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A key inflation gauge sets 40-year high as gas and food soar

March 31, 2022 apnews.com reported: "An inflation gauge that is closely monitored by the Federal Reserve jumped 6.4% in February compared with a year ago, with sharply higher prices for food, gasoline and other necessities squeezing Americans' finances.

The figure reported Thursday by the Commerce Department was the largest year-over-year rise since January 1982. Excluding volatile prices for food and energy, so-called core inflation increased 5.4% in February from 12 months earlier.



Robust consumer demand has combined with shortages of many goods to fuel the sharpest price jumps in four decades. Measures of inflation will likely worsen in the coming months because Thursday's report doesn't reflect the consequences of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, which occurred Feb. 24. The war has disrupted global oil markets and accelerated prices for wheat, nickel and other key commodities.

Squeezed by inflation, consumers increased their spending by just 0.2% in February, down from a much larger 2.7% gain in January. Adjusted for inflation, spending actually fell 0.4% last month. The decline partly reflected a shift away from heavy spending on goods to a focus on services, such as health care, travel and entertainment, which consumers had long avoided during the worst of the pandemic." ..."

Ukraine says Russia planting mines in Black Sea as shipping perils grow

March 31, 2022 jpost.com reported: "Ukraine accused Russia on Wednesday of planting mines in the Black Sea and said some of those munitions had to be defused off Turkey and Romania as risks to vital merchant shipping in the region grow.

The Black Sea is a major shipping route for grain, oil and oil products. Its waters are shared by Bulgaria, Romania, Georgia and Turkey as well as Ukraine and Russia.

Russia's military took control of waterways when it invaded Ukraine on Feb. 24, in what Moscow calls a 'special operation.'

In recent days Turkish and Romanian military diving teams have been involved in defusing stray mines around their waters. Turkey's navy has increased the combat readiness of minesweepers and patrol aircraft due to the threat of naval mines in the Black Sea..."

Taiwan Studying Ukraine War Tactics, Discussing With U.S.

March 31, 2022 voanews.com reported: "Taiwan's defense ministry has set up a working group to study the tactics of the war in Ukraine, including how the country has been able to hold out against Russia, and has been discussing this with the United States, its minister said Thursday.

Taiwan, claimed by China as its own territory, has raised its alert level since the Russian invasion, wary of Beijing possibly making a similar move on the island, though it has reported no signs this is about to happen. The possible impact of the war on China's military thinking on Taiwan, and how China could attack the island, has been widely debated in official circles in Taipei.

Speaking to reporters on the sidelines of parliament, Defense Minister Chiu Kuo-cheng said they had had 'contact' with foreign countries to talk about how the war was being fought, and had set up their own working group to study it.

Topics Taiwan is following include Russia's poor military performance and Ukraine's resistance, he said..."

'Israel is facing an armed revolt from the Arab sector'

March 29, 2022 Arutz Sheva 7 reported: "IDF Brigadier General (Res.) and former minister Effi Eitam warned Tuesday that the recent spate of terror attacks perpetrated by Israeli Arabs marks the beginning of a violent uprising by Israel's Arab sector.

Speaking with *Galei Tzahal* Tuesday morning, the former chief of the National Religious Party – the forerunner of the Jewish Home party – said that the spike in violent terror attacks carried out by Arabs with Israeli citizenship is a symptom of a larger problem in the Arab sector.

‘We need to tell ourselves the truth: We are in the midst of an Arab revolt, an Islamic-nationalist revolt against the idea of Israel as the state of the Jewish people. They hold [Israeli] citizenship and have equal rights in everything, but they are separatists.’

‘These 200,000 ‘good’ Arabs don’t need guns. The [Arab] sector is building a military force against the state, Israeli Arabs are becoming a separatist population. We may face a situation in which citizens of the country rebel against its authority and its sovereignty, included with armed underground movements.’...”

Russia says achieved main tasks of war, Ukraine army ‘degraded’

March 29, 2022 jpost.com reported: “Russia’s Defense Minister claimed to have achieved Russia’s main objectives for the first phase of the war against Ukraine on Tuesday, Russian state media outlets reported.

‘The main tasks of the first stage of the operation have been completed,’ Russia’s Sergei Shoigu said, according to *TASS*. The degraded conditions of Ukraine’s military would ‘allow us to focus our main attention and efforts on achieving the main goal — the liberation of Donbas.’

‘The Russian armed forces will continue the special military operation until the set goals are achieved,’ he continued.

‘The rest of the special military operation – and denazification is one of the goals of this operation – it continues,’ said Russian press secretary Dmitry Peskov on Tuesday, *Interfax* reported.

In an interview with *Pravda Ukraine*, Lviv Mayor Andriy Sadovy said that he expected the war to continue in one form or another at least until the end of the summer...”

Hamas: The next war will be a ‘turning point in the conflict’

March 29, 2022 Arutz Sheva 7 reported: “Saleh al-Arouri, the deputy leader of Hamas, said on Monday that the Palestinian Arab uprising within the ‘occupied state’ (Israel) has become a serious concern for the ‘occupation.’

Speaking with the Hezbollah-affiliated *Al-Mayadeen* television network, Arouri noted that Operation Saif al-Quds (the round of military confrontation in May 2021 -ed.) revealed dangerous strategic aspects for Israel, and in particular due to the uprising of Israeli Arabs.

Arouri claimed that in May of 2021, Hamas was prepared for a war that could have gone on for many months, and added that if Israel continues its ‘aggression’ today, Hamas will be ready for a comprehensive confrontation.

He further claimed that the next confrontation against Israel would have ‘a wider popular scope’ (that is, a wider participation of the Palestinian Arab public in Judea and Samaria and Israel) and that it ‘would be a turning point in the history of the conflict with the occupation.’...”

Jordan king hosts UAE, Egypt, Iraq leaders

March 28, 2022 spacewar.com reported: “Jordan’s King Abdullah II hosted leaders from Egypt, Iraq and the United Arab Emirates on Friday for ‘consultative’ talks, state media said.

The meeting with Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al-Nahyan, Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi and Iraqi Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhemi in the Red Sea port city of Aqaba was ‘consultative’, according to state television.

An official source requesting anonymity told *AFP* that the ‘consultative brotherly meeting dealt with recent international and regional developments. The source did not elaborate...”

Kim Jong Un: We will prepare for long-term confrontation with US

March 25, 2022 Arutz Sheva 7 reported: “North Korea confirmed on Friday (local time) it test fired its ‘new type’ of intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) Hwasong-17 in a launch on Thursday, *Reuters* reported, citing North Korea’s official news agency *KCNA*.

The country’s leader Kim Jong Un directly guided the test, the report said.

Kim said, according to *KCNA*, that the ‘new strategic weapon of the DPRK would make the whole world clearly aware of the power of our strategic armed forces once again.’

‘He stressed that our national defense forces would possess formidable military and technical capabilities unperturbed by any military threat and blackmail and keep themselves fully ready for long-standing confrontation with the US imperialists,’ the news agency added...”



N. Korea Pres. Kim Jong Un