Introducing another week of Future Trends — tracking current global news stories that provide insight into the future.

IN THIS WEEK'S EDITION

Here's what you need to know: Russian supporters stage protest rallies in Serbia and Central African Republic, Sub-Saharan Africa emerges as the global epicentre of terrorism, the world’s first Infinity Train can recharge itself, global supply chains will be re-written by the 'second Cold War', Brazil's Lula da Silva aims to strengthen ties with Mexico's ruling leftist party, there are five different type of core regrets.

SPECIAL EDITION: UKRAINE

Russian supporters stage protest rallies in Serbia and Central African Republic. Marches through the capitals of the countries involved thousands of people in support of the Russian invasion of Ukraine.
Japan, US and Europe banks risk losses from $150bn Russia exposure. Sanctions and an exodus of global companies from Russia dim the prospects of recouping a combined $150 billion in debt owed by the country and business.

Russia's demand for US guarantees may hit nuclear talks, Iran official says. Russia's demand for US guarantees that sanctions on Moscow would not harm Russian cooperation with Iran is not constructive for nuclear disarmament talks.

Protests across Russia see thousands detained. More than 10,000 people have been detained at protests in 53 cities.

**CONFLICT**

Malian army says dozens of its soldiers killed in jihadist attack. The west African state has been battling jihadist movements affiliated with Al-Qaeda and the Islamic State for almost a decade, with around two-thirds of its territory outside state control.
The head of the UN Mission in Afghanistan calls for collaboration with the Taliban government. Deborah Lyons pledged that the only way to help the country is to collaborate with the de facto government. The country faces a cessation of development aid since international forces left the country last August.

Security forces in Nigeria kill at least 200 gunmen. In a security operation to clear armed gangs in Nigeria, at least 200 bandits have been killed in three days in Niger state.

China announces South China Sea drills close to Vietnam coast. China is carrying out more than a week of military drills in the South China Sea warning shipping to stay away.

Sub-Saharan Africa emerges as the global epicentre of terrorism. IEP’s Global Terrorism Index revealed that the region accounts for 48% of terrorism fatalities in the world, while the overall figure continues to decline.

DEVELOPMENT

Ten underreported emergencies. Countries have millions of people in need, suffering from food insecurity, civil war and poverty, including Burundi, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Honduras, Columbia and Niger.
Exoskeleton technology allows spinal injury patients to move again.
The electrodes read the signals from the brain being sent to the muscles, and the exoskeleton has the intelligence to compensate for any weakness and perform that movement for them. It also improves neuroplasticity.

2m in Tigray in urgent need of food – UN. In the first comprehensive assessment the World Food Programme has carried out in Tigray since the start of the war, 37% of the population were found to be severely food insecure.

Scientists Solve 30,000-Year-Old Venus statue mystery. The world’s oldest known statue was carved by a hunter-gatherer culture known as the Gravettian people, and travelled hundreds of miles across the treacherous landscape of Europe before the last ice age.

The world’s first Infinity Train can recharge itself. The train uses the gravitational energy created on the downhill loaded sections of the rail network to recharge its battery power systems, eliminating the need for additional charging on the return trip to reload.

ECONOMICS
Global supply chains will be re-written by the 'second Cold War'. Growth in the global trade has stalled since 2008 with the Covid pandemic accelerating the on-boarding of manufacturing. Now the Ukrainian war will intensify the trends as the West and China and Russia form two distinct trading systems.

China plans 7.1% defence spending rise this year, outpacing GDP target. China’s military spending has outpaced last year's increase and the government's modest economic growth forecast for 2022.

Europe turns to Africa for natural gas imports. Russia’s invasion of Ukraine has forced Europe to turn to African countries such as Nigeria, Algeria, Angola and Egypt for energy supply.

Sudan’s economy tumbles in post-coup deadlock. Sudan is lurching towards economic collapse in the aftermath of a coup in October, with exports plummeting more than 85% in January and the currency sliding on the black market.

Turkey’s inflation surges to 54%, highest in 20 years A Turkish official said upward risks on inflation are rising and energy prices would continue to put pressure on prices.
Brazil's Lula da Silva aims to strengthen ties with Mexico's ruling leftist party. The former Brazilian president has improved his chances in the presidential race by aligning with Mexico's MORENA party, and promised closer ties if he wins the presidency.

Philippine President Duterte signs an executive order to boost nuclear energy. According to the Energy Secretary, the initiative will pave the way for the entry of small modular reactor (SMR) technology into the country.

Honduran minister says new mining restrictions not retroactive. The Honduran government's recent push to sharply restrict mining will not apply to existing projects, days after the Environment and Mining Ministry pledged to cancel permits.

Libya's Bashagha says he will not use force to take office. The man chosen by Libya's parliament as the new Prime Minister said that he expects to take office in Tripoli peacefully despite the incumbent's vow to hold onto power.

The Polish government said it would increase its defence spending to 3% of GDP in 2023. This exceeds the 2% NATO target which aims to ensure the alliance's military readiness. Poland has welcomed over a million people fleeing Ukraine.
An African judge approves ascension to the Zulu throne. Prince Misuzulu Zulu ascends to the throne after the death of the king and will rule one-fifth of South Africa's population, represented by 11 million Zulus.

Belgians rush for iodine tablets due to nuclear threat. Nearly 30,000 Belgians went to get free iodine tablets, following reports of fighting near Chernobyl in Ukraine and nuclear threats from Russia.

There are five different types of core regrets. Largest study ever finds that 80% of people globally suffer from regret. The most common are in regards to the loss of connection in relationships, poor moral decisions and not speaking their mind.

Spanish prosecutor drops probes into former King Juan Carlos. Spain's national prosecutor's office has dropped two investigations into alleged fraud in former King Juan Carlos's business dealings after failing to find sufficient evidence of criminal activity.

Faecal transplants change gut microbiome, improving mood. Through transplanting gut microbiome from people without mental disorders, people suffering from bipolar disorders have been cured.

PEACEBUILDING

The Rotary Foundation has launched Programs of Scale, a new program to award grants to Rotary clubs or districts with evidence-based interventions that are ready to scale. The first such grant, will provide $2 million to a member-led program, Partners for
a Malaria-Free Zambia. Co-funders World Vision U.S. and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation will also each contribute $2 million to the effort. The program will train and equip 2,500 community health workers in Zambia to support the government’s work to eradicate malaria in that country.

The Carter Center is initiating I-Policy (India Policy) to educate U.S. policymakers on issues related to democracy and human rights in India. I-Policy will host dialogues and publish original research to keep stakeholders informed of key developments in Indian democracy, especially given rising challenges in the country.

The Environmental Law Institute has launched a new Pro Bono Clearinghouse to connect communities in need of legal services with environmental professionals seeking pro bono service opportunities. Law schools and other clinical programs will provide assistance in establishing these relationships.

UC Davis Professor Ermias Kebreab has found that adding just 3 ounces of seaweed each day to a cow’s diet reduces its methane emissions by 82 percent. Almost all of these emissions come out of a cow’s front end. The lab is now testing other kinds of methane-reducing additives that have shown promise in lab tests, according to PBS.