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Inside C2

Southern DAILY

Make Today Different

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Biden bans Russia oil imports to U.S., warns U.S. gasoline prices will rise further

WASHINGTON, March 8 (Reuters) - U.S. President Joe Biden announced a ban on Russian oil and other energy imports on Tuesday in retaliation for the invasion of Ukraine, underscoring strong bipartisan support for a move that he acknowledged would drive up U.S. energy prices.

“We’re banning all imports of Russian oil and gas energy,” Biden told reporters at the White House. “That means Russian oil will no longer be acceptable in U.S. ports and the American people will deal another powerful blow to (Russian President Vladimir) Putin’s war machine.”

Oil prices jumped on the news, with Benchmark Brent crude LCOc1 for May climbing by 5.4% to \$129.91 a barrel by 1345 GMT. [read more](#)

Biden has been working with allies in Europe, who are far more dependent on Russian oil, to isolate Russia’s energy-heavy economy and Putin. Britain announced shortly before Biden’s remarks that it would phase out the import of Russian oil and oil products by the end of 2022. [read more](#)

Biden said sanctions imposed by the United States and its allies had already caused the Russian economy to “crater”. He said the latest moves had been made in close consultation with allies and partners around the world.

Who buys Russia’s oil and gas?
Russia exports between 4 and 5 million bbls of crude a day and about 8,500 billion cubic feet of natural gas annually. The United States imported more than 20.4 million barrels of crude and refined products a month on average from Russia in 2021, about 8% of U.S. liquid fuel imports, according to the Energy Information Administration, and the ban is expected to send already high gasoline prices and inflation soaring. The United States also imports a negligible amount of coal from Russia.

Biden predicted prices would rise further as a result of “Putin’s war,” but pledged to do all he could to minimize the impact on the American people. He also warned U.S. gas companies against exploiting the situation to engage in profiteering or price gouging.



U.S. gas pump prices near a record high [Reuters Graphics](#)

U.S. Senator Chris Coons said the administration was coordinating with European allies “and making sure that we’ve done the groundwork to understand how to effectively implement a ban on Russian energy.”

“We are going to see increased gas prices here in the United States. In Europe, they will see dramatic increases in prices. That’s the cost of standing up for freedom and standing alongside the Ukrainian people, but it’s going to cost us,” Coons told CNN.

The White House had been coordinating with U.S. congressional leaders working on fast-tracking bipartisan legislation to ban Russian imports, but the ban of Russian imports would make any such bill moot.

Republican lawmakers took to social media to welcome the decision, while criticizing Biden’s green energy policies, and calling for the administration to support more oil and gas production at home.

U.S. Representative Susan Wild said Americans need to realize the larger sacrifice needed. “Obviously nobody wants to pay more for gas,” Wild, a Democrat on the House of Representatives Foreign Affairs Committee, said on MSNBC.

In announcing that it is phasing out imports of Russian oil and oil products by the end of 2022, Britain said it is giving the market and businesses more than enough time to find alternatives to the imports, which make up 8% of demand.

“The government will also work with companies through a new Taskforce on Oil to support them to make use of this period in finding alternative supplies,” British Business and Energy Secretary Kwasi Kwarteng said.

U.S. President Joe Biden announces actions against Russia for its war in Ukraine, during remarks in the Roosevelt Room at the White House in Washington, U.S., March 8, 2022. [REUTERS/ Kevin Lamarque](#)

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WEA LEE'S GLOBAL NOTES

03/08/2022



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Welcoming Houston Chronicle Publisher Nancy Meyer And Chairman Jack Sweeney



Today we are very honored to welcome Madam Nancy Meyer, publisher of the Houston Chronicle and Chairman Jack Sweeney.

Mr. Chairman, we haven't seen each other in nearly 20 years since you came to the International District.

Over twenty years ago most of Bellaire Blvd. was raw land. Over time, through

the efforts of many business and community leaders, today we have developed hundreds of thousands of businesses in this area, including banks, supermarkets, retail stores and restaurants. We have become one of the most prosperous and successful business model areas of the City of Houston.

Today we are so glad to host this welcoming

luncheon in our new Houston International Studio at our television center. We will use this new media platform to promote the City of Houston around the world.

Madam publisher, I have two proposals for your consideration. One of them is to have this type of community leaders meeting with the Chronicle at least

twice a year; second is that we want to join with the Houston Chronicle and more than one hundred Asian media organizations, including TV stations and newspapers to promote local events. We can become partners in many areas to promote the greater Houston community.

For myself and Mr. Gary Randazzo, Jim

Noteware, Glen Gondo, Stephen Le and Danny Nguyen, as well as our board members of the International Trade Center and International District, are all here to say a heartfelt "thank you" for your many decades of support.

Again, Publisher Meyer, all the very best, and much success to you and the Houston Chronicle.



Southern DAILY Make Today Different

Editor's Choice



An activist performs the Chilean feminist protest anthem "Un violador en tu camino" (A Rapist in Your Path) ahead of International Women's Day in Santiago, Chile March 7. REUTERS/Ivan Alvarado



Alexandra, 12, holds her sister Esyea, 6, who cries as she waves at her mother Irina, while members of the Jewish community of Odessa board a bus to flee Russia's invasion of Ukraine, in Odessa, Ukraine, March 7. REUTERS/Alexandros Avramidis



Carrie Underwood, winner of the Song of the Year award poses during the 57th Annual Academy of Country Music Awards in Las Vegas, Nevada, U.S., March 7. REUTERS/Maria Alejandra Cardona



Tian Jintao of China in action during Para Ice Hockey preliminary Group B Italy v China match at Beijing 2022 Winter Paralympic Games, Beijing, China, March 8, 2022. REUTERS/Aly Song



A security personnel keeps watch before the second plenary session of the National People's Congress at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, China March 8, 2022. REUTERS/Carlos Garcia Rawlins



Dolly Parton attends the 57th Annual Academy of Country Music Awards in Las Vegas, Nevada, U.S., March 7. REUTERS/Maria Alejandra Cardona

How Russia's Invasion Of Ukraine Could Impact You



Further sanctions, energy market disruptions and cyberwarfare could reach Americans seemingly far removed from the conflict between Ukraine and Russia. Here, Russian army tanks are loaded onto trains to move them back to their permanent base after drills in Russia. (Photo/Russian Defense Ministry Press Service via AP)

Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor

The long-feared invasion of Ukraine by Russia jolted markets, sent energy prices higher and prompted promises of a new round of consequences for Russia...

This week, President Biden announced a "first tranche" of economic sanctions on two Russian banks with about \$80 billion in assets and five Russian oligarchs and their families...

President Biden speaks about Russia and Ukraine in the East Room of the White House on Tuesday. (Photo/Brendan Smialowski/AFP via Getty Images)

restrictions on major Russian banks that would dramatically affect Russia's ability to conduct international business. Severe U.S. sanctions could drive up prices for everyday Russians or cause Russia's currency or markets to crash.

Because the U.S. does not rely much on trade with Russia, it is somewhat insulated from direct consequences. Europe is more directly affected. But certain sectors of the U.S. economy rely on highly specific Russian exports, primarily raw commodities.

Energy prices could rise In the early hours following Russia's invasion, Brent crude oil was trading at more than \$100 per barrel for the first time since 2014, and another benchmark, West Texas Intermediate, rose nearly 5% to more than \$96 per barrel.

Russia is a major exporter of oil and natural gas, especially to Europe. As a result, officials have reportedly shied away from severe sanctions on Russian energy exports.

Nearly 40% of the natural gas used by the European Union comes from Russia. President Biden said prior to Russia's invasion of Ukraine that the not-yet-operational Nord Stream 2 pipeline would not move ahead in the event of an invasion. (Photo/Michael Sohn/AP)

For one, Russia could choose to cut off or limit oil and gas exports to Europe as retaliation for sanctions. Nearly 40% of the natural gas used by the European Union comes from Russia...

Even if Russia chooses not to limit exports, supplies could still be affected by the conflict in Ukraine because multiple pipelines run through the country, carrying gas from Russia to Europe.

Either way, if Europe's natural gas supply is pinched, that could cause energy prices — which have already been climbing — to rise even further. And even though the U.S. imports relatively little oil from Russia, oil prices are set by the global market, meaning local prices could rise anyway.

Other industries, from food to cars, might also be hurt Russia is a major exporter of rare-earth minerals and heavy metals — such as titanium used in airplanes. Russia supplies about a third of the world's palladium, a rare metal used in catalytic converters...

Ukrainian economic output and industry will likely be significantly disrupted. The country is a major source of neon, which is used in manufacturing semiconductors. As a result, U.S. officials have warned various sectors, including the semiconductor and aerospace industries...

Global markets could drop The invasion rattled investors Wednesday, with Dow futures down more than 2% before the markets opened in the United States. Markets across Asia also dropped. The invasion sent the prices of traditional investment safe havens higher, with gold up more than 1.5% overnight.

Various federal agencies, including the Treasury and the Department of Homeland Security, have warned of possible cyberattacks on targets like big banks and power grid operators.



Markets are fundamentally not prepared for a land war in Europe in the 21st century, Rediker said. "It's something people just have not contemplated."

The U.S. stock market has already been unusually volatile in recent weeks, churning over inflation, moves by the Federal Reserve to curb its stimulus programs and the looming conflict in Ukraine.

Historically, the market has bounced back relatively quickly after geopolitical events. That's what's most likely today too, analysts say, so the effect on people with 401(k) accounts may be short term.

But if the conflict causes long-lasting disruption of energy markets and other exports, investors could rethink that conventional wisdom.

You're potentially at a point where not only are we looking at Russia potentially invading Ukraine and sanctions and countermeasures, but you are also looking at a rise of China that doesn't necessarily agree with the American perspective on the world anyway.

Russia could launch disruptive cyberattacks Another way Russia could respond to U.S. sanctions is through cyberattacks and influence campaigns.



Various federal agencies, including the Treasury and the Department of Homeland Security, have warned of possible cyberattacks on targets like big banks and power grid operators.

They have been warning everyone about Russia's very specific tactics about the possibility of attacks on critical infrastructure, Katerina Sedova, a researcher at Georgetown University's Center for Security and Emerging Technology, told NPR.

Russian cyberattacks have targeted Ukraine relentlessly in recent years, including attacks on the capital city of Kyiv's power grid in 2015 and 2016. But a major escalation could shift focus to U.S. targets.

Sedova pointed to the Russian state-backed attack on the IT software company SolarWinds and a ransomware attack that shut down the Colonial Pipeline for six days as

examples of how major Russian cyberattacks could disrupt U.S. operations. (The Biden administration said it does "not believe the Russian government was involved" in the pipeline attack.)

Power grids, hospitals and local governments could all be targets, she said.

For now, Sedova said she is more worried about subtler attacks — like influence campaigns that aim to "sow discord between us and our allies in our resolve" to act jointly against Russia.

Often, cyber-operations go hand in hand with influence, she said. "They're targeting a change of decision-making, a change in policy in that direction, a change in public opinion."

A major invasion would likely spark a refugee crisis



A serviceman with Ukraine's military forces walks along a trench on the front line with Russia-backed separatists, not far from Novoluhanske, in Ukraine's Donetsk region, on Feb. 16. (Photo/Anatolii Stepanov/AFP via Getty Images)

The invasion could send 1 million to 5 million refugees fleeing Ukraine, U.S. officials and humanitarian agencies have warned.

It will be a continent-wide humanitarian disaster with millions of refugees seeking protection in neighbouring European countries, Agnès Callamard, secretary-general of Amnesty International, said last month in statement.

Poland, which shares a border with Ukraine and is already home to more than a million Ukrainians, would likely see the most refugees. Polish Interior Minister Mariusz Kaminski said his country was preparing for an "influx of refugees" from Ukraine.

The U.S. military says that the thousands of soldiers deployed to Poland this month are prepared to assist with a large-scale evacuation.

Assistance with evacuation flow is something they could do, and could do quite well. They are going to be working with Polish authorities on what that looks like and how they would handle that.

Defense Department spokesperson John Kirby said last week. At the largest scale, a refugee crisis would not be contained to Europe — the U.S. would likely see refugees seeking asylum too. (Courtesy npr.org)

COMMUNITY

Will The New, Fast 5G Mobile System Put Lives At Risk?

5G Signal Could Jam Satellites That Provide Weather Forecasting

Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor



Forecasters may no longer be able to warn of storms such as 2018's 'beast from the east', which dumped heavy snow on cities on the East Coast of the U.S. (Photo/Humphreys/PA)

quency. Water vapor emits a faint signal at this specific natural wavelength, and this data is monitored and measured by weather satellites. Forecasters then use this information to work out how a storm or weather system is likely to develop.

Such data is critical to our ability to make forecasts," said Niels Bormann, also of the Reading weather centre. "They are a unique natural resource, and if we lose this capability, weather forecasts will get significantly worse."

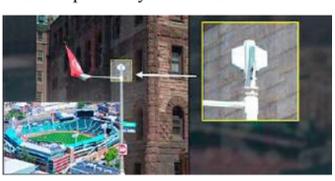


A 5G box attached to a pole on the Las Vegas Strip, just one block from Caesar's Palace.

The problem is that some 5G phone networks may transmit near a frequency similar to that emitted by water vapor, and so would produce a signal that looks very like the presence of water vapor in the atmosphere.

"We would not be able to tell the difference and so would have to discard that data," added Bormann. "That would seriously compromise our ability to make accurate forecasts."

The urgency of the problem is underlined by the fact that US Federal Communications Commission and similar agencies in other countries have already started to auction off frequencies close to the 23.8 GHz frequency to future 5G network providers. In addition, other bands that are used to probe our weather include the 36-37 GHz band, which is used to study rain and snow; the 50 GHz band, which is used to measure atmospheric temperature; and the 86-92 GHz band, which helps to analyze cloud and ice.



A 5G box high on a pole near Boston's Fenway Park.

All these contain sections of waveband that are being auctioned off in the US. It remains to be

seen if other nations will follow suit and sell these frequencies in their own countries over coming months. The issue is set to be debated at a global conference in Egypt later this year. Forecasters say the US move has already compromised their ability to collect data, and promise to lobby other nations to limit use of crucial frequencies to preserve their ability to provide accurate forecasts.

"The more we lose, the greater the impact will be," states meteorologist Jordan Gerth of the University of Wisconsin-Madison, in the current issue of Nature. "This is a global problem." (Courtesy https://www.theguardian.com)

5G Health Effects: Dangers Of New Wireless Technology



5G, the next-generation mobile wireless technology, will create the always-on, always-connected wireless world long-sought by the wide-eyed champions of this technology. It will infuse billions of connected devices, which will ceaselessly emit and receive wireless signals as they work to satisfy users all around the world. The electromagnetic radiation from the hundreds of billions of 5G-connected devices will bombard the entire planet and most every human on it every second of every day.

The United States plans to roll out nationwide 5G networks over the next few years. China wants to beat the U.S. to this landmark while the 27 countries in the European Union will deploy the tech by the next decade.

5G will be everywhere by the 2020s, and so will be its health dangers. For a start, getting 5G to become ubiquitous will mean building new cell towers, millions and millions of them. These towers bring with them all the health risks associated with overexposure to electromagnetic radiation.

The preliminary results of a the \$25 million National Toxicology Program study released in 2016 found a link between cell phone radiation and cancer. It also found an increased risk of radiation exposure beyond what's deemed safe by the U.S. government.

Critics of 5G and its health dangers admit a lot of research needs to be done before they can definitely say cell phone radiation causes cancer. But the question they pose is: "Should humans be guinea pigs in the meantime?"



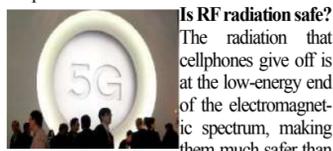
A 5G box attached to a lamp pole at the corner of East 57th Street, close to Times Square in New York City.

"I don't think it's clear that there are health risks, but it's also not clear that there are no health risks," said Dr Leeka Kheifets, PhD, an epidemiology professor at UCLA.

According to a 2018 study published in the journal Health Physics, extremely fast bursts of data transfers on a device as the result of 5G technology might lead to the heating of skin tissue in exposed people under current safety guidelines. (Courtesy https://www.medicaldaily.com)

Is the 5G spectrum harmful to our health? Experts say, 'Don't worry.'

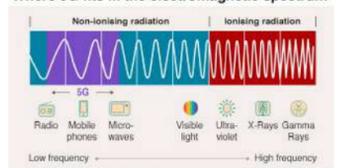
Harnessing millimeter wave (mmWave) spectrum for faster data speeds is one of the biggest breakthroughs of 5G, the next generation cellular networking technology following 4G LTE. But there are concerns this very high-frequency spectrum could pose adverse health effects for the public.



Is RF radiation safe? The radiation that cellphones give off is at the low-energy end of the electromagnetic spectrum, making them much safer than high-energy radiation like x-rays and gamma rays. While the latter give off ionizing radiation, meaning they have enough energy to ionize an atom or molecule and thus damage cell DNA resulting in cancer, RF radiation does not.

The FDA noted in 2018 statements that it believes "the current safety limits for cellphone radiofrequency energy exposure remain acceptable for protecting the public health."

Where 5G fits in the electromagnetic spectrum



The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and U.S. National Toxicology Program (NTP) also have not formally classified RF radiation as cancer-causing. Meanwhile, the World Health Organization's International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) classifies RF radiation as "possibly carcinogenic to humans" due to the finding of a possible link in at least one study between cellphone use and a specific type of brain tumor.

However, the IARC considers overall evidence "limited."

It's also important to note the IARC puts coffee and talc-based body powder in the same "possibly carcinogenic" category.

In one of the most recent studies, performed by the National Toxicology Program (NTP), high exposure to 2G and 3G RF radiation led to cancerous heart tumor development in male rats. NTP senior scientist John Butcher noted, however, that the levels and duration of exposure to RF radiation were much greater than what people experience with even the highest level of cell phone use, so the findings should not be directly extrapolated to human cell phone usage.



What about 5G? The FDA told Digital Trends that, at this time, it "continues to believe that the current safety limits for cellphone radiofrequency energy exposure remain acceptable for protecting the public health."

"The limits are based on the frequency of the device, meaning that 5G has a different limit than other technologies," an agency spokesperson wrote in an email. "As part of our commitment to protecting the public health, the FDA has reviewed, and will continue to review, many sources of scientific and medical evidence related to the possibility of adverse health effects from radiofrequency energy exposure in both humans and animals and will continue to do so as new scientific data are published."

The agency noted that it lists significant ongoing research on the topic of RF exposure on its website at https://www.fda.gov/radiation-emitting-products/cell-phones/current-research-results. (Courtesy digitaltrends.com)