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‘As Long as There’s No Beer Shortage’: Russians Mock Fuel Crisis in Memes

By Moscow Times Reporter

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One meme shows President Vladimir Putin filling up his own car at a gas station like an ordinary Russian. The caption reads: "These prices..." **Social media**

Russia is in the throes of a fuel crisis that has triggered rationing, long lines at gas stations, soaring prices and reports of empty pumps in several regions following a wave of Ukrainian drone strikes on oil refineries and energy infrastructure.

While the disruptions have sparked widespread public frustration, many Russians have turned to humor to cope with the crisis.

The Moscow Times rounds up some of the jokes circulating online:

"The era of the ‘dinner dater’ is over. The era of the ‘gasoline dater’ has begun."

This meme plays on the derogatory Russian slang term *tarelochnitsa* (“dinner dater”), which is used to describe a woman accused of only going on dates to eat at expensive restaurants for

free.

With gasoline now in short supply, the joke suggests fuel has become so valuable that women are supposedly seeking men for gasoline instead of dinner.

Another meme satirizes the Russian authorities' habit of blaming the West for domestic problems. It depicts current and former U.S. presidents Donald Trump, Joe Biden and Barack Obama carrying gasoline cans away from a Russian gas station.

“As long as there's no beer shortage,” one meme says, encapsulating the sense of fatigue amid the war.

Despite being one of the world's largest oil producers, Russia has reportedly started importing gasoline from India to ease domestic shortages. The Kremlin confirmed this week that it is in talks with other countries to purchase gasoline as it tries to stabilize the domestic market.

Social media users quickly responded with another joke: **“Happy Russia-started-buying-gasoline-from-India Day!”**

In Russian, the Telegram messaging app’s name is commonly shortened to *telega*, which can also mean “horse-drawn wagon.”

In this meme, a ma driving a horse-drawn wagon says he still uses *telega* (Telegram) in response to a car driver saying he uses Max, the state-backed messaging app critics say could facilitate government surveillance. The motorist then sees a “No gasoline” sign at a gas station, which implies that anyone using a *telega* (wagon) no longer needs fuel.

Another joke quips: "Russia is so rich that it can afford to shoot down drones with oil refinery lids" — a reference to the lid of an oil storage tank that was blown into the air during a recent Ukrainian drone strike on Moscow's Kapotnya oil refinery.

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