

TODAY'S MEDIA TRENDS

METROTV

FEBRUARY 21, 2026

THE GDELT PROJECT

INDONESIA'S DUAL-TRACK STRATEGY: PROJECTING GLOBAL POWER AMIDST DOMESTIC FRAGILITY & WIDENING GEOPOLITICAL CONFLICT

A visual narrative of Indonesia's high-stakes balancing act in February 2026, as outlined in the report.

GLOBAL POWER PROJECTION: PEACEKEEPING & INVESTMENT DRIVE



Leveraging high-level U.S. engagements for massive investment deals, centralized under the new Danantara agency (Rp 649 trillion goal), prioritizing renewable energy, AI, and digital economy.



Committing 800 peacekeepers to Gaza and assuming a deputy command role, elevating diplomatic influence as a key security architect in the Middle East, contingent on a ceasefire.

VOLATILE GEOPOLITICAL ENVIRONMENT & EXTERNAL RISKS



U.S. signals shift to military options against Iran; Iran-Russia conduct joint naval maneuvers, raising maritime trade disruption risks.

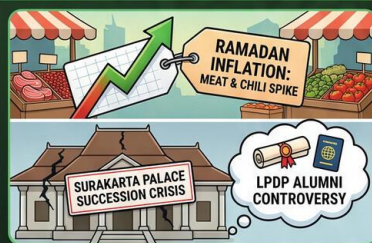


U.S. Supreme Court ruling overturns reciprocal tariffs, forcing Indonesia to renegotiate trade terms (textiles, agriculture) and introducing significant uncertainty.



Ukraine utilizes long-range missiles to strike Russian defense industrial heartland.

DOMESTIC INSTITUTIONAL FRAGILITY & ECONOMIC PRESSURE



Start of Ramadan triggers sharp staple food price inflation. Institutional controversies (Palace succession, LPDP) and natural disasters (floods in Java/Sumatra) strain internal cohesion.



High-profile crime syndicates (gold laundering, online gambling) and corruption erode state capacity, requiring robust intervention. Infrastructure resilience failures (bridge collapse, train collision) highlight systemic risks.

FUTURE OUTLOOK & STRATEGIC FORESIGHT

SHORT TERM (1-4 Weeks):

Stabilize Prices, Monitor Gulf

Intense pressure to control Ramadan inflation; potential military skirmishes affecting trade.

MEDIUM TERM (1-6 Months):

Formalize U.S. Trade Treaty, Deploy ISF
Push for formal trade agreements; initial peacekeeper deployment to Rafah, testing operational command.

LONG TERM (1-5 Years):

Danantara as Wealth Fund, Structural Reform
Evolve Danantara into a major sovereign wealth fund; potential reform of LPDP towards 'Civil Service First' model.



RISK CONVERGENCE: Middle East war, supply chain ruptures, and institutional backlash present a high-risk profile for the immediate future.

TODAY'S MEDIA TRENDS

METROTV

FEBRUARY 21, 2026

INDONESIA PROJECTING GLOBAL
POWER AND SECURING
INVESTMENT AMIDST WIDENING
MIDDLE EAST CONFLICT AND
DOMESTIC INSTITUTIONAL
FRAGILITY

DAY-AT-A-GLANCE

February 21, 2026, marks a pivotal moment for Indonesia's global posture, characterized by a dual-track strategy of aggressive economic diplomacy and military-stabilization projection. President Prabowo Subianto is leveraging high-level engagements in Washington D.C. and London to secure [multi-billion dollar investment commitments](#), while simultaneously positioning Indonesia as a lead architect in Middle East security through a [deputy commander role](#) in the International Stabilization Forces (ISF) for Gaza. This projection of strength abroad is juxtaposed against a domestic landscape strained by seasonal economic pressures, natural disasters, and institutional controversies that threaten internal cohesion.

The administration's foreign policy achievements, including a [massive \\$38.4 billion investment MOU](#) with U.S. businesses,

face immediate headwinds from external geopolitical volatility. U.S. President Donald Trump's signaled shift toward [military options against Tehran](#) and a Supreme Court ruling [invalidating reciprocal tariffs](#) introduce significant uncertainty into Indonesia's strategic trade calculations. Domestically, the start of Ramadan has triggered sharp [inflation in staple food prices](#) and widespread flooding, which, combined with high-profile crime syndicates in [illegal gold mining](#) and online gambling, creates a complex risk environment requiring robust state intervention.

MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS

Global Investment Drive and the Danantara Initiative

- Indonesia secured a [monumental \\$38.4 billion \(Rp 649 trillion\)](#) investment commitment during a roundtable summit in Washington.
- The establishment of the **Danantara** investment agency is being framed as a [critical vehicle for deregulation](#), easing investor concerns and centralizing capital management.
- Investment sectors prioritized include [renewable energy, AI, and digital economy](#), signaling a push toward high-tech self-sufficiency.

Escalating Conflict and Peacekeeping Projection

- Indonesia has committed [800 peacekeepers to Gaza](#), assuming a deputy command role in the ISF, a significant escalation of its regional diplomatic influence.

- The U.S. administration under Donald Trump is [threatening military strikes against Iran](#) if nuclear concessions are not met within 10 days.
- Iran and Russia responded with [joint naval maneuvers](#) in the Gulf of Oman, raising the risk of maritime trade disruptions.

Institutional and Social Friction

- A national controversy erupted over the [LPDP scholarship program](#) after an alumni's child took foreign citizenship, sparking debates over nationalistic obligations and state-funded brain drain.
- The [succession crisis at the Surakarta Palace](#) remains unresolved despite government mediation, highlighting the persistent power of traditional elite structures to disrupt local stability.
- Bareskrim Polri uncovered a [Rp 25.8 trillion gold laundering](#) operation tied to illegal mining, exposing deep-seated corruption in the mineral supply chain.

KEY GOVERNANCE TOPICS

Armed Conflict & Militarization

- Foreign Minister Sugiono confirmed that Indonesia's [peacekeeping mandate in Gaza](#) is contingent on a sustainable ceasefire and has received Palestinian consent.
- Ukraine utilized [long-range cruise missiles](#) to strike Russia's defense industrial heartland in the Udmurt Republic.

Macroeconomics & Trade

- The U.S. Supreme Court's [overturning of reciprocal tariffs](#) forces Indonesia to renegotiate trade terms, with Jakarta pushing to maintain [0% tariff rates](#) on textiles and agriculture.

- Ramadan meat prices in Aceh have hit [Rp 180,000 per kilogram](#), prompting concerns over food security and potential social unrest.

Legal Warfare & Regulatory Risk

- Human Rights Minister Natalius Pigai is [fast-tracking revisions to the HAM Law](#) to empower Komnas HAM with direct investigative units for gross violations.
- The Ministry of Agriculture conducted [unannounced inspections \(sidak\)](#) of markets to combat price gouging by distributors during the holy month.

DEEP DIVE: TRENDS AND THEMES

Strategic Non-Alignment and Economic Realism

Indonesia is attempting a high-wire balancing act: courting American capital while maintaining a leadership role in the Islamic world's security concerns. The [\\$38.4 billion MOU](#) suggests a deepening reliance on U.S. private sector ties, yet the [Gaza deployment](#) signals that Jakarta will not remain a passive observer in geopolitical crises. This "active-independent" policy is being tested by the Trump administration's unpredictable trade and military policies, forcing Indonesia to seek formal treaties to [lock in economic gains](#) before they are swept away by U.S. domestic court rulings.

The Weaponization of Nationalist Sentiment

A growing trend of populist nationalism is visible in the [backlash against the LPDP alumni](#). The state is increasingly under pressure to enforce "moral and nationalistic" returns on investment for its citizens. This

sentiment is being utilized by politicians to push for stricter [screening and post-study monitoring](#), which could inadvertently discourage the global mobility of Indonesian talent if not handled with care.

Infrastructure Resilience as a National Security Prerequisite

From the [airport train collision in Tangerang](#) to the [collapse of a newly built bridge in Aceh](#), the day's reports highlight a systemic failure in infrastructure safety and maintenance. The frequent [flooding across Java and Sumatra](#) further reveals that rapid urbanization is outpacing drainage and flood-mitigation capacity. For the Prabowo administration, the inability to secure domestic infrastructure may eventually undermine its credibility as a stable destination for the [massive foreign investments](#) it is currently soliciting.

INTERNAL DYNAMICS & DOMESTIC INSTABILITY

Indonesia's domestic stability is currently challenged by institutional decay within traditional and modern structures. The [Surakarta Palace succession](#) drama is more than a cultural curiosity; it represents a failure of conflict resolution within a significant traditional elite group, complicating the government's cultural preservation goals. Concurrently, the [LPDP controversy](#) indicates a disconnect between the state's elite-education goals and the public's perception of national loyalty, suggesting a thinning of the social contract regarding state-funded benefits.

Crime and corruption continue to erode state capacity. The discovery of a [Rp 25.8 trillion laundering case](#) involving illegal gold highlights the difficulty of regulating the informal and extractive economies. These

domestic vulnerabilities—infrastructure failures, elite infighting, and grand-scale financial crime—are likely driving the government's aggressive pursuit of [foreign investment and diplomatic wins](#) as a way to project competence and secure the capital necessary for large-scale domestic restructuring.

EXTERNAL DYNAMICS & GLOBAL POSTURE

The broadcasts portray a world entering a phase of high-risk confrontation. The "outside world" is framed as a volatile threat matrix—marked by [U.S.-Iran military posturing](#), the [Ukraine-Russia escalation](#), and the [Gaza humanitarian catastrophe](#). In response, Indonesia is adopting a more assertive "security provider" role rather than just a diplomatic facilitator. By accepting a [deputy command position in Gaza](#), Jakarta is significantly raising its stakes in the Middle East, likely seeking to become the primary bridge between Western security interests and Global South/Islamic solidarities.

THE ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT

The Indonesian economy is currently navigating a period of sharp Ramadan-induced inflation while attempting to integrate into the U.S. high-tech supply chain. Market sentiment is cautiously optimistic regarding the [new \\$38.4 billion investment deals](#), but remains vulnerable to U.S. regulatory shifts and domestic supply shocks in the agricultural sector.

Key Economic Vectors:

- **Foreign Direct Investment: \$38.4 billion in MOUs** across mining, energy, and AI sectors.

- **Commodity Prices:** Daging (beef) has reached [Rp 180,000/kg](#) in Aceh; Red chili peppers spiked to [Rp 150,000/kg](#) in Jakarta.
- **Trade Policy:** Uncertainty following the [U.S. Supreme Court tariff ruling](#), impacting Indonesia's textile and semiconductor export strategy.
- **Financial Crime:** [Rp 25.8 trillion \(approx. \\$1.6 billion\)](#) in gold-related money laundering uncovered.
- **Social Infrastructure:** New [leadership appointments for BPJS Ketenagakerjaan](#) to expand coverage to informal workers.

LEADERSHIP CHANGES

The day's events highlight a significant reshuffling of power and responsibility in key state-aligned institutions and diplomatic missions.

- **Prabowo Subianto (Winner):** Solidified his status as a [global statesman and deal-maker](#), effectively centralizing Indonesian investment policy through Danantara.
- **Saiful Hidayat (Promotion):** Appointed as [President Director of BPJS Ketenagakerjaan](#), a role crucial for managing the social safety net during the current economic volatility.
- **Pangeran Puruboyo (Under Fire):** His appointment as [Solo Palace heir](#) continues to be contested by the LDA, leaving the traditional leadership in limbo.
- **Donald Trump (Disruptor):** Portrayed as a [volatile factor](#) whose military and trade decisions are the primary source of external risk for Indonesian interests.

EDITORIAL POSTURE & STORY HIERARCHY

The network's editorial strategy focuses on a narrative of **Indonesia Triumphant** abroad versus **Indonesia Threatened** at home. Prabowo's investment mission and the Gaza peacekeeping role are the top priorities, consistently presented with a nationalistic and optimistic tone. Conversely, crime stories (online gambling, gold laundering, child murder) are used to maintain a sense of urgency and support for "firm" policing. Conspicuous omissions include any meaningful criticism of the [Gaza deployment's risk to Indonesian troops](#) or a deep analysis of why the [Aceh bridge collapsed](#) just one day after being handed over. The emotional tone is reassuring regarding the top-level leadership but alarmist regarding the "moral decay" of citizens who move abroad or engage in crime.

GEOPOLITICAL FRAMING

The current geopolitical map is framed as a series of hotspots where Indonesia acts as the rational, stabilizing middle power.

COUNTRIES

- **United States:** Portrayed as a **chaotic but essential partner**. The administration under Trump is viewed as inept in its legal trade mechanisms ("deeply disappointing" court rulings) but strong and threatening in its military posture toward Iran. ["Iran is a hotspot right now... not easy to make meaningful deals."](#)
- **Iran:** Framed as a **defiant and cornered actor**. Portrayed as choosing military drills with Russia over diplomatic concessions. ["Iran and Russia hold joint military exercises in the Sea of Oman."](#)

- **Palestine/Gaza:** Portrayed as a **zone of extreme suffering and resilience**, looking to Indonesia for salvation and stability. ["Ramadan in Gaza this year is a lesson for the world in steadfastness."](#)

LEADERS

- **Donald Trump:** Portrayed as a **unilateralist** who prioritizes "U.S. right" over international consensus, even at the cost of his own trade treaties. ["Ashamed for not having the courage to do what's right for our country."](#)
- **Prabowo Subianto:** Portrayed as **tireless and visionary**. His schedule is described as an "endless marathon" of securing Indonesia's future. ["A productive meeting... yielding definite results not yet announced."](#)

INFORMATION WARFARE ENVIRONMENT

The primary information warfare battlefield is domestic nationalism. The **meta-narrative** of the day is the "National Responsibility" of the elite. The intense media focus on the [LPDP alumni scandal](#) appears to be a seeded narrative to justify tighter control over the "Dana Abadi" (Endowment Fund) and to distract from systemic infrastructure failures. There is also a clear **psychological operation** in the framing of the U.S. investment deals; by touting "trillions of rupiah" in potential gains, the government is building an image of economic inevitability to suppress anxiety about [soaring meat and chili prices](#) during Ramadan.

HYPOTHESES AND FUTURE OUTLOOK

- If the U.S. executes a "limited strike" on Iran, global oil prices will likely trigger an immediate fiscal crisis for Indonesia's fuel subsidy regime, potentially negating the [investment gains](#) from the D.C. trip.
- The deployment of [peacekeepers to Gaza](#) will lead to a permanent shift in Indonesia's defense doctrine toward more active international interventionism.
- The [food inflation](#) at the start of Ramadan, if not controlled by the current "sidak" tactics, will lead to localized "stomach protests" or market riots by late March.

STRATEGIC FORESIGHT

Short Term (1-4 Weeks):

- Intense pressure on the [Ministry of Agriculture](#) to stabilize food prices as Ramadan progresses.
- Possible military skirmishes in the [Gulf of Oman](#) affecting maritime insurance rates.

Medium Term (1-6 Months):

- Formalization of the [U.S.-Indonesia trade treaty](#) through Congressional/DPR channels to bypass U.S. court restrictions.
- Initial deployment phase of the [ISF in Rafah](#), testing Indonesia's operational command capabilities.

Long Term (1-5 Years):

- Danantara evolving into a [Sovereign Wealth Fund](#) comparable to Temasek or GIC, centralizing Indonesia's economic power.

- Potential structural reform of the [LPDP program](#), shifting from academic freedom to a "Civil Service First" model.

RISK ASSESSMENT

The convergence of external military threats and domestic logistical failures presents a high-risk profile for the second quarter of 2026.

- **Middle East Regional War:** Triggered by U.S. or Israeli strikes on Iran; Likelihood: Moderate-High; Impact: Severe (Energy shock, troop danger in Gaza); Mitigation: Continued back-channel diplomacy via [Board of Peace](#).
- **Supply Chain Rupture:** Triggered by continued [flooding and bridge collapses](#) during peak Ramadan demand; Likelihood: High; Impact: Moderate-High; Mitigation: Accelerating [bridge rehabilitations](#) by TNI Zeni units.
- **Institutional Backlash:** Triggered by public anger over [perceived elite privilege \(LPDP\)](#) while common food prices soar; Likelihood: Moderate; Impact: Moderate (Social order); Mitigation: Stricter [monitoring and public audits](#).
- **Maritime Trade Disruptions:** Triggered by [Iran-Russia naval posturing](#) in the Oman Sea; Likelihood: Moderate; Impact: High; Mitigation: Strategic reserves and alternative shipping routes.
- **Infrastructure Catastrophe:** Triggered by [airport rail safety failures](#) during high-volume Lebaran travel; Likelihood: Moderate; Impact: High (Political fallout); Mitigation: Urgent [safety evaluations of crossings](#).

GAPS & BLIND SPOTS

- The transcripts do not explain the **actual legality** of Indonesia's Gaza mission under the UN charter vs. the "Board of Peace" framework.
- There is a lack of information on the **concessions** Indonesia gave to secure the \$38.4 billion MOU—specifically regarding mineral rights or environmental standards.
- The **contingency plan** for the 800 peacekeepers if the "Swiss Fire" (ceasefire) collapses into full-scale urban combat is entirely absent.
- The financial **underpinnings of Danantara** and how it will avoid the transparency pitfalls of previous wealth fund attempts are not detailed.

CONTRARIAN NARRATIVE SCENARIOS

- **The "Investment Mirage":** The \$38.4 billion in MOUs are non-binding "hope" documents meant to prop up the Rupiah during Ramadan. In reality, capital is fleeing the region due to the [looming Iran-U.S. conflict](#), and the flashy announcements are a psychological backstop.
- **The "Peacekeeper Hostages":** The ISF mission in Gaza is a **strategic trap**. Indonesia is being pushed into a deputy command role so that the U.S. can outsource the "body bag" risk of a messy occupation, potentially leading to domestic instability if Indonesian troops are targeted.

- **Black Swan - The "Palace Coup":** If the Surakarta succession conflict [cannot be resolved](#), a rival claimant might seek support from hardline religious factions, turning a localized royal spat into a broader national identity crisis during the height of Ramadan.

RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLICATIONS

For Statecraft/Public Sector:

- **Security:** Immediately enhance the "rules of engagement" training for the [800 Gaza-bound troops](#), prioritizing asymmetric warfare defense.
- **Economic:** Leverage the [Danantara agency](#) to create a "Critical Mineral Fund" to hedge against trade volatility from U.S. court rulings.
- **Diplomatic:** Use the upcoming Turkey trip to forge a secondary security alliance in the event the [U.S.-led Board of Peace](#) fails.

For Private Sector/Investors:

- **Supply Chain:** Diversify logistics routes away from [flood-prone Karawang/Bekasi](#) industrial hubs; invest in "private bridge" solutions for rural mining sites.
- **Regulatory:** Prepare for [stricter reporting requirements](#) as Danantara centralizes industry oversight.
- **Safety:** Multinationals operating in Java must conduct independent audits of [railway crossings](#) and worker transport infrastructure to avoid liability.

LEGISLATIVE ROUNDUP

Government efforts are currently focused on institutional strengthening of human rights

and investment governance, while navigating the fallout of international trade decisions.

• **BILLS DISCUSSED/DEBATED:**

- **HAM Law Revision:** Aimed at creating [special investigative units](#) within Komnas HAM to handle gross violations.
- **US-Indonesia Trade Treaty:** A proposed bilateral agreement to stabilize [tariff rates at 0-10%](#) following the U.S. Supreme Court ruling.

• **HEARINGS & PRESS EVENTS:**

- **Board of Peace D.C. Presser:** Minister Sugiono and representatives from Palestine [confirmed the ISF mandate](#).
- **Danantara CEO Briefing:** Pandu Sjahrir and Rosan Roeslani [outlined the \\$38.4B investment roadmap](#).

KEY STORIES

- **Prabowo's \$38.4 Billion U.S. Investment Deal:** President Prabowo Subianto met with 12 world-class CEOs in Washington D.C., securing massive MOUs for Danantara in sectors ranging from AI to mining ([Source](#)).
- **Indonesia's Gaza Peacekeeping Mandate:** Indonesia is named deputy commander of the International Stabilization Forces, preparing to send 800 personnel to Gaza ([Source](#)).
- **U.S.-Iran Conflict Warning:** President Trump gives Tehran a 10-day ultimatum on nuclear deals before considering "military options" ([Source](#)).
- **Rp 25.8 Trillion Gold Laundering Bust:** Bareskrim Polri investigates massive money laundering linked to illegal gold mining in Surabaya and Nganjuk ([Source](#)).

- **LPDP Alumni Citizenship Scandal:** Public outrage after an LPDP recipient's child was registered as a British citizen, triggering debates on scholarship accountability ([Source](#)).
- **Surakarta Palace Succession Standoff:** Internal conflict over the naming of Pangeran Puruboyo as heir persists despite government mediation ([Source](#)).
- **Airport Train Crossing Collision:** A Soekarno-Hatta airport train hit a container truck in Tangerang, dragging it 300 meters; no fatalities but significant damage ([Source](#)).
- **Ramadan Food Price Spikes:** Meat reaches Rp 180k/kg in Aceh; red chilies hit Rp 150k/kg in Jakarta markets ([Source](#), [Source](#)).
- **Ukraine Strikes Russian Defense Plant:** Long-range Ukrainian missiles targeted the Fortkensk missile factory in Russia ([Source](#)).
- **Nationwide Flooding and Infrastructure Failure:** Widespread flooding in Karawang (2m deep), Bekasi, and Samarinda; a new bridge in Aceh collapsed one day after handover ([Source](#), [Source](#)).
- **HAM Law Modernization:** Minister Natalius Pigai proposes new Ham Law and Komnas HAM investigative powers for 2027 ([Source](#)).
- **Online Gambling Syndicate Bust:** Medan police uncover a "home-based" online gambling headquarters providing phones for players ([Source](#)).
- **Child Murder in Sukabumi:** A 12-year-old boy (N.S.) died from severe burns after allegedly being scalded with boiling water by his stepmother ([Source](#)).
- **New BPJS Leadership:** Saiful Hidayat inaugurated as the new head of BPJS Ketenagakerjaan ([Source](#)).
- **Iran-Russia Naval Exercises:** Joint military maneuvers in the Sea of Oman in response to U.S. threats ([Source](#)).
- **Laotse Mosque Architecture:** Feature on the oriental-styled Chinese mosque in Bandung during Ramadan ([Source](#)).
- **U.S. Tariff Overturned:** Supreme Court cancels Trump's reciprocal tariffs, impacting global trade treaties ([Source](#)).
- **Albania Political Unrest:** Protests in the capital with molotov cocktails thrown at police over corruption allegations ([Source](#)).
- **Argentina School Bombing:** Four injured in a bomb blast at a military school in Buenos Aires ([Source](#)).
- **Illegal Gold Processing Sidak:** Police search properties in Surabaya used for storing illegal mining gold ([Source](#)).
- **Bekasi TransJakarta Expansion:** New bus stops planned for Jatiasih route to reduce congestion ([Source](#)).
- **Surakarta Palace Audit Request:** Government calls for a full audit of palace grant funds amid leadership dispute ([Source](#)).
- **Gendarmerie School Bombing:** A bomb package exploded at a security forces school in Argentina ([Source](#)).
- **Human Trafficking (TPPO) in NTT:** 13 girls from Bandung rescued from a nightclub in Sika, East Nusa Tenggara ([Source](#)).
- **Medan Bubur Pedas Tradition:** Feature on the Delhi Sultanate's spicy porridge charity during Ramadan ([Source](#)).

ABOUT THIS REPORT

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

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

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

By helping journalists and scholars see the broader trends and patterns of global news coverage, this analysis helps them identify relevant stories and coverage they might not otherwise have encountered and uncover connections, emphases and narrative shifts that enable more comprehensive reporting and deeper, evidence-based research.

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

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