



Oil passes \$100 a barrel after Houthis 'strike two tankers' in Red Sea

July 23, 2026 telegraph.co.uk reported: "Oil has surged past \$100 a barrel for the first time in two months after the Iran-backed Houthi militia claimed it struck two Saudi oil tankers on Wednesday night. Brent crude oil prices climbed more than 6pc...as the strikes threatened to open a new front in the Iran war near a critical trade artery in the Red Sea.

Stocks fell heavily on Wall Street following the Houthi strikes, with the S&P 500 down 1pc and the Nasdaq Composite down 2pc. Higher oil prices also triggered a sell-off on bond markets, pushing up the cost of government borrowing around the world.

The Yemeni group said it targeted the Encelia and Layla tankers, claiming they had violated its maritime embargo against Saudi vessels in the Bab El-Mandeb Strait. The waterway – which is a chokepoint between the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean – has become a vital alternative shipping route to the perilous Strait of Hormuz..."



Houthi Rebel boat

Trump threatens Iranian infrastructure after Houthis block Red Sea artery

July 22, 2026 yahoo.com reported: "U.S. President Donald Trump vowed on Wednesday to destroy an Iranian bridge or power plant every time Iran shoots at a ship in the Strait of Hormuz, raising the stakes in the war with Iran as Iranian-allied Houthis in Yemen threatened a second vital energy route.

Five tankers changed course in the Red Sea to avoid the Bab el-Mandeb Strait on Wednesday, a day after the Houthi threat to block Saudi oil exports highlighted a new risk to global oil supplies from the escalating conflict. Three tankers loaded with Saudi oil for China and India made U-turns on Tuesday.

Iran's joint military command warned, according to state media, that if Trump's threat against infrastructure was carried out, Iranian forces would target regional oil, gas, electricity and economic infrastructure and prevent the export of "even a single drop of oil."

"Our defence doctrine is clear: eye for an eye..." Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi said on X..."

CDC issues travel notice for tropical hotspot as outbreak of deadly incurable mosquito virus reaches Americas

July 21, 2026 dailymail.com reported: "A tropical travel hotspot is facing an outbreak of a deadly mosquito-borne virus as cases spread in the Americas. The CDC issued a Level 2 travel advisory for Costa Rica, urging US citizens to 'practice enhanced precautions' as chikungunya plagues the Guanacaste Province.

The incurable virus is spread through mosquito bites, which causes a life-threatening high fever, excruciating joint and muscle pain, and a rash. Costa Rica's health ministry declared an active outbreak in the popular beach town Playa Langosta on July 1.

The US Embassy in the country alerted travelers to the outbreak last week, warning there was now local transmission of the virus, meaning it is present in the mosquito population and not just arriving in the country..."

Xi's G20 no-show hints at China's shifting diplomatic priorities

July 20, 2026 spacewar.com reported: "President Xi Jinping's unexplained decision to snub the G20 summit underlines Beijing's frayed ties with other major powers as well as growing secrecy at the top of the ruling Communist Party, China analysts told AFP.

Beijing's foreign ministry said Monday that Premier Li Qiang would join the leaders of the world's biggest economies in New Delhi this weekend, effectively confirming Xi's absence.

No reason was given why Xi will not attend the summit, which he has not skipped since coming to power, except Rome in 2021 when he participated by video link owing to Covid pandemic restrictions.

His probable absence draws a sharp contrast with his appearance at the BRICS summit of emerging economies in South Africa last month.

There, Xi was front and centre as the bloc agreed to admit six new members in what he called a "historic" achievement. The emphasis on ties with the developing world reflects Beijing's efforts to "create an alternative... to the liberal international order dominated by the US since the end of World War Two", said Steve Tsang, director of the SOAS China Institute at the University of London.

The realignment "is China-friendly if not Sino-centric, with support being gathered and consolidated in the Global South", Tsang told AFP. "The G20... is not (something) that China can dominate, so it is given lower priority. I am not saying that Xi is anti-G20, just (that he does) not put it on par in importance to BRICS."..."

Pete King to Newsmax: Mamdani Validates NYC Jews' 'Worst Fears'

July 20, 2026 Newsmax reported: "Former Rep. Pete King, R-N.Y., warned Monday that New York City Mayor Zohran Mamdani is validating the worst fears of Jewish New Yorkers by saying he would seek to arrest Benjamin Netanyahu if the Israeli prime minister were to visit the city.

Speaking on Newsmax's "National Report," King said Mamdani's remarks were never about legal authority, but were instead a calculated attempt to signal support for anti-Israel activists he believes make up a key part of the mayor's political base.

"What it means for the Jewish community is that all their worst fears are just reinforced by this," King said. "This guy is so dangerous. His basic views are antisemitic, anti-Israel, anti-Jewish, no matter how you want to phrase it."

The former Republican congressman said he believes those views will influence how Mamdani governs, particularly when it comes to protecting Jewish institutions and responding to anti-Israel demonstrations across the city.

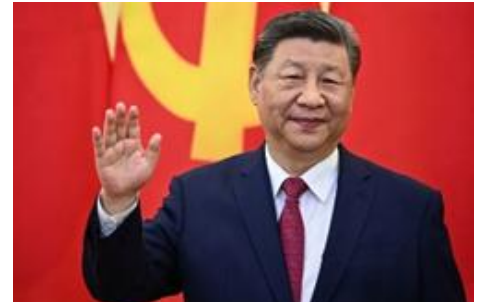
"He's going to follow that in any way that he can, whether it's on demonstrations, whether it's on having security outside synagogues and temples with buffer zones," King said. "This man is dangerous. He really is."

He argued that Mamdani's comments about Netanyahu are part of a broader ideological agenda that extends beyond foreign policy.

"And that's just the beginning of it," King said. "There's also his socialist views, his anti-police attitudes, his pro-crime attitude. These are dark days for the city of New York."..."

Dictator Xi Jinping Touts China as Global Leader of Artificial Intelligence

July 17, 2026 Breitbart.com reported: "In his address to the opening ceremony of the World Artificial Intelligence Conference (WAIC) in Shanghai on Friday, Chinese dictator Xi Jinping touted his authoritarian country as the global leader of the AI revolution, challenging the U.S. effort to develop rules and ethical standards for the new technology.



China President Xi

The WAIC is an annual event that has been held in Shanghai since 2018. This year's event featured the debut of the World Artificial Intelligence Cooperation Organization (WAICO), an entity created by China that included Russia, Cuba, Brazil, Pakistan, and Venezuela among its founding members.

Xi's speech cast China as the champion of AI technology for developing nations, or the "Global South." Although he refrained from challenging the United States by name, his vision of a China-led global AI order directly contradicted the Trump administration's "Pax Silica" initiative launched in 2025 to create secure supply chains of critical minerals for the free world, and protect AI from abuse by malevolent powers.

The Chinese dictator peppered his speech with numerous negative allusions to American dominance in artificial intelligence, such as a call for the rest of the world to stand against "overstretching the national security concept in the field of AI, or placing one country's security over that of others."

Xi also boasted of China's alleged commitment to "open-source" AI and technology sharing, despite companies like Nvidia complaining that China has locked them out of its markets with protectionist regulations...A major theme of Xi's speech was that AI has been unfairly hoarded by the Western nations that created it, and China will lead the effort to redistribute that technological wealth — along with the United Nations, which he wanted to have a greater role in AI governance..."

Republic of China Army Deploys U.S. 'Super Cobra' Attack Helicopters For Deep Dispersal Exercises

July 17, 2026 militarywatchmagazine.com reported: "The Republic of China Army has deployed its AH-1W Super Cobra attack helicopters for a deep-area dispersal exercise within Tainan as part of the ongoing Joint Defense Exercises, demonstrating a growing emphasis on preserving combat aviation assets during the opening stages of a potential conflict. Rather than remaining concentrated at established air bases that would likely be targeted by missile strikes, the helicopters dispersed to alternative operating locations, where they landed, established temporary operating sites, and prepared to resume combat missions. The exercise centered on improving survivability..."

Compiled by L. Jim Tuck

Minister

jim_tuck@ucg.org