

TODAY'S MEDIA TRENDS

JORDANTV

FEBRUARY 21, 2026

THE GDELT PROJECT



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JORDAN REASSERTS REGIONAL
SOVEREIGNTY AND SOCIAL
WELFARE AMIDST ECONOMIC
DISTRESS AND SHIFTING US
DIPLOMATIC POSTURES.

DAY-AT-A-GLANCE

On February 21, 2026, Jordanian state media focused on a dual-track narrative: maintaining domestic social cohesion through religious-led welfare programs and asserting a sovereign foreign policy in a volatile Middle East. The day was marked by high-level diplomatic outreach to Venezuela and a sharp rebuke of American diplomatic rhetoric regarding Israeli control over the West Bank. Domestically, the government is grappling with a severe agricultural crisis, as olive oil production plummeted by 44%, threatening a cornerstone of the national economy and food security. The state is leveraging its religious institutions, particularly the Ministry of Awqaf and Zakat funds, to provide a visible social safety net for the impoverished and disabled, particularly in the marginalized Badia regions.

Geopolitically, Jordan is navigating a complex landscape defined by the transactional and often contradictory policies of the Trump

administration. While the U.S. continues to pressure Iran through nuclear negotiations in Geneva, Jordan has distanced itself from provocative U.S. diplomatic statements that suggest Israeli hegemony over the region. Concurrently, the domestic narrative is heavily reinforced with themes of "martyrdom" and historical continuity, linking modern military heroes to early Islamic battles to bolster national identity during a period of perceived external threat and internal economic hardship. This convergence of events suggests a state seeking to project stability and principled independence while managing significant structural vulnerabilities in its economy and social order.

MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS

Diplomatic Pivot and Rejection of Annexationist Rhetoric

- Jordan formally [rejected statements](#) by the U.S. Ambassador to Israel suggesting Israeli control over the entire Middle East and the West Bank.
- Foreign Minister Ayman Safadi delivered a message from King Abdullah II to the Venezuelan leadership, signaling a [deepening of bilateral ties](#) and a move toward a more multipolar diplomatic posture.
- Official rhetoric underscored the "illegitimacy" of any moves to annex the West Bank, citing violations of international law and previous U.S. presidential commitments.

The Agricultural Crisis and Economic Headwinds

- National olive oil production [fell by 44%](#) compared to the 2012-2024 average, with only 16,342 tons produced this season.

- The stock market experienced volatility, though it saw a [slight rise](#) in the general index to 3,629 points despite the broader economic gloom.
- The imposition of a [15% comprehensive tariff](#) by the Trump administration was reported as a major factor complicating trade and import costs.

Security and Social Order in the Palestinian Territories

- Palestinian resistance forces have reportedly [regained control](#) over approximately half of the Gaza Strip, deploying local police forces to restore order.
- Israeli forces continue "mopping up" operations in the eastern areas, including the Bureij camp, amidst a dire humanitarian situation.
- Jordanian media highlighted the absence of Ramadan celebrations in Gaza due to the ongoing aggression and humanitarian crisis.

State-Led Social Welfare and Religious Governance

- The Ministry of Awqaf launched a high-profile [intervention for disabled citizens](#) in the Badia region, providing infrastructure, medical support, and financial aid.
- Zakat funds and Islamic banking were heavily promoted as the [primary vehicles](#) for social justice and economic relief for the "martyrs" and the poor.
- The state mandated a comprehensive plan for mosques during Ramadan, including the appointment of 150 personnel to oversee religious and social services.

KEY GOVERNANCE TOPICS

Diplomacy & Statecraft

- The King's outreach to Venezuela serves as a [strategic hedge](#) against regional isolation and a signal of discontent with specific U.S. diplomatic directions.
- Jordanian officials emphasized that the embassy in Damascus remains a [focal point](#) for regional stabilization efforts, despite U.S. intentions to move personnel there permanently.

Food & Water Security

- The [sharp decline](#) in olive oil production—a vital export and local staple—represents a significant threat to rural livelihoods and national food sovereignty.
- The government is calling for "proactive plans" for future agricultural seasons to mitigate the effects of climate change and fluctuating rainfall.

Armed Conflict & Militarization

- Security forces reported the [apprehension of an 13-member terrorist cell](#) involved in drug trafficking, illustrating the persistent link between organized crime and regional instability.
- Military "martyrs" were glorified in a specialized program, [linking modern soldiers](#) to the historical Battle of Mu'tah to maintain public support for the security apparatus.

DEEP DIVE: TRENDS AND THEMES

The "Martyrdom" Narrative as a Social Glue

There is a concerted effort by state media to weave a narrative of historical and religious sacrifice. By highlighting historical figures like Jafar ibn Abi Talib alongside modern soldiers like Khader Shokri Abu Darwish, the state is [cultivating a culture of resilience](#). This narrative serves to distract from economic failures by framing the current hardships as part of a long, honorable struggle for the homeland and the faith. It also reinforces the legitimacy of the monarchy and the military in the eyes of a conservative populace.

Resistance and Governance in Gaza

A notable shift in reporting suggests that the "resistance" in Gaza is transitioning from purely military operations back into [civil governance](#). The deployment of "local police" in half the strip indicates a failure of Israeli forces to maintain administrative control or establish an alternative governance structure. This development points toward a protracted stalemate where the resistance maintains its social and administrative roots despite overwhelming military pressure.

INTERNAL DYNAMICS & DOMESTIC INSTABILITY

Jordan's domestic stability appears to rely heavily on paternalistic state interventions. The [case of Abu Muhammad](#), a disabled man in the Badia whose home was renovated by the state, is used as a powerful propaganda tool to demonstrate that the government "cares" for its most vulnerable citizens. However, the underlying economic data—rising costs, new tariffs, and failing crops—suggests that these individual cases of charity may not be sufficient to offset broader systemic decay. The heavy emphasis on Zakat and religious charity suggests the state is increasingly outsourcing social welfare to

religious institutions, which may strengthen those institutions' political influence at the expense of secular state capacity.

EXTERNAL DYNAMICS & GLOBAL POSTURE

Jordan is portraying the international system as increasingly chaotic and unreliable, primarily due to inconsistent U.S. policy. The framing of the U.S. Ambassador's comments as "absurd" and "provocative" shows a growing rift between Amman and certain factions of the Trump administration. Jordan is adapting by seeking "multipolar" partnerships, as evidenced by the [rapprochement with Venezuela](#) and maintaining open lines with Iran through regional intermediaries like Lebanon. The state is projecting a "principled defense" posture, positioning itself as the guardian of international law and the Palestinian cause in a world that is seen as abandoning both.

THE ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT

The economic environment is characterized by inflationary pressures and significant agricultural contraction, mitigated only by slight gains in the stock market and a stable gold price.

- **Agricultural Output:** Olive oil production fell to [16,342 tons](#), a 44% decrease from historic averages.
- **Trade Policy:** A new [15% tariff](#) imposed by the U.S. is expected to increase import costs across the board.
- **Market Sentiment:** The Amman Stock Exchange saw a [volume of 55 million JOD](#) traded, with 43 companies rising and 68 declining, indicating significant market skittishness.

- **Commodities:** Global gold prices are at [5,104 USD per ounce](#), while local prices for 24k gold hit 118 JOD per gram.

LEADERSHIP CHANGES

The transcripts indicate no major personnel changes, but they highlight the strategic positioning of several key figures.

- **King Abdullah II:** Asserting [personal diplomatic leadership](#) through direct messages to world leaders (Venezuela) and oversight of domestic welfare.
- **Ayman Safadi (Foreign Minister):** Acting as the [primary voice of Jordanian resistance](#) to U.S.-Israeli annexation plans.
- **Donald Trump (U.S. President):** Portrayed as an unpredictable figure whose [contradictory policies](#) (supporting West Bank annexation while claiming to seek peace) are a source of regional instability.

EDITORIAL POSTURE & STORY HIERARCHY

JordanTV maintains a tone of "managed crisis." The lead stories are consistently diplomatic (the King's activities) or religious-nationalistic. Significant negative economic news, such as the olive oil collapse, is framed within a "technical" economic segment to minimize its emotional impact. Domestic poverty is addressed through "feel-good" stories of individual charity, distracting from the systemic nature of the issue. A conspicuous omission is any detailed discussion of the specific terms of the Iran nuclear negotiations in Geneva, which are mentioned only in passing as having "limited progress." The channel's tone is reassuring and nationalistic, designed to bolster state legitimacy.

GEOPOLITICAL FRAMING

Jordanian media frames the world as a place where Jordan is a "stable island" surrounded by "chaotic actors."

- **Israel:** Framed as an [aggressive, occupying power](#) that is "provocative" and dismissive of international law.
- **The United States:** Portrayed as **internally conflicted** and "unpredictable," with a disconnect between its leadership and its diplomatic envoys.
- **Iran:** Seen as a **calculated negotiator** that "will not bow" to external pressure but remains open to "balanced agreements."
- **Venezuela:** Framed as a [resilient partner](#) and a target for Jordan's diplomatic diversification efforts.

INFORMATION WARFARE ENVIRONMENT

The Jordanian state is actively shaping a narrative of "social solidarity." By televising the [restoration of a single house](#) in the Badia, they seed the narrative that the state is omnipresent and benevolent. Simultaneously, there is a clear "meta-narrative" regarding the West Bank, where Jordanian media is aggressively countering what it perceives as U.S. disinformation regarding Israeli "rights" to annexation. The use of theological discussions on human creation [serves as a soft power tool](#) to reinforce traditional values and religious identity as the ultimate defense against secular or foreign ideological encroachment.

HYPOTHESES AND FUTURE OUTLOOK

- The 44% decline in olive oil production will likely lead to **significant rural unrest** or a sharp increase in the cost of living by mid-2026 as reserves are depleted.
- Jordan will continue to **quietly expand its diplomatic circle** toward non-Western powers (like Venezuela) to offset the perceived unreliability of the U.S. alliance.
- The deployment of police by resistance forces in Gaza suggests that **Hamas-aligned governance will persist** post-conflict, regardless of Israeli military declarations.

STRATEGIC FORESIGHT

Short Term (1-4 Weeks): Expect heightened social tension as Ramadan begins, particularly if food prices spike due to the agricultural crisis. The government will likely announce more tax exemptions or subsidies to preemptively quiet descent.

Medium Term (1-6 Months): Jordan may formalize new trade agreements with South American or Asian partners. The impact of the 15% U.S. tariff will start to show in national GDP figures, potentially forcing a budget realignment.

Long Term (1-5 Years): A structural shift toward a more religious-centric social safety net could lead to a "hollowing out" of secular state institutions, potentially creating a long-term challenge to the monarchy's absolute authority if religious leaders gain too much popular control over welfare.

RISK ASSESSMENT

- **Economic Collapse in Rural Sectors:** The massive drop in olive oil production threatens thousands of livelihoods. **Triggers:** Persistent drought or failure of state subsidies to reach farmers. **Likelihood:** High. **Impact:** High (civil unrest and mass migration to cities). **Mitigations:** Immediate emergency financial aid to the agricultural sector and proactive water management reform.
- **Regional War Escalation:** Provocative annexationist rhetoric could ignite a new Intifada or regional conflict. **Triggers:** Formal Israeli declaration of annexation or a major settlement expansion. **Likelihood:** Moderate. **Impact:** Extreme (total regional destabilization). **Mitigations:** International diplomatic pressure on Israel and U.S. policy clarification.
- **Resurgence of Terrorist Cells:** The 13-member cell arrest indicates persistent vulnerabilities. **Triggers:** Economic desperation in border regions. **Likelihood:** Moderate. **Impact:** Moderate (localized attacks). **Mitigations:** Enhanced border security and economic development programs for the Badia.
- **Food Insecurity Inflation:** Rising costs for staples. **Triggers:** U.S. tariffs combined with local crop failure. **Likelihood:** High. **Impact:** High (public anger). **Mitigations:** Diversifying import sources and price controls on essential goods.

- **Nuclear Negotiation Failure:** The "limited progress" in Geneva could lead to increased regional tension. **Triggers:** Breakdown of talks between the U.S. and Iran. **Likelihood:** Moderate. **Impact:** High (increased proxy conflicts). **Mitigations:** Sustained diplomatic engagement and regional de-escalation channels.

GAPS & BLIND SPOTS

- The media failed to discuss the specific **funding sources** for the expansive Zakat programs, leaving questions about their long-term sustainability and transparency.
- There is a total lack of **Israeli perspectives** or official justifications for their military actions, leading to a one-sided assessment of regional security risks.
- The report on "local police" in Gaza does not specify the **command structure** or their relationship to Hamas, which is critical for understanding future governance.
- The "successes" of the Amman Stock Exchange were reported without accounting for **inflationary erosion** of real capital value.

CONTRARIAN NARRATIVE SCENARIOS

- **The "Charity Facade":** The high-profile welfare cases (like Abu Muhammad) are not evidence of state strength but are actually desperate attempts to hide the fact that the state is **losing control** of rural areas to local tribes or religious groups.

- **The U.S. "Good Cop/Bad Cop":** The contradictory U.S. statements (Ambassador vs. President) are not accidental but a deliberate strategy to keep regional actors off-balance while advancing a pre-planned annexation agenda.
- **Black Swan - The Olive Oil Famine:** If the 44% production drop is followed by another failure next year, Jordan could face a **collapse of its rural credit system**, leading to a sudden, catastrophic failure of its domestic banking sector that serves the agricultural industry.

RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLICATIONS

For Statecraft/Public Sector:

- Jordan should accelerate its **diplomatic "Plan B"** by seeking security guarantees or economic partnerships outside the traditional U.S.-UK orbit.
- The government must integrate **climate resilience** into its national security strategy, as agricultural failure is now a primary driver of instability.
- Increase monitoring of **religious-led welfare networks** to ensure they do not become "states within a state."

For Private Sector/Investors:

- **Supply Chain Risk:** Diversify away from local Jordanian olive and agricultural products for the next 12-24 months due to severe supply shortages.
- **Regulatory Compliance:** Prepare for new **import/export complexities** resulting from the 15% U.S. tariffs and potential retaliatory measures by Jordan.

- **Investment Opportunity:** Significant capital is needed in **desalination and irrigation tech** in Jordan, as the agricultural crisis is structural and long-term.

LEGISLATIVE ROUNDUP

Legislative activity focused on tax relief and domestic aid, aimed at mitigating economic pressure on citizens.

- **BILLS DISCUSSED/DEBATED:** A [tax exemption proposal](#) was approved by the House of Representatives to waive income and sales taxes for specific consumer groups.
- **HEARINGS & PRESS EVENTS:** The Ministry of Awqaf held a [briefing on Ramadan preparations](#), detailing a 150-person deployment to ensure religious and social order during the holy month.

KEY STORIES

- **Jordan-Venezuela Diplomatic Outreach:** Foreign Minister Ayman Safadi delivers a royal message to Venezuela to discuss economic and political cooperation.
- **Rejection of US Annexation Rhetoric:** Jordanian officials [strongly condemn](#) the U.S. Ambassador to Israel's comments on West Bank control.
- **Gaza Resistance Control:** Resistance forces reportedly [reclaim 50% of Gaza](#) and deploy local police.
- **Olive Oil Production Collapse:** Production fell by 44% to [16,342 tons](#) due to climate factors.
- **Terrorist Cell Apprehension:** Security forces [arrest 13 members](#) of an armed cell involved in drug smuggling in the Badia.

- **Awqaf Social Intervention:** The state [renovates the home](#) of a disabled man (Abu Muhammad) as part of a national welfare program.
- **Amman Stock Market Report:** Market index [rises slightly](#) to 3,629 points despite a 15% global tariff impact.
- **Iran-US Geneva Negotiations:** Talks on the nuclear file [show limited progress](#) with Trump administration negotiators.
- **Heroic Martyr Recognition:** A program [glorifies 1968 war hero](#) Khader Shokri Abu Darwish alongside historical figures.
- **Embryology and Faith Segment:** A detailed [theological-medical lecture](#) on the stages of human development according to the Quran.
- **Zakat Fund Promotion:** Promoting Islamic banking and Zakat as solutions to [poverty and orphans' needs](#).

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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omissions. Please verify all findings. No data is used to train or tune any AI model.

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