

ONE WAY: UP

Demand overseas will keep oil prices pumped



THE PROVIDENCE JOURNAL / GRETCHEN ERTL

The sign at the Mobil gas station on Plainfield Pike in Johnston tells the tale of spiraling fuel prices in the region.

BY SCOTT MACKAY
JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

Southeastern New England's beleaguered motorists may not want to hear this, but experts say the price of petroleum products and gasoline will continue to rise for the foreseeable future.

Forces halfway around the globe — principally the surging economies of India and China — are affecting the price of petroleum products in a way that is expected to push prices at the pump steadily upward.

It is as basic as Economics 101, says Prof. Edinaldo Tebaldi, who teaches international economics and trade at Bryant University. "It is very simple: supply and demand, a fundamental law of economics," Tebaldi says. "On the

supply side, production has not increased all that much, and on the demand side we have a huge increase."

As the world's population skyrockets — the United Nations projects 8 billion people by 2025, up from 6.6 billion today — it is also growing richer. Even in poor nations, people are consuming more food, electricity, and appliances. China's 1.3 billion people and the 1.1 billion who live in

India are striving to climb into the middle class, with the high-protein diets, gasoline-fueled vehicles and electric gadgets that make life easier in the industrialized West.

"I think the big thing that isn't going to change is the growth of China and India," says Lincoln Chafee, the former

U.S. senator who is now a scholar at Brown University's Watson Institute. "They are really just dipping their straws into the world's oil reservoir and are rapidly modernizing in the 21st century.

"The demand, when you think about it, has been pent up," Chafee says. "I just don't see it going back to the 20th-century levels."

The upward pressure on prices is likely to get worse over the next few decades. Population growth will be accompanied by increases in oil-fueled transportation. The number of cars and trucks will probably double to 2 billion or more over the next 30 years. And the rapid development in countries that were once agricultural will mean twice

SEE **OIL, A7**

Bill makes criminal records erasable

Rhode Island already allows expungement in cases of nonviolent first offenders who complete their sentences, but new proposals would allow for broader rewriting of criminal histories.

BY KATHERINE GREGG
JOURNAL STATE HOUSE BUREAU

PROVIDENCE — Over the strong objections of the attorney general and state police, a key House committee has approved a bill to forever remove thousands of crimes from the public record so convicted criminals can tell state licensing boards and prospective employers — with impunity — that they have never been convicted of a crime.

Lawmakers have considered — and rejected — similar bills every year for the last decade. They have each died under fire from one governor after another and law-enforcement officials.

But this year, an advocacy group for released convicts has teamed with the criminal-defense lobby, the public-defenders office and a group of minority legislators to convince the lawyer-dominated House Judi-

SEE **RECORDS, A6**

U.S. asks boaters to be sentries

Federal officials today will ask states to develop safety standards for recreational boaters and ask them to report suspicious behavior on the water.

BY EILEEN SULLIVAN and SCOTT LINDLAW
ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — As boating season approaches, the Bush administration wants to enlist the country's 80 million recreational boaters to help reduce the chances that a small boat could deliver a nuclear or radiological bomb somewhere along the country's 95,000 miles of coastline and inland waterways.

According to an April 23 intelligence assessment obtained by the Associated Press, "The use of a small boat as a weapon is likely to remain al-Qaida's weapon of choice in the maritime environment, given its ease in arming and deploying, low

SEE **BOATERS, A10**

Karzai escapes assassination try

BY CARLOTTA GALL and ABDUL WAHEED WAFI
THE NEW YORK TIMES

KABUL, Afghanistan — A well-coordinated assassination attempt on President Hamid Karzai by suspected Taliban insurgents at the Afghan national day military parade in central Kabul has turned into a moment of national embarrassment for the government, which has been pressing to take over responsibility for Kabul's security from foreign troops.

Three people were killed yesterday in the brazen assault, ruining what was supposed to have been a proud moment for Afghan security forces. The ability of the attackers to get so close to Karzai, who escaped unhurt, suggested they had inside help.

The dead included a tribal chief and a member of parliament who were in the reviewing stands near Karzai, and a 10-year-old boy caught in the crossfire as militants and security forces aimed at each other, officials said. Eleven people were wounded, among them army officers, police officers and civilians,

SEE **KARZAI, A10**

MAYBE THIS IS YOUR FATHER'S ROCK 'N' ROLL GROUP

The Young@Heart Chorus, whose members range in age from 73 to 89 and are the subject of a new documentary, performs to benefit the Newport International Film Festival.

BY C. EUGENE EMERY JR.
JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

NEWPORT — The Bob Dylan song "Forever Young" begins softly, almost too softly.

The audience at the Jane Pickens Theater is forced into complete silence as they strain to hear the 23 people on stage, singing as if consumed by a quiet prayer.

"May God bless and keep you always. May your wishes all come true. May you always do for others, and let others do for you. May you build a ladder to the stars, and climb on every rung. May you stay forever young."

By the time the ballad has reached its crescendo, the men and women on stage have pumped their right fists into the air and turned

the prayer into a declaration.

And then, the audience is on its feet. Again.

But these are not typical rockers. These folks, the Young@Heart Chorus from Northampton, Mass., range in age from 73 to 89 and they were in town for an afternoon performance to benefit the Newport International Film Festival.

If you haven't heard of them already, you probably will soon.

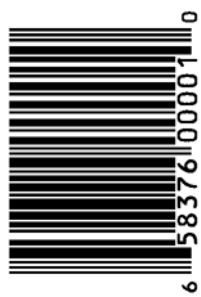
Young@Heart is the subject of a documentary — shown before yesterday's performance and being released locally Friday — that could make them forever famous.

SEE **CHORUS, A6**



THE PROVIDENCE JOURNAL / KRIS CRAIG

Patsy Linderme leads the group Young@Heart in one of their many numbers during a Newport performance yesterday.



INSIDE TODAY

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YOU'LL PAY MORE TO FLY

Forget about \$200 fares to Europe and \$50 flights to Chicago. The U.S. airline industry is in the midst of a radical makeover, and the first casualty is the ultralow pricing that has sent Americans to the skies in record numbers but left carriers teetering. **A8**

YOUR TURN TO CHAT WITH SEN. JACK REED

Rhode Island's senior U.S. senator has quietly become an authoritative voice in matters of foreign policy, the military, economics and health care. The story of his military and political career was told in yesterday's Journal and on projo.com. And this morning at 11:45, Reed will chat with readers online. You can log on live — or post a question in advance — at projo.com/chat



AMERICAN GIRL COMES TO PPAC

This weekend, the company renowned for its popular collection of educational dolls and books will bring to life *Addy: An American Girl Story*, the tale of a slave girl whose family escapes to freedom — and then struggles to survive. **D1**