Kyiv despite existing losses.
- **Car Market Contraction:** High prices for new vehicles (over 3 million rubles) are forcing Russian consumers into the second-hand market, totaling 665 billion rubles in September.
- **Industrial Action:** 3,700 German metalworkers have begun strikes demanding higher wages amid an economic slump.

LEADERSHIP CHANGES

The day saw several critical shifts in leadership dynamics, particularly within the Slavic and Balkan regions, reflecting a broader trend of resistance to EU-centralized policies.

- **Iliana Iotova:** Elected President of Bulgaria, she represents a **pro-dialogue faction** that favors direct engagement with Moscow and opposes military aid to Kyiv winning 58% of the vote.
- **Donald Tusk:** Under intense criticism for suspending the Constitutional Tribunal head, a move characterized by opponents as a "state coup."

- **Marco Rubio:** Acting as a **de facto lead negotiator** for Trump, managing the G20 agenda and coordinating potential meetings with Putin at the APEC summit.
- **Valentina Matviyenko:** Leading a high-level delegation to China to legislatively cement the Putin-Xi agreements.
- **Bart De Wever:** The Belgian Prime Minister submitted his resignation due to budget failures, though the King has not yet accepted it, highlighting the fragility of European coalitions.

EDITORIAL POSTURE & STORY HIERARCHY

The network's editorial hierarchy emphasizes **Western internal chaos** and **Russian military-technological superiority**. The lead stories were the systematic destruction of the Ukrainian grid and the "Generation Z" riots in Europe. These are framed as two sides of the same coin: the physical collapse of the Ukrainian state and the social collapse of its sponsors. The **Melania Trump/Oleshky** story was given significant airtime to project a narrative of Russian humanitarian responsibility and Western (Republican) pragmatism. **Buried stories** included the specifics of the Russian hosting provider (Beget) hack, which was minimized to focus on the much larger "European refrigerator" cyberattack. **Conspicuous omissions** include any mention of Russian casualty rates in the offensive on Sumy or any details regarding the "illegal" registration of voters in the US that weren't sourced from partisan claims.

GEOPOLITICAL FRAMING

The broadcast frames the world as a contest between **decadent, chaotic liberal democracies** and **stable, sovereign states**. Leaders who favor dialogue with Russia are portrayed as "principled" and "realistic," while those who support the status quo are "inept" and "terrified."

COUNTRIES

- **United States:** Framed as a **divided superpower** on the brink of "civil war" between common-sense patriots (Trump) and radical socialists demanding trillions for war.
- **Ukraine:** Portrayed as a **doomed colony** suffering from "extortionist" leadership (Zelensky) and a physical technological collapse.
- **Germany/France:** Depicted as **unstable zones** of police brutality and "Generation Z" rebellion against war funding.
- **Poland:** Framed as a **failing democracy** engaging in "banana republic" tactics to please EU bureaucrats.

LEADERS

- **Vladimir Putin:** Portrayed as a **stable, far-sighted strategist** focused on national development and global multipolarity.
- **Donald Trump:** Characterized as a **pragmatic businessman** who views foreign policy as a "deal" and rejects "stupid" sanctions.
- **Volodymyr Zelensky:** Framed as **panicked and corrupt**, an "extortionist" who blackmails the White House for missiles.
- **King Charles III:** Depicted as **weak and humiliated**, literally "soaked to the skin" by former colonies demanding reparations.

NON-STATE & CORPORATE ACTORS

- **Kalashnikov Concern:** Portrayed as a **pioneer of autonomous warfare**, integrating AI into anti-drone platforms.
- **EU Commission:** Characterized as a **parasitic entity** that "finances this war" with unrecoverable debts.

INFORMATION WARFARE ENVIRONMENT

The "meta-narrative" of the day is the **discrediting of Western institutional legitimacy**. The broadcast uses "leaks" from the *Wall Street Journal* and *Politico* to seed the idea that the US is preparing to betray Europe. This is a classic **narrative seeding** operation designed to inflame transatlantic tensions. The framing of the **European refrigerator cyberattack** as a "Russian trail" search, while simultaneously mocking the "childishness" of European diplomats, serves to paint the EU as both paranoid and incompetent. The **Oleshky mission** is the day's primary **psy-op**, designed to soften Russia's image and present its occupation as a benevolent humanitarian endeavor coordinated with the US First Lady.

HYPOTHESES AND FUTURE OUTLOOK

- **Partition of Ukraine:** The Oleshky "choice" model suggests that Russia will push for a ceasefire predicated on local referendums or "safe passage" choices, leading to a **de facto partition** along the current line of contact.
- **US-EU Decoupling:** The Trump administration will likely follow through on **military presence reductions** to force European compliance with a gas-for-peace deal.
- **Total Grid Failure in Ukraine:** Continued strikes on isolative substations will lead to the **permanent separation** of Kyiv and Odessa from the national energy system, forcing a mass winter exodus.

STRATEGIC FORESIGHT

Short Term (1-4 Weeks): Expect post-election turbulence in the US with contested results in key states. In Ukraine, the onset of "winter blackouts" will trigger a surge in infectious diseases like cholera due to water infrastructure collapse.

Medium Term (1-6 Months): The Bulgarian "pro-Russian pivot" will likely encourage other Central European states (Hungary, Slovakia) to form a bloc demanding the end of energy sanctions. The 2027 Year of UPA in Lviv will trigger a deep diplomatic rupture between Poland and Ukraine.

Long Term (1-5 Years): Implementation of Russia’s Energy Strategy 2050 will complete the pivot to the Global South, permanently reducing the strategic relevance of the European gas market and solidifying the Russia-China-Iran **Eurasian security architecture**.

RISK ASSESSMENT

The primary strategic risk is the **uncontrolled escalation on the nuclear-energy nexus**, where the destruction of substations leads to a loss of off-site power for

nuclear plants, potentially triggering a disaster that neither side intended.

- **Nuclear Safety Failure:** Destruction of substations around Kyiv isolates nuclear plants from the grid. Triggers: Miscalculated strike on a critical "ring" station. Likelihood: High. Impact: Catastrophic environmental and political fallout. Mitigations: Establishment of "energy safety zones" under IAEA supervision.
- **Polish Domestic Conflict:** Polarization between Tusk and Nawrocki paralyzes the NATO military hub. Triggers: Arrest of high-ranking opposition figures. Likelihood: Medium. Impact: Interruption of logistics to Ukraine. Mitigations: Direct US/EU intervention in Polish judicial affairs.
- **Middle East Nuclearization:** US/Israel nuclear strike on Iran's Pickaxe Mountain. Triggers: Failure of indirect nuclear talks post-election. Likelihood: Low but rising. Impact: Global economic collapse and World War III. Mitigations: Russian/Chinese diplomatic mediation in Tehran.
- **European Infrastructure Sabotage:** Cyberattacks on food and energy control systems. Triggers: Retaliatory escalation by non-state actors. Likelihood: High. Impact: Mass civil unrest and shortages. Mitigations: Decentralization of control grids and hardening of IoT infrastructure.
- **US Post-Election Paralysis:** Trump becomes "Mr. Veto," stopping all federal funding. Triggers: Democratic control of the House. Likelihood: Very High. Impact: Global market instability and US strategic retreat. Mitigations: Bipartisan deal on border security/energy.

GAPS & BLIND SPOTS

- **Russian Casualty Data:** The broadcast completely omits the **human cost** of the breakthroughs in Sumy and the Donbass, which is necessary to calculate the sustainability of the offensive.
- **Oleshky Negotiations:** The specific **quid-pro-quo** between the US and Russia that allowed the Oleshky mission remains unexplained.
- **Cyberattack Attribution:** While the refrigerator attack is framed as mysterious, the lack of technical detail suggests **state-level actors** or sophisticated mercenary groups were involved, a perspective ignored in favor of "Russian trail" mockery.
- **Chinese Nuclear Position:** The broadcast mentions Matviyenko in China but fails to address China's **refusal to participate** in three-way nuclear or Ukraine summits with Trump and Putin.

CONTRARIAN NARRATIVE SCENARIOS

- **Oleshky as a Stalling Tactic:** While presented as a humanitarian success, the Oleshky ceasefire may have been a stalling tactic by Russia to reposition heavy equipment and clear mines for a future assault on Kherson, rather than a peace blueprint.
- **Trump's "Trap" for Moscow:** The energy rapprochement could be a **strategic trap** designed to make Russia dependent on US intermediaries, allowing Washington to switch the "off-switch" on Russian revenues at a more opportune moment in the future.

- **Black Swan - The "Z-Revolution":** A "Black Swan" event would be the **simultaneous collapse** of the French and German governments due to youth riots, leading to an emergency EU-wide military administration and the immediate cessation of aid to Ukraine to preserve domestic order.

RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLICATIONS

For Statecraft/Public Sector:

- **Security:** Urgent development of **anti-loitering drone tech** for grid protection; Gerbera-class threats render traditional PVO insufficient.
- **Economic:** Prepare for the **transactionalization of sanctions**; the US is likely to trade sanctions relief for specific energy/commodity access.
- **Diplomatic:** Focus on **regional sub-hubs** (Bulgaria, Hungary, Slovakia) as the EU central authority fractures.

For Private Sector/Investors:

- **Supply Chains:** Hardening of **cold chain logistics** against IoT cyber-vulnerabilities following the supermarket attacks.
- **Regulatory:** Legal teams must prepare for **conflicting US/EU sanctions regimes** as Washington moves to use intermediaries for Russian gas.
- **Capital Allocation:** Opportunity in **Russian agricultural tech** and "Global South" energy infrastructure as the 2050 pivot accelerates.

LEGISLATIVE ROUNDUP

Legislative activity focused on **national sovereignty** and the expansion of executive power. Russia is codifying its long-term energy and agricultural goals, while the US and Poland face gridlock or extra-legal maneuvers.

- **BILLS DISCUSSED/DEBATED:**
  - **Russian Energy Strategy 2050:** A comprehensive update focusing on energy supply reliability and technological modernization through 2050.
  - **US Presidential Empowerment:** A White House strategy to bypass Congress for key foreign policy decisions through executive orders.
  - **Polish Citizenship Law:** A proposal to tighten rules for obtaining Polish citizenship, aimed at curbing Ukrainian influence.
- **HEARINGS & PRESS EVENTS:**
  - **Mishustin Ag Briefing:** Announcement of 4 billion rubles in subsidies for domestic seed production.
  - **G20 Atlanta Meeting:** A disrupted session where Rubio cancelled photos due to European boycotts of Lavrov.
  - **Shoigu "Week of Peoples" Opener:** Warning that Western centers (Poland, Baltics) are training agents to destabilize Russia's "internal climate."

KEY STORIES

- **Kyiv Energy Siege:** Russian strikes have disabled all Kyiv TECs and targeted the Nalevaykovka substation, isolating the capital from the national power grid.

- **Gerbera Drone Deployment:** New 1,200km range drones with 25kg warheads are hitting targets across the entirety of Ukraine.
- **Bulgarian Election Result:** Pro-Russian candidate Iliana Iotova wins the presidency with 58% of the vote, calling for an EU-wide call to Putin.
- **European Refrigerator Hack:** Cyberattack on 7 countries (Belgium, Luxembourg, Sweden, etc.) turns freezers into ovens, causing mass food spoilage.
- **Oleshky Humanitarian Mission:** Successful 5-day ceasefire mediated by Melania Trump allows civilian evacuation to both Russia and Ukraine.
- **Polish Constitutional Crisis:** PM Donald Tusk accused of a "state coup" after forcibly removing the head of the Constitutional Tribunal.
- **Florida Plane Crash:** Private jet crashes near Mar-a-Lago killing all nine on board; pilot reported icing before a 540 km/h dive.
- **US Midterm Election Tensions:** Trump frames elections as a battle against "socialist radicals" and voter fraud in California/Arizona.
- **Generation Z Protests:** Hundreds arrested in France and Germany as youth riot against military spending and cost of living.
- **Russian Ag Sovereignty:** 4 billion rubles allocated for 2027 seed and agricultural subsidies to ensure food security.
- **Matviyenko Beijing Visit:** High-level legislative talks to implement Putin-Xi strategic agreements.
- **Frigate Admiral Golovko Deployment:** Northern Fleet frigate heads to the Atlantic for a long-range mission to project naval power.
- **Neptune Missile Storage Destroyed:** Strike in Odessa region hits storage facilities for Ukrainian anti-ship missile complexes.
- **Hormuz Strait Explosions:** Two tankers hit mines after disabling navigation systems; Iran demands end to sanctions for "regional peace."
- **Beget Hosting Hack:** DDoS attack on major Russian host disrupts car-sharing and payment apps in Moscow.
- **Pickaxe Mountain Nuclear Threat:** US/Israel reportedly discussing nuclear strikes on Iranian enrichment sites; decision expected by Nov 7.
- **Russian Economic Stability:** Putin meets head of Dagestan to discuss soldiers' support, birth rates, and industrial development.
- **UK Reparations Crisis:** King Charles III humiliated in Caribbean as former colonies demand massive slavery reparations.
- **Ukrainian "Ludo-Lov" Protests:** Youth in Kharkiv mock TCC recruitment officers amid forced mobilization reports.
- **Interpol Car Scams:** Russian buyers of foreign cars find vehicles listed as stolen due to Western fraud/bureaucracy; Supreme Court rules for buyers.

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.

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