



## DrumBeat: March 26, 2007

Posted by [Leanan](#) on March 26, 2007 - 9:03am

Topic: [Miscellaneous](#)

### [The lights are out all over oil-rich Nigeria](#)

Nigeria is rich in oil but short of energy, and at night the lights are out and darkness reigns for most of the 140 million inhabitants.

Hundreds of small and medium-scale businesses are being strangled by an almost total lack of power in a country which is the sixth-biggest exporter of oil in the world.

### [Clean coal is all hot air](#)

When it comes to clean coal, there is a gigantic elephant in the room. Although \$500 million is a significant amount of money to spend on corporate welfare, it is a drop in the ocean compared with the higher costs of electricity generation that are involved in the use of clean coal technology, and the effects that these higher costs will have on consumer prices.

### [Al Gore and the Wedges Game](#)

Whether they realize it or not, policymakers dealing with energy and climate issues are now deeply engaged in the wedges game. What is the wedges game? It is a useful way of thinking about how to replace energy technologies that produce greenhouse emissions with less-harmful alternatives.

### [Energy activists snipe at rivals](#)

In what one industry representative calls a struggle for supremacy, advocates of various sources of alternative energy are beginning to point out the competition's warts.

### [Ethanol industry basks in big profits](#) - *But margins not expected to last*

The ethanol industry last year posted the largest profit margins since the industry's

infancy, fueled by factors including high gas prices, low corn prices and the elimination of the fuel additive methyl tert-butyl ether (MTBE).

### [Is bioethanol a sustainable fuel or a threat to food for the poor?](#)

Looked at globally, using data from the US-based Earth Policy Institute, the world's 800 million motorists will be competing for food with its 2 billion poorest people already struggling to stay alive.

Apparently, the maize required to fill the tank of a 4x4 vehicle with ethanol once would be enough to feed a person for a whole year.

### [Peak oil thriller hits German best-seller list](#) - includes an interview with the author.

### [Ghana: Use energy efficiently](#)

The two agencies say consumers would have to endure more of the ongoing load management programme to save the Akosombo Dam from total collapse.

...Under the new timetable electricity consumers will be denied power for 24 hours every four days instead of the current 12 hours off, after every 5 days.

### [Vietnam: Production brought to standstill due to power cuts](#)

According to the Electricity of Vietnam (EVN), the consumption of electricity in the first month of the year increased by 17%, while the demand for electricity for 2007 is forecast to increase by 15% only. Thus, the actual electricity demand is much higher than expected.

### [South Africa: Petrol and diesel imports to surge](#)

South Africa will import about 1.2 billion litres of diesel, petrol and other refined petroleum products this year to meet demand from motorists and industry that local refineries cannot satisfy.

The rising demand for fuel has raised concern about the capacity of ports to handle significantly larger volumes of refined product and the ability to move fuel inland.

### [Energy trading market planned to protect suppliers](#)

The Yangtze River Delta is preparing to inaugurate a united energy trading market in an effort to safeguard its energy supply and enhance efficiency.

### [As if gold weren't bad enough, now they have found oil](#)

Ever since press reports indicated several years ago that commercial deposits of petroleum had been confirmed in Zanzibar off the shores of Pemba and surrounding areas, things have never been the same.

### [Iran's chances are getting slimmer for controlling future energy markets](#)

The troubles surrounding Iran is not ending. With mass reserves of gas and oil, the ambition to develop nuclear technology is leaving the Iranian industry handcuffed. While Iran is following the footsteps of North Korea, Russia is using the gas to build an energy empire.

### [UAE has the fifth largest natural gas reserves in the world](#)

The UAE contains proven crude oil reserves of 97.8 billion barrels, or slightly less than 8% of the world total reserves. Abu Dhabi holds 94% of this amount, or about 92.2 billion barrels. Dubai contains an estimated 4.0 billion barrels, followed by Sharjah and Ras al-Khaimah, with 1.5 billion and 100 million barrels of oil, respectively.

### [Japan recognises India's nuclear energy requirement](#)

Japan "recognises" India's quest for civilian nuclear energy cooperation and has promised to "proactively participate" in the discussions on the sensitive issue in the international fora.

### [Fighting for air: frontline of war on global warming](#)

"We only see the sun for a few days each year," said Zhou Huocun, a doctor in the outlying village of Liucunzhen. "The colour of our village is black. It is so dirty that nobody airs their quilts outside any more so we are getting more parasites. I have seen a steady increase in respiratory diseases as the air quality gets worse and worse."

### [From Pipe Dream to Pipe Reality](#)

China's thirst for oil is clear from the numbers. Although the country was self-sufficient in oil as late as 1993, unprecedented economic growth in recent years has drastically changed the situation. Since 1995, for example, China's gross domestic product has

grown by 8 percent to 10 percent per year, while oil imports have increased by an average of 22 percent.

And the appetite continues to grow. According to a September 2005 report from China's Energy Research Institute, China's oil demand will top 11 million barrels per day by 2020. By the same year, China will have to be a net importer of almost 8 million barrels per day, versus about 4 million now. How will it make up the difference?

### [Saudi petrochemicals group eyes GE plastics](#)

Saudi Basic , the largest public company in the Middle East, is lining up a bid for General Electric's plastics division in a deal that could be valued at up to \$12bn (€9bn).

### [Carbon Trading: History Repeating Itself?](#)

The Catholic Church was roundly criticized—and rightly so—for the practice of selling indulgences. Indeed, it spawned the Reformation. But even at its worst, this practice was never touted as a permission to commit sin, nor as a pardon of future sin. It would take the modern environmental movement to bring such commerce to the secular world. These new indulgences are called "carbon credits."

### [U.K.: Report recommends decentralising energy](#)

Creating a network of local power stations would be far more efficient and lead to lower carbon emissions than building new nuclear power stations, according to a report commissioned by Greenpeace.

### [The changing nature of Russia's Gazprom](#)

"Because gas is so tremendously important to the Russian economy, Gazprom has a tremendously important position, and I think President Vladimir Putin views it as too important a company for foreign or even private Russian interests to get control of."

### [Kurt Cobb: Environmental discourse and the paradox of the open society](#)

Given the increasing weight of the evidence on such issues as global warming, energy depletion, industrial agriculture, fisheries destruction, and water supply and quality, the natural course for an open society would be to discuss ways to minimize the risks of possible adverse developments. Instead, with the emerging exception of global warming, the discussion continues to be whether any of these concerns rate as real problems. This discussion, of course, isn't taking place in a vacuum. Vast sums are being spent on public relations by large corporate interests in an effort to convince the powerful and the not-

so-powerful that the problems we face are either not problems at all or at worst, are easily managed by the very corporations complicit in creating them.

### [You can't have it your way](#)

We keep arguing over potential solutions to the problems we've caused in our world. Invariably, we look to science for those solutions, believing that there is a perfect solution there if only science could find it. In fact, there is an excellent solution, but it's one that we can't ever believe because it says something that contradicts everything our national ethos tells us to believe.

The solution is to change our behavior.

### ['Green' revival with echoes of the '70s](#)

In Halfmoon, the sign over the front door of Town Hall still reads "Solar Town, USA."

But the futuristic monicker town officials inaugurated when they built a new Town Hall in 1978 that featured state-of-the-art solar technology never got hot.

### [Take my junk mail, but leave the toilet paper](#)

### [Oil prices hit 2007 highs on Iran tensions](#)

World oil prices struck the highest points so far in 2007, nearing 64 dollars a barrel in London on Monday as the market fretted over rising tensions in major crude producer Iran, traders said.

In London, the price of Brent North Sea crude May delivery rose 52 cents to 63.70 dollars a barrel in electronic deals. It had earlier struck 63.97 dollars -- the highest point since December 6.

### [OPEC Dictates Higher Prices, Scarcity as Crude Rises](#)

Saudi Arabia is shipping less oil to customers. OPEC by February reduced daily output by 1 million barrels. Global inventories this year fell the most in a decade.

### [Bush, automakers to talk flex-fuel cars](#)

President Bush is getting at look at U.S. automakers' latest advances in alternative fuel

vehicles as the companies press the case that ethanol and biodiesel blends can help reduce the nation's reliance on foreign oil.

### [Why Hybrid Cars Aren't Selling Well](#)

I would suggest that Americans aren't all that "green" despite the endless print and broadcast media harangues that our wonderful lifestyles are to blame for everything from hurricanes to frizzy hair. Those who have tried to be green have found that there are considerable additional costs involved and this has proven particularly true of hybrid cars that include batteries to permit electricity to partially replace the use of gasoline.

### [Jérôme Guillet: The View from the Peak](#)

So what can be said about peak oil today? Richard Heinberg and Leonardo Maugeri provide some solid answers - and radically different conclusions.

### [Clean fuel's internal combustion](#)

Imagine legislators in Washington being driven around in steam-powered cars, indicting heavy polluting car companies, holding federal hearings on reducing carbon emissions, and introducing legislation to ban the internal combustion engine within 10 years. Sound like an optimistic future? Try 35 years ago.

### [APPLE leader inspires others to help planet](#)

A Nevada City woman transformed her life by trading in her SUV for a motorcycle, replacing all the lightbulbs in her house with energy-efficient bulbs, taking in a roommate, cutting down on meat consumption and saying goodbye to her cell phone.

### [Report queries nuclear role in beating global warming](#)

The surge in political popularity of nuclear power as a quick-fix, zero-carbon solution to global warming is misguided and potentially highly dangerous, a group of academics and scientists said on Monday.

In its report "Secure energy, civil nuclear power, security and global warming", the Oxford Research Group said there was not enough uranium available and nuclear nations would therefore tend to opt for reprocessing spent fuel to obtain plutonium.

### [Palm Oil & Deforestation: Truth or Fiction?](#)

First, the BBC sent a film crew to film the so-called deforestation and habitat loss of the Orang Utans. Then the NGO's added their voices to the irrational chorus of calls for consumers to avoid palm oil products as they had allegedly come from unsustainable sources. The Friends of the Earth, a UK NGO alleges that "the palm oil industry is now considered by scientists as the biggest threat to the Orang Utan"! Scientists? Which scientists? The pseudo-scientists from the verbose sounding "Center for Science in the Public Interest"?

### [Japan's Energy Wisdom: Green and growing](#)

AN ISLAND nation with no domestic oil supply, Japan offers a glimpse into the world's energy future, when oil reserves decline to unsustainable levels and alternatives are the only alternative. Unlike the vast and swaggering United States, Japan has confronted the reality of limited oil, especially in its energy conservation efforts. According to the International Energy Agency, Japan's energy consumption as a percentage of gross domestic product is the lowest in the world.



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