



DrumBeat: March 22, 2007

Posted by [Leanan](#) on March 22, 2007 - 8:38am

Topic: [Miscellaneous](#)

[What has happened to our 'cheap' gasoline?](#) - *Less than two years after Katrina, consumption hasn't changed*

We Americans need to bite the bullet, and start rearranging our lives and our infrastructure to be able to live with, and make our economy progress with, high cost gasoline.

[U.K.: £11bn fall in oil forecasts forces borrowing](#)

Gordon Brown yesterday slashed by a further £11bn his estimates of total North Sea revenues in the next five years - forcing up overall government borrowing projections which would otherwise have remained almost unchanged.

[Global boom in coal power – and emissions](#)

So what does the future hold? An acceleration of the buildup, according to a Monitor analysis of power-industry data. Despite Kyoto limits on greenhouse gases, the analysis shows that nations will add enough coal-fired capacity in the next five years to create an extra 1.2 billion tons of CO₂ per year.

Those accelerating the buildup are not the usual suspects.

Lester Brown: [Ethanol drives up world food prices](#)

If you think you are spending more each week at the supermarket, you may be right. The escalating share of the US grain harvest going to ethanol distilleries is driving up food prices worldwide.

[Mumbai, Lagging Shanghai, Faces First Power Cuts in a Century](#)

Mumbai, India's commercial capital, may have its first daily blackouts in a century next month because the government failed to plan for soaring demand.

[China's economy seen hurt if oil prices above 80 usd/barrel](#)

The vice-director of the State Council's State Energy Office, Xu Dingming, told reporters at an industry conference that China and India are the two largest oil consumption countries in the world and higher oil prices will hurt the countries' economies.

[Super-High Mileage Cars](#)

Here's the next big competition coming down the road: a \$25 million dollar prize to the builder of the first commercially-viable 100 mile per gallon car.

[The Saab Biofuel Budget 2007](#)

The Saab Biofuel Budget Report 2007 contains Saab Great Britain's recommendations for how the UK Government can support its emerging biofuels industry, with the primary aim of reducing road transport emissions. Other advantages include ensuring security of energy supply and diversifying the rural economy.

[India looks big on alternative energy](#)

Imagine running your computer on a solar energy backup for five hours a day! It's possible, says an expert who sees India as a promising destination for alternative sources of power.

[Biofuels launch biotech's 'third wave' to help meet increasing demand for energy](#)

Thousands of corporate executives and scientists gather this weekend in Orlando, Fla. for an industry trade show specifically aimed at touting biotechnology's so-called third wave, industrial applications. The word on everyone's lips: ethanol.

[Denmark leads the way in green energy — to a point](#)

Viewed from the United States or Asia, Denmark is an environmental role model. The country is "what a global warming solution looks like," wrote Frances Beinecke, the president of the Natural Resources Defense Council, in a letter to the group last autumn. About one-fifth of the country's electricity comes from wind, which wind experts say is the highest proportion of any country.

But a closer look shows that Denmark is a far cry from a clean-energy paradise.

[Energy crisis demands immediate attention](#)

James R. Schlesinger, a leading expert in the energy field and the first U.S. Secretary of Energy, spoke yesterday evening at the Lyric about the nation's energy crisis. Schlesinger is also currently co-chairing a study for the Department of Defense energy strategy. He articulated that consumption of oil as an energy source in today's society is a serious problem that will not disappear in the near future, but rather demand immediate attention.

[US trying to block Iran energy deals](#)

Emboldened by the perception that Russia is hardening its stance toward Iran, Washington is increasing its efforts to put more economic pressure on Tehran.

[Russia, Kazakhstan plan nuclear venture](#)

Russia is piecing together a new company to own nuclear-energy assets based on a revival of Soviet-era ties with Kazakhstan and other neighboring states, officials said. Vladimir Putin and Nursultan Nazarbayev, the presidents of Russia and Kazakhstan, met on Monday to discuss pooling newly formed ventures in uranium mining, enrichment, reactor construction and logistics into a trans-national holding, said Vladimir Servetnik, deputy chief executive officer of Tenex, Russia's state-owned atomic fuel trader.

[Asian buyer confirms rare S. African coal purchase](#)

A North Asian company has bought South African coal for the first time in about three years, despite the long shipping distance, to compensate for tight local supplies, a source at the buyer's company said on Thursday.

[Nepal: Petroleum shortage continues](#)

Petroleum shortage has continued in the capital city and major urban centers since the past few days due to lack of fuel supply. The transportation of the fuel has been halted due to the growing unrest in the Terai region.

Philippines: [DOE asks SC to reconsider oil depot closure](#)

Currently, the Pandacan oil depot supplies 50percent of power generation, 73percent aviation fuel, 70percent of the shipping industries' needs, 90 percent lubricants and 25percent of chemical to the entire country.

[Japan's Cosmo consider other currencies for Iran crude](#)

Japanese refiner Cosmo Oil is considering switching payment for its term purchases of Iranian crude away from the US dollar as early as April, when it finalizes contract terms for the next fiscal year, a senior company source said Tuesday.

The source said Cosmo had been contacted by Tehran some six months ago about paying in alternative currencies such as the yen or euro. Other Japanese refiners have talked about the possibility of using other currencies to pay for Iranian crude, which would still be officially priced in dollars.

[Norwegian Statoil reports risks in Iran and Venezuela](#)

Norwegian state oil firm Statoil said it could face penalties from the United States in connection with the company's operations in Iran and is risking losing 171 million barr

[Asian oil addiction growing fast](#)

The demand for oil in Asia will nearly double over the next 25 years and will account for 85 per cent of the increased demand in 2007, a Bangkok energy conference heard.

[Valley College Plants Seeds of Energy Independence](#)

Following its certification as the district's first college with a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design-accredited building, Valley has a plan in the works to have a one-megawatt photovoltaic farm, which uses an array of solar cells, known as photovoltaic cells, to convert sunlight into energy.

[Uganda: Govt Proposes 14 Dam Sites](#)

[Southern Ocean current faces slowdown threat](#)

The impact of global warming on the vast Southern Ocean around Antarctica is starting to pose a threat to ocean currents that distribute heat around the world, Australian scientists say, citing new deep-water data.

Melting ice-sheets and glaciers in Antarctica are releasing fresh water, interfering with the formation of dense "bottom water," which sinks 4-5 kilometers to the ocean floor and helps drive the world's ocean circulation system.

Plumbing, pipe-fitting, and peak oil: this [Mechanical Contracting Workshop](#) has a session on peak oil.

James McGarvey, executive director of the New York State Weatherization Directors' Association, will address the opening session March 29 on "Peak Oil: Myth or Reality?" He will cover what the U.S. Department of Energy's Hirsch Report, U.S. Army Corps' Energy Study and other reports have to say on the topic.

[Al Gore's testimony to the House](#) - Grist live-blogs it.

[Critics Slam Gore over Global Warming Testimony](#)

This is the same Al Gore who's global warming documentary drew vast media attention and the same losing Democratic presidential candidate who was recently called a hypocrite over his zinc mine which is under investigation for numerous environmental pollution violations.

[Spilling Oil In Mexico](#)

Mexico swims in oil, but long-standing nationalism inhibits its extraction. Now its oil revenues are running low, while emigrant remittances soar. What's wrong with this picture?

[Pemex Oil Output Edges Up in February](#)

Crude oil production at Mexican state oil monopoly Petroleos Mexicanos, or Pemex, edged up in February to 3.15 million barrels a day from 3.14 million barrels a day in January, while natural gas output reached a record 5.8 billion cubic feet a day, according to data released Wednesday.

Tom Whipple - [The Peak Oil Crisis: Situations To Watch](#)

Evidence is mounting that oil prices will soon climb to new, perhaps unaffordable for many, highs. Some think "soon" is three, four, or five years away. Others think "soon" may be as close as three, four, five, or six months. It is this latter scenario in which oil and gasoline prices reach new highs before the year is out that we look at today.

[Richard Heinberg's Museletter #179: Burning the Furniture](#)

A soon-to-be-released study by the Energy Watch Group in Germany on the future of

global coal supplies has implications so surprising and far-reaching that energy policymakers may take years to digest it. This essay is intended to help speed that process. The report's central conclusion is that minable global coal reserves are much smaller than is commonly thought, and that a peak in world coal production is likely within only ten to fifteen years.

[Nuclear plans may stall on uranium shortage](#)

Growing global competition for scarce enriched uranium threatens to derail a much-heralded nuclear renaissance in the United States and around the world, says an industry researcher from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

In a report released yesterday, MIT researcher Thomas Neff said there has been 20 years of under-investment in uranium production and enrichment, resulting in a tightening of supply that has driven prices up eightfold.

[Leftist Brazilian President Silva slammed for calling ethanol producers 'heroes'](#)

Brazil's booming alternative ethanol fuel industry is attracting praise and investment from around the world, but President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva was roundly criticized at home Wednesday for calling well-off ethanol producers "national and world heroes."

Less than two weeks after Silva forged an ethanol "alliance" with U.S. President George W. Bush, activists said they were upset that Brazil's first working-class leader appeared to praise producers they blame for pocketing huge profits while legions of cane-cutting farm workers stay poor.

[Hydrogen cars face technological hurdles](#)

BMW, Toyota, Honda, GM, DaimlerChrysler and Volkswagen have hydrogen-powered vehicles on display at the conference, but all have similar technological challenges, including costs that range up to a million dollars a piece and limited range on a hydrogen fill-up.

[China's Feb. Coal Imports Rise 51 Percent to 3.9 Million Tons](#)

China's imports of coal jumped 51 percent from a year earlier in February as energy demand increased in the world's fastest-growing major economy.

Coal imports climbed to 3.9 million metric tons, the Customs General Administration of China said in Beijing today. Imports in the first two months of the year surged 66 percent to 8.6 million tons.

[UK Offshore Operators: Treasury Turns 'Blind Eye' to Industry](#)

Responding to Wednesday's Budget statement by UK Chancellor of the Exchequer Gordon Brown, the UK Offshore Operators Association (UKOOA), the representative body for North Sea production companies, accused the Treasury of turning a blind eye to the urgent needs of the UK's offshore oil and gas industry where production is being undermined by high costs and punitive tax.

[Pemex Seeks Multiple Alliances for Deep-Water Oil](#)

Petroleos Mexicanos, the third- biggest oil supplier to the U.S., needs to enter alliances with several companies to help it develop deep-water oil fields, said Mexico Energy Minister Georgina Kessel.

[Police hold French oil firm CEO for questioning](#)

The new CEO of French oil giant Total SA was being held for questioning Wednesday in an investigation into the group's activities in Iran, the latest legal challenge for the company and its embattled chief.

[High gas prices not slowing RV industry](#)

The recreational vehicle industry has been reporting record sales for the past five years, despite rising costs at the pump. Insiders credit a growing number of baby boomers who want the gas-guzzling vehicles for retirement and younger families opting for vacations closer to home for offsetting any potential losses because of soaring fuel costs.

[New carbon-dioxide tracking developed](#)

With concern growing about global warming, researchers said Wednesday they have developed a new system to track carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. Being able to determine where and when this major greenhouse gas increases or decreases should help in projecting future climate change and evaluating efforts to reduce releases of carbon. "This is a pretty exciting opportunity," said Richard Spinrad, head of research at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

[Water scarcity: Global warming to deepen thirst for blue gold](#)

Fresh water, the stuff of life, is set to become even more precious as global warming begins to bite, experts warned ahead of World Water Day on Thursday.



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