

TODAY'S MEDIA TRENDS

METROTV

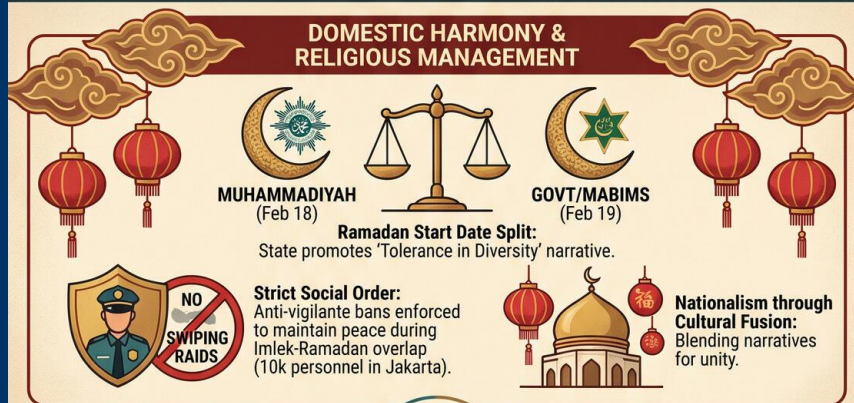
FEBRUARY 17, 2026

THE GDELT PROJECT

INDONESIA 2026: THE FIRE HORSE CONVERGENCE

Navigating Religious Pluralism, Bureaucratic Reform, and Global Diplomacy
in a Volatile Era (Feb 17-18 Reporting Period)

DOMESTIC HARMONY & RELIGIOUS MANAGEMENT



MUHAMMADIYAH
(Feb 18)

GOVT/MABIMS
(Feb 19)

Ramadan Start Date Split:
State promotes 'Tolerance in Diversity' narrative.

Strict Social Order:
Anti-vigilante bans enforced to maintain peace during Imlek-Ramadan overlap (10k personnel in Jakarta).

Nationalism through Cultural Fusion:
Blending narratives for unity.

GLOBAL DIPLOMACY & PEACEMAKING

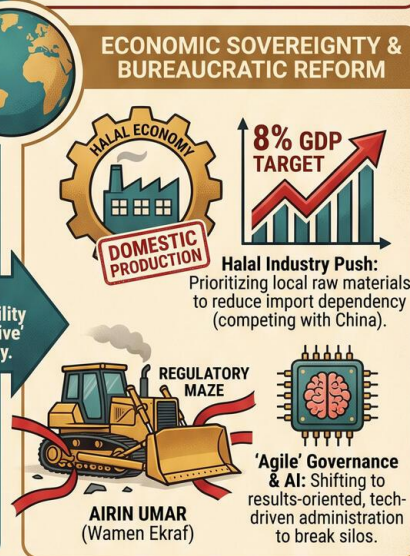


Prabowo in D.C.:
Mitigating trade risks, proposing 'Board of Peace' for global mediation.

Sugiono at U.N.:
Advocating for Palestine, seeking prominent role for Muslim nations in security.

Leveraging Domestic Stability for 'Free & Active' Foreign Policy.

ECONOMIC SOVEREIGNTY & BUREAUCRATIC REFORM



HALAL ECONOMY
DOMESTIC PRODUCTION

8% GDP TARGET

Halal Industry Push:
Prioritizing local raw materials to reduce import dependency (competing with China).

REGULATORY MAZE

AIRIN UMAR
(Wamen Ekraf)

'Agile' Governance & AI: Shifting to results-oriented, tech-driven administration to break silos.

YEAR OF THE FIRE HORSE: CONTEXT & OUTLOOK



Volatile Context: Astrological 'Fire' energy suggests economic passion & emotional volatility. Climate risks (Aceh floods, global extremes) act as destabilizers.

SHORT TERM: Heightened security for religious duality.

MEDIUM TERM: Clarity on 'Trump Tariffs' impact & reform success.

LONG TERM: Standardization (KHGT), Halal Hub status, Technocratic leadership.

EDITORIAL POSTURE: Optimistic yet cautionary, using 'Fire Horse' framing to deliver a pro-stability message amidst high-stakes internal and external maneuvering towards the 2045 'Golden Indonesia' goal.

TODAY'S MEDIA TRENDS

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FEBRUARY 17, 2026

INDONESIA NAVIGATES A DELICATE
CONVERGENCE OF RELIGIOUS
PLURALISM, BUREAUCRATIC
REFORM, AND HIGH-STAKES
GLOBAL DIPLOMACY AS IT ENTERS
THE VOLATILE YEAR OF THE FIRE
HORSE.

DAY-AT-A-GLANCE

The reporting period of February 17-18, 2026, reveals an Indonesian state operating at a high tempo of domestic cultural management and international strategic maneuvering. Domestically, the nation is navigating a sensitive dual-holiday period: the arrival of the Lunar New Year (Imlek 2577) and the commencement of the holy month of Ramadan. A significant point of friction has emerged regarding the start of the fasting month, with the [Muhammadiyah organization](#) declaring 1 Ramadan on February 18, while the government and other major organizations, following the [MABIMS moon-sighting criteria](#), have officially set the date for February 19. The administration is actively managing this disparity by promoting a narrative of "tolerance in diversity" while simultaneously enforcing strict social order

measures, such as Governor Pramono Anung's ban on [unauthorized paramilitary raids](#) (swiping) on eateries during the fasting period.

On the international stage, President Prabowo Subianto is projecting Indonesia as a major mediator and economic player. His high-profile [arrival in Washington D.C.](#) to meet with President Donald Trump signals a proactive attempt to mitigate the risks of "Trump Tariffs" and position Indonesia as a key member of a newly proposed "Board of Peace" for global conflict resolution. This is mirrored by Foreign Minister Sugiono's activities at the [United Nations in New York](#), where he is reinforcing Indonesia's commitment to the two-state solution for Palestine and seeking a more prominent role for Muslim-majority nations in international security architectures. The convergence of these events suggests an administration attempting to leverage domestic stability and cultural heritage to bolster its "free and active" foreign policy in an increasingly polarized multipolar environment.

MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS

1. Religious Schism Over Ramadan Commencement

- Muhammadiyah officially began [Tarawih prayers on February 17](#), citing the Global Hijri Calendar (KHGT) method, while the government's Isbat session determined [Ramadan starts on February 19](#).
- The government is emphasizing "Ma'rifat" and "Ijtihad" (legal reasoning) to justify the existence of [differing start dates](#) without disrupting social cohesion.

- Police and regional governments are on high alert, with [10,000 personnel deployed](#) in Jakarta alone to ensure security during the overlapping religious observances.

2. Presidential Diplomacy in the United States

- President Prabowo Subianto arrived in D.C. to discuss [Trump-era trade tariffs](#) and attend the inaugural meeting of the "Board of Peace."
- The visit includes significant engagement with the [Indonesian diaspora](#), framing Prabowo as a leader capable of commanding respect on the world stage.
- Strategic focus is placed on maintaining [balance in US-Indonesia relations](#) amid shifting American foreign policy under the Trump administration.

3. Economic Positioning of the Halal Industry

- Minister of Industry Agus Gumiwang Karta Sasmita is pushing for a [4% growth target](#) in the halal value chain to reach a goal of 8% contribution to GDP.
- The government is prioritizing the domestic production of [halal raw materials](#), such as gelatin and enzymes, to reduce import dependency.
- There is a concerted effort to simplify the [halal certification process](#), which is currently viewed as more cumbersome and expensive than in competitor nations like China.

4. Bureaucratic "Bulldozing" and Creative Economy Reform

- The appointment of Airin Umar (Airin Rachmi Diany) as [Deputy Minister of Creative Economy](#) (Wamen Ekraf) marks a shift toward technocratic, "agile" governance.
- Umar, described as a "bulldozer," is tasked with breaking through [rigid bureaucratic barriers](#) to support local creators and intellectual property (HKI) registration.
- The administration is openly promoting the [use of AI](#) to replace repetitive administrative tasks, signaling a long-term goal for digital government transformation.

5. Year of the Fire Horse: Cultural and Risk Framing

- Astrological experts are framing 2026 as the [Year of the Fire Horse](#), characterized by high "Fire" energy that suggests both economic passion and emotional volatility.
- Feng Shui analysis predicts a [cooling of the property sector](#) and high risks for the metal and finance industries.
- The narrative explicitly links astrological "instability" to a [need for "wisdom"](#) among political leaders to prevent social "classes" and "clashes."

KEY GOVERNANCE TOPICS

Armed Conflict & Militarization

- Indonesia is maintaining a high-profile stance on the [Palestine conflict](#), with FM Sugiono advocating for international peace efforts at the UN.

- Domestically, the [Kostrad \(Strategic Reserve Command\)](#) remains a pillar of the state's readiness to "face critical situations" and support the President's international "Board of Peace" initiatives.

Climate & Extreme Weather

- Significant flooding and landslides in [Aceh and Banten](#) have disrupted local infrastructure, requiring presidential intervention via cattle donations for traditional ceremonies.
- Global climate impacts are highlighted, including [extreme flooding in France](#) and the [wettest start to the year in the UK](#) since 1890, framing climate as a universal destabilizer.

Diplomacy & Statecraft

- The Prabowo administration is leveraging "pluralism" as a [diplomatic asset](#), with Chairman Surya Paloh emphasizing that Indonesian diversity is a "strength, not a weakness."
- The [MABIMS consensus](#) among Southeast Asian ministers serves as a regional governance framework for religious standardization.

Macroeconomics & Trade

- The [Lunar New Year](#) period is estimated to have generated 9 trillion IDR in economic turnover, driven by a massive increase in inter-regional travel and consumption.
- The government is actively [fighting "trade wars"](#) by mandating halal certification for all products entering the country to protect domestic manufacturing.

DEEP DIVE: TRENDS AND THEMES

Technocratic "Agile" Governance vs. Deep Bureaucracy

A recurring theme is the deliberate attempt to infuse the government with "startup-style" agility. The framing of [Airin Umar's appointment](#) highlights a desire to move beyond the "government by ready" (asal bapak senang) culture toward a results-oriented "bulldozer" approach. This trend toward "Agile Governance" is positioned as a necessity for Indonesia to reach its 2045 "Golden Indonesia" goals, though the transcripts acknowledge significant [resistance from entrenched regulations](#) and cross-ministry siloing.

Nationalism Through Religious and Cultural Fusion

The administration is successfully blending Islamic and Chinese cultural narratives to reinforce a unified Indonesian identity. The ["Indahnya Harmony Imlek"](#) reporting and the integration of [Ramadan traditions](#) with Chinese New Year symbols (such as red lanterns in mosques) suggest a state-sponsored campaign to define Indonesia as the world's most successful inclusive democracy. This is not merely a social project but a strategic geopolitical narrative intended to [influence the global "Board of Peace"](#) discourse.

Vulnerability to "Trump 2.0" and Global Protectionism

There is a palpable undercurrent of anxiety regarding global economic shifts. The preoccupation with ["Trump Tariffs"](#) and the push for [import substitution](#) in the halal sector reveal a state that is preparing for a

more hostile, protectionist global trade environment. The strategic response is twofold: high-level diplomatic charm offensives and the aggressive development of a "halal sovereign" supply chain.

INTERNAL DYNAMICS & DOMESTIC INSTABILITY

Religious Divergence and Social Order

The persistent split between [Muhammadiyah and the Government](#) on the start of Ramadan remains a primary source of internal tension. While portrayed as "tolerance," it forces the state to mobilize massive security assets to prevent social friction. The ban on [unauthorized raids \(swiping\)](#) indicates a long-standing struggle to maintain the state's monopoly on violence against radical or vigilante elements during religious periods. Any perceived failure to maintain order during this "Fire Horse" year could quickly escalate into civil unrest, as warned by [feng shui experts](#) regarding "emotional volatility."

Elite Reform vs. Institutional Decay

The rhetoric around "bulldozing" the bureaucracy suggests that the leadership views the current administrative apparatus as a hindrance to development. The reliance on individual "stars" like [Airin Umar](#) to drive reform indicates a lack of systemic institutional resilience. If these individual efforts fail to penetrate the "maze of regulations," public disillusionment with the administration's reformist agenda may grow.

EXTERNAL DYNAMICS & GLOBAL POSTURE

Indonesia as a "Global Peacemaker"

The transcripts portray Indonesia as a nation moving away from a purely reactive foreign policy toward one of "strategic projection." By participating in the [Board of Peace](#) and hosting bilateral meetings in D.C., Indonesia is attempting to lead a "middle power" bloc that can mediate between the US, Russia, and the Middle East. The frequent mention of [Palestine and global peace](#) serves to bolster Prabowo's domestic legitimacy as a strong Islamic leader while establishing his international credentials as a statesman.

Strategic Economic Nationalism

The "Outside World" is increasingly framed as a source of economic risk, specifically via [tariffs](#) and [foreign-certified halal goods](#) that outcompete local products. In response, Indonesia is weaponizing its massive consumer market by mandating domestic certification standards. This is a defensive posture aimed at securing [tech and industrial sovereignty](#) before global trade routes further fracture.

THE ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT

The Indonesian economy is currently characterized by a robust consumption-led growth phase, bolstered by seasonal religious celebrations, but clouded by long-term dependency on imports for strategic sectors.

- **Inter-regional Mobility:** Inter-regional travel during the Lunar New Year period increased by [10.5% compared to 2025](#), with railways seeing a 4.3% uptick.
- **Halal Industry Targets:** The Ministry of Industry is targeting an 8% GDP contribution from the [halal sector](#), with current growth at approximately 4%.

- **Imlek Economic Impact:** Total money circulation for the Lunar New Year was estimated at [9 trillion IDR](#).
- **Commodity Pressure:** Beef prices in Aceh have risen to [180,000 IDR per kilogram](#) due to increased demand and limited supply during the "Megang" tradition.
- **Energy Transition:** PLN is accelerating the [EV infrastructure rollout](#), with over 4,600 SPKLU units operational as of late 2025.

LEADERSHIP CHANGES

The recent leadership shifts signal a move toward technical expertise and a "disruptive" management style within the Prabowo-Gibran cabinet.

- **Airin Umar (Wamen Ekraf):** Positioned as a [high-performing bureaucratic "bulldozer"](#) from a banking and gaming background, signaling a push for creative industry modernization.
- **Agus Gumiwang Karta Sasmita (Minister of Industry):** Dominating the [industrial sovereignty narrative](#), focusing on domestic halal raw materials.
- **Pramono Anung (Governor of Jakarta):** Consolidating power through [strict civil order policies](#), positioning himself as a defender of secular-religious harmony.

EDITORIAL POSTURE & STORY HIERARCHY

The editorial focus is heavily tilted toward **National Unity and Harmony**. The "Lead Stories" are consistently about the peaceful coexistence of Imlek and Ramadan celebrations. The second hierarchy is **Strategic Diplomacy**, focusing on Prabowo's

US visit. "Buried Stories" include details on [Aceh's "giant hole" disaster](#) and [global floods](#), which are presented as local or background noise rather than systemic climate failures. The overall tone is **optimistic yet cautionary**, using "Fire Horse" astrology to deliver a pro-stability message. Notable omissions include any critical analysis of the [potential negative outcomes](#) of the Prabowo-Trump meeting or the specific details of the "Trump Tariffs" being negotiated.

GEOPOLITICAL FRAMING

The transcripts reveal a world divided between stable, culturally rich "peacemakers" and chaotic, aggressive "destabilizers."

COUNTRIES

- **United States:** Portrayed as a powerful but [unpredictable partner](#) whose trade policies (tariffs) present a significant risk to Indonesian stability.
- **China:** Framed as a [highly efficient competitor](#) in the halal sector, possessing a simpler certification process that threatens Indonesian market share.
- **Israel:** Consistently characterized as an [aggressor and violator](#) of international law, specifically regarding "illegal" land seizures in the West Bank.
- **Iran:** Portrayed as a [militarily defiant actor](#) conducting "large-scale" drills and missile tests to counter US pressure.

LEADERS

- **Prabowo Subianto:** Framed as a [decisive global leader](#), respected by both world powers and the common people (via diaspora engagement).

- **Donald Trump:** Implicitly framed as a [transactional and aggressive negotiator](#) whose "Trump Tariffs" are a primary focus of Indonesian concern.
- **Airin Umar:** Framed as a [principled and "agile" reformer](#), capable of navigating the "maze of regulations" to deliver for the youth.

INFORMATION WARFARE ENVIRONMENT

The meta-narrative of the day is **State-Directed Pluralism**. By heavily featuring Imlek celebrations and Islamic Ramadan preparation simultaneously, the media is actively "seeding" the narrative that Indonesia is immune to the sectarianism plaguing the West and the Middle East. There is also a notable **narrative management of the "Fire Horse"** astrology; by framing the year's potential conflicts as "elemental" or "astrological," the state provides a psychological buffer for potential domestic economic or social shocks. The "delta" exists in the [Ramadan date split](#); while presented as "tolerance," it actually reveals a fundamental disagreement over religious authority that the state is struggling to unify under a single "Global Hijri Calendar."

HYPOTHESES AND FUTURE OUTLOOK

- **Religious Standardisation:** The government will likely move toward mandating the [Global Hijri Calendar \(KHGT\)](#) by 2027 to eliminate the social friction caused by differing Ramadan start dates.

- **Trade Retaliation:** If the Prabowo-Trump meeting fails to yield tariff exemptions, Indonesia will likely increase [non-tariff barriers](#) under the guise of "halal sovereignty" against US imports.
- **Technocratic Ascendancy:** Figures like [Airin Umar](#) represent a new class of leaders who will be increasingly used to bypass traditional political hierarchies in the name of "agility."

STRATEGIC FORESIGHT

Short Term (1-4 Weeks): Expect heightened domestic security operations as the [Muhammadiyah and government-recognized Ramadan periods](#) begin. Regional food price spikes in commodities like [beef and chili](#) will test local market resilience.

Medium Term (1-6 Months): The impact of "Trump Tariffs" will become clear; if negotiations in D.C. fail, we may see [capital outflows](#) from Indonesian manufacturing. The first phase of "Agile Governance" reforms in the [Creative Economy ministry](#) will face its first major legislative tests.

Long Term (1-5 Years): Indonesia will likely succeed in positioning itself as a [global halal hub](#) for the OIC region, but this will rely on successfully decoupling its chemical and agricultural supply chains from non-OIC competitors like China.

RISK ASSESSMENT

- **Social Instability from Religious Schisms:** Disagreements over Ramadan start dates can lead to a loss of government mandate. **Triggers:** Visible public conflict between Muhammadiyah and NU followers. **Likelihood:** Moderate. **Impact:** High (Domestic disruption). **Mitigations:** Aggressive promotion of the ["Matlak Tunggal"](#) (Unified Horizon) concept.
- **Trump-Indonesian Trade War:** Imposition of sudden "Trump Tariffs" on Indonesian exports. **Triggers:** Failure of the D.C. meeting to secure a Special Trade Agreement. **Likelihood:** High. **Impact:** Severe (GDP contraction). **Mitigations:** Diversification into [OIC/ASEAN markets](#).
- **Bureaucratic Gridlock:** Failure of "bulldozer" technocrats to bypass old regulations. **Triggers:** Resignation of key reformist leaders like Airin Umar. **Likelihood:** Moderate. **Impact:** Moderate (Stalled growth). **Mitigations:** Presidential decrees to [override outdated statutes](#).
- **Climate-Induced Infrastructure Failure:** Increasing frequency of floods/landslides in critical zones. **Triggers:** A major "Fire Horse" year storm event. **Likelihood:** High. **Impact:** High (Supply chain disruption). **Mitigations:** Investment in [flood-resistant infrastructure](#) in Sumatra and Banten.
- **Middle East Conflict Escalation:** Escalation in Palestine/Iran drawing in middle powers. **Triggers:** Breakdown of the [US-Iran nuclear talks](#) in Geneva. **Likelihood:** Moderate. **Impact:** Severe (Global oil price shock). **Mitigations:** Strengthening the [International "Board of Peace"](#) initiative.

GAPS & BLIND SPOTS

- The specific demands of the ["Trump Tariffs"](#) are not detailed, leaving a gap in understanding what Indonesia might have to concede (e.g., labor standards or raw material export bans).
- There is no mention of the [fiscal cost](#) of deploying 10,000 personnel for seasonal holiday security.
- The transcripts fail to provide a critical view of [Airin Umar's previous political controversies](#), presenting her solely through an "agile reformer" lens.
- The reliance on [astrological framing](#) for political stability obscures real economic policy failures or successes.

CONTRARIAN NARRATIVE SCENARIOS

The "Harmony" is a Mask for Vulnerability

While the media portrays a nation in "harmony," the heavy reliance on state-enforced order (swiping bans, massive security deployments) suggests that the underlying sectarian tensions are actually at an all-time high. The "pluralism" narrative may be a desperate attempt to maintain foreign investor confidence as the [Ramadan date split](#) signals a fraying of the government's cultural control.

Black Swan: The Board of Peace Backfires

Prabowo's attempt to lead a global ["Board of Peace"](#) could alienate traditional Western allies if it is seen as a vehicle for anti-US or anti-Israel sentiment. A "Black Swan" event would be a sudden diplomatic rupture with Washington D.C. following a failed meeting,

leading to Indonesia being labeled as a "hostile" trade partner in the new Trump administration.

RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLICATIONS

For Statecraft/Public Sector:

- Accelerate the legal codification of the [Global Hijri Calendar](#) to ensure future religious and economic synchronization.
- Formalize the "Board of Peace" as an [inter-ministerial agency](#) to prevent it from being purely personality-driven by the President.
- Increase transparency in the [halal certification cost structure](#) to prevent domestic manufacturers from moving operations to China.

For Private Sector/Investors:

- Investors in the property and finance sectors should **hedge against "Fire Horse" volatility**, particularly in the second and third quarters of 2026 as warned by [market analysts](#).
- Companies in the [Creative and AI sectors](#) should prioritize partnerships with the Wamen Ekraf office, which is looking for "agile" showcase projects.
- Manufacturers must prepare for **stricter halal enforcement** on all raw material imports as the state moves toward its "halal sovereign" target.

LEGISLATIVE ROUNDUP

The policy environment is currently dominated by executive orders aimed at social

order and administrative efficiency, with long-term industrial policy taking a front seat.

- **BILLS DISCUSSED/DEBATED: Undang-undang 33 Nomor 2014**, the Halal Product Assurance Law, is being aggressively enforced to [mandate certification](#) for all market entries.
- **HEARINGS & PRESS EVENTS: Governor Pramono Anung's Press Conference** banning [unauthorized raids \(swiping\)](#) during Ramadan to maintain urban stability.
- **HEARINGS & PRESS EVENTS: Minister Agus Gumiwang's Roadmap 2029**, presented to align the [halal industrial sector](#) with the 2045 Golden Indonesia vision.

KEY STORIES

- **Ramadan Commencement Disparity:** Muhammadiyah begins fasting on [February 18](#) based on KHGT, while the government sets February 19.
- **Prabowo's Washington Arrival:** The President meets with [Donald Trump](#) to discuss trade and the "Board of Peace."
- **Sugiono at the UN:** The Foreign Minister advocates for [Palestine and global peace](#) at PBB headquarters in New York.
- **Halal Industry Expansion:** Minister Agus Gumiwang targets [8% GDP contribution](#) from halal exports by 2045.
- **Airin Umar Appointment:** The former mayor is named [Wamen Ekraf](#) to "bulldoze" bureaucratic inefficiencies.
- **Imlek 2577 Celebrations:** Nationwide events mark the [Year of the Fire Horse](#), emphasizing diversity and spending.

- **Aceh "Megang" Tradition:** President Prabowo provides [1,455 cows](#) to flood-affected Aceh residents for holiday rituals.
- **Anti-Swiping Mandate:** Jakarta Governor bans [vigilante raids](#) on eateries during Ramadan.
- **EV Infrastructure Milestone:** PLN and Huawei launch [Ultra-Fast charging](#) units to accelerate the green transition.
- **Aceh Geologic Disaster:** A [giant hole \(80m deep\)](#) in Aceh Tengah threatens local residents, triggered by "erosional piping."
- **Kilauea Eruption:** Hawaii's [volcano erupts](#), sending ash 10,000 meters high, monitored as a global disaster risk.
- **UK/France Flooding:** Extreme weather in [Europe](#) leads to agricultural and residential devastation.
- **Indonesian Crime Reports:** Police uncover an [Iranian-led drug lab](#) in North Jakarta and seize 20 billion IDR in narcotics.
- **US-Iran Tensions:** Iran conducts [missile drills](#) in the Strait of Hormuz amid Geneva nuclear negotiations.

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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