



## DrumBeat: May 10, 2007

Posted by [Leanan](#) on May 10, 2007 - 9:12am

Topic: [Miscellaneous](#)

### [Total SA says two killed in fire at Congo oil field, production halted](#)

A fire at an oil field operated by Total SA killed two people and injured two others, the French petroleum giant said Thursday.

The fire halted production causing a loss of 60,000 barrels a day, company officials said in a statement disseminated on state-run radio.

The cause of the blaze at the Kossa oil field, around 570 kilometers (354 miles) from Brazzaville, was unknown. Flames engulfed the oil field before dawn, and the fire was still burning late Thursday. Company officials said their investigation so far had turned up a suspicious boat, its hull and body completely burned.

### [Gunmen kill 2 police in Nigeria oil area](#)

Gunmen jumped from a minibus in Nigeria's southern oil center and killed two police officers Thursday in the latest violence to strike the petroleum-producing region, officials said.

### [Richard Heinberg: Coal's Future in Doubt](#)

The three primary take-away conclusions from the new coal study are as follows:

- “World proven reserves (i.e. the reserves that are economically recoverable at current economic and operating conditions) of coal are decreasing fast....
- “The bulk of coal production and exports is getting concentrated within a few countries and market players, which creates the risk of market imperfections.
- “Coal production costs are steadily rising all over the world, due to the need to develop new fields, increasingly difficult geological conditions and additional infrastructure costs associated with the exploitation of new fields.”

### [Why aren't Americans using less gas?](#)

"Prices by themselves have to go higher than they are now and stay there for a longer time for customers to change their minds in a significant way," says Tom Libby, senior analyst at J.D. Power. In other words, don't expect a big shift like we saw during the gas crises of the 1970s, when fuel availability - not fuel prices - was the issue.

### [A World of Difference in Energy Access](#)

About 56 percent of total energy use comes from traditional biomass — mostly firewood. The top 20 biomass users in the world are all African countries, with the exception of Nepal (fourth), Haiti (11th) and Myanmar (12th), according to the book.

The growing appetite for energy has helped shrink forests. Nearly 45,000 square kilometers of forest were lost in low income countries between 1990 and 2005, and another 38,000 square kilometers of forest were lost in lower middle income countries.

### [Trade gap exceeds forecasts](#)

The U.S. trade deficit widened more than expected in March to \$63.9 billion, as higher oil prices helped push total imports to the second highest on record, a U.S. government report showed Thursday.

The trade gap swelled 10.4 percent from February, the Commerce Department said, surprising Wall Street economists who had expected a more modest expansion.

### [OVL finds huge gas reserve in Iran](#)

NEW DELHI: ONGC Videsh Ltd, (OVL) on Wednesday announced that the company has made a natural gas discovery with in-place reserves being estimated at around 10 trillion cubic feet in Iran.

### [World Powers Eye Central Asia's Energy](#)

The EU wants to secure energy supplies by pledging aid; Russia and China are countering with a different tack; and Turkey has a renewed interest in the region

[Urban farms empower Africa](#) - *Aid providers in Congo and elsewhere are discovering that lessons in farming can succeed where food handouts have not.*

There are unique considerations when it comes to urban farming, Wally says: He can't grow crops that will get too tall, or else they will absorb too much pollution. Also, bandits

might hide in the foliage. Better to keep the vegetables low and leafy.

### [Oil, Food, and the Coming Crisis in Agriculture](#)

*Eating Fossil Fuels* begins and ends with a very basic assessment, something that too few people completely understand or think about, and yet is absolutely critical to our well-being on planet Earth: our food supply is highly dependent on hydrocarbons, whether as fossil fuel or petrochemical additives. In the 1950s and 1960s when population growth threatened to outrun food stores, an international agricultural program, now referred to as the Green Revolution, was initiated to increase farm production all around the world through the intensified use of petrochemical fertilizers and irrigation. The results were impressive. Production nearly tripled. In the years since, low cost fossil fuels have increasingly become a critical part of all facets of industrial agriculture from the growing to the packaging to the transportation to the preparation of the product, to the extent, as Mr. Pfeiffer would say, we are all but eating fossil fuel.

### [Clean Power That Reaps a Whirlwind](#)

The wind turbines rising 180 feet above this dusty village at the hilly edge of Inner Mongolia could be an environmentalist's dream: their electricity is clean, sparing the horizon sooty clouds or global warming gases.

But the wind-power generators are also part of a growing dispute over a United Nations program that is the centerpiece of international efforts to help developing countries combat global warming.

### [China beating India for African oil](#)

India is competing with China in the African continent over two issues: Oil reserves in Africa and its strong presence in the United Nations in terms of membership. African membership will play a crucial role in determining India's chances of getting a seat in the UN Security Council.

### [Putin begins Central Asia tour aimed at boosting Moscow's energy power](#)

Russian President Vladimir Putin, on a Central Asian tour aimed at boosting Russia's influence in the region's rich energy sector, on Thursday agreed to allow more Kazakh oil to be shipped through Russian territory.

### [Oil giant warns of legal action](#)

Marathon Oil Corp. says regulators have warned the company that it may face legal action for allegedly attempting to manipulate crude oil prices in 2003.

### [Conoco CEO: Has not received firm proposal on Venezuela talks](#)

ConocoPhillips has not yet received a definite proposal from the Venezuelan government on the future commercial terms of its investment there, but expects one before the end of June, Chief Executive Jim Mulva said Wednesday.

### [Refinery workers raise safety worries](#)

Invoking the memory of BP's deadly Texas City explosion, ConocoPhillips refinery workers told the company's top executives Wednesday that budget cuts may be compromising plant safety.

### [Former weed may fill world's fuel tanks](#)

From China to Brazil, countries have begun setting aside tens of thousands of acres for the cultivation of jatropha – a plant many experts say is the most promising source for biodiesel. At the same time, companies from Europe and India have begun buying up land throughout Africa to establish jatropha plantations.

### [Denmark banks on offshore wind power for 'clean' future](#)

Denmark, a world leader in wind energy production and consumption, has built the world's largest offshore wind park in the North Sea as it aims to generate 75 percent of its electricity needs with wind power by 2025.

### Tom Whipple - [The Peak Oil Crisis: The Summer Ahead](#)

Last week they began kidnapping foreign workers at an alarming pace —22 foreigners kidnapped in 36 hours— and overran offshore platforms and production ships. On Monday, the strongest militant group issued a chilling ultimatum. “All foreign and local nationals working with multinational oil companies and their contractor should vacate Ijaw territory (the oil producing region) immediately.” “All foreign embassies should withdraw their nationals from our homelands.” “Nothing can protect them --- No more hostages taking -- Any national caught shall be summarily dealt with.” By the way, these guys have a good track record for doing what they say they are going to do. The next morning, three major oil pipelines were bombed, shutting down another 150,000 barrels per day of oil production. Total production shutdown by the insurgency is now on the order of 900,000 barrels per day. The insurgents have demonstrated that they have the capability of shutting down most, if not all, of Nigeria’s oil production.

### [Ukraine Looks to Canada for Nuclear Energy Help](#)

Ukraine is actively searching for alternative energy supplies to avoid another energy crisis, and Canadian nuclear technology and expertise could play a big role, the country's foreign minister said Monday.

### [Africa faces energy crisis - report](#)

Africa faces an energy crisis. It is not getting enough energy for its growing needs and the resources currently being used the most, are running out.

### [Biofuel boom leading to price hikes of food products](#)

Rising demand for plant-derived bioethanol has led to a shortage of cooking oil, pushing up prices of food products such as mayonnaise, and likely beef and even beer.

### India: [Lest 'power' potholes trip a sizzling economy](#)

Chronic power shortages are a serious problem. They can just be the potholes to trip an economy that is estimated to sizzle at a double-digit growth rate. "Economic growth in developing countries is extremely energy hungry. An analysis of electricity generation vis-à-vis the GDP growth rates reveals an elasticity of close to 1.2 per cent," explains Mr Singh. "In absolute terms this translates to an annual capacity addition requirement in excess of 17000 MW per year. Even considering improvements in energy efficiency, the number is not likely to be substantially lower. Against this, the country has been achieving barely 4000 – 5000 MW a year in the past."

### Nepal: [Fuel shortage hits Valley](#)

The Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), Nepal's sole oil supplier, has curtailed the supply of petroleum products by 40 percent to Nepal, sparking a fresh round of fuel shortage in the capital.

### [Namibia: Surprise! Second Petrol Price Shock in a Month](#)

FUEL prices have been increased for the second time in a month, with the Ministry of Mines and Energy attributing the increase to high international oil prices and the depreciation of the South African rand - to which the local currency is pegged - against the U.S. dollar.

### [Refinery down time being felt at pump](#)

"The key driver (of high gas prices) has been refinery down time, planned and unplanned," said Tom Kloza, a leading industry analyst for the Oil Price Information Service in Wall, N.J. Planned shutdowns included increased maintenance at West Coast refineries. Unplanned ones stemmed from accidents including fires at BP's Whiting, Ind., facility and Valero's plant in McKee.

### [Gas price expected to rise in summer](#)

Gasoline, already past \$3 a gallon, is poised to rise this summer as robust demand for the fuel once again outpaces the ability of U.S. refineries to produce it.

The reasons for high gas prices are many, ranging from the falling dollar to extraordinarily low supplies at gas stations and refineries, to tight markets around the world. But a new culprit emerged this year: Washington's push to incorporate more ethanol into transportation fuels.

### [Consumer advocates say 'hot fuel may inflate price at the pump](#)

If you think filling up costs a lot now, just wait until the dog days of summer.

Fuel expands when temperatures rise, but most retail gas station nozzles don't adjust for volume differences based on temperature. That oversight means California motorists could be losing up to 3 cents on every gallon, or \$480 million annually, according to an estimate by the Foundation for Taxpayer and Consumer Rights.

### [Statoil cuts 2007 oil and gas production target by 100,000 to 150,000 barrels per day](#)

Norwegian oil company Statoil ASA said Thursday it was cutting its 2007 oil and gas production targets by between 7.6 and 11.5 percent due to delays on new fields and other projects.

### [ResourceX Introduction to Mining and Mining Investment](#)

Greenhouse gas emissions and global warming, along with the likelihood of peak oil putting upward pressure on established energy prices and eventually knocking out supply – these have conspired to put nuclear back on the global agenda, regardless of what environmentalists have to say about it.

...To put it simply, we are entering an era of scarcity. It's increasingly difficult to supply enough gold, uranium, nickel, copper, fuel and so on to the millions that are added to the world's (read: Chinese and Indian) middle class each year. During the period 1980 to



2000, China's GDP quadrupled, resulting in an incredible boom in its middle class that still goes on today. And what do middle class people do? They watch TV, drive cars, and wear jewelry. In short, they consume, and, as I stated earlier, everything that is not grown must be mined.

### [Cornucopian catechism: Notes from Pittsburgh](#)

Simultaneously I contacted several foundations and "Green" organizations; specifically asking them to look at Portland's Peak Oil Task Force Report and --if they would not mind- get back to me on what relevance it had for our city. One foundation president forwarded my email to his economic development director --an interesting choice over his environmental area. This director replied, "We [have] ... a sensible agenda around alternative energy ... using market-based mechanisms as one way to achieve progress toward environmental sustainability." She would not comment of the Portland Task Force Report; and "sensible" is code for don't mess with economic growth as well as, I conjecture, for dismissing peak oil as "non-sensible."

### [Addiction to oil is U.S. defense issue](#)

You can agree with me, the liberal tree-hugging energy watchdog, who's pointing to the numbers and urging a dialogue for change. Or you can agree with the energy corporations, whose only purpose in life is to make lots of money today and grow their stock value. Or our government, whose interests are obviously driving us to a net energy-losing, climate-changing end. Or you can live in a fog of denial. The choice is yours.

### [Editorial: Don't like gas prices?](#)

As gasoline crosses that especially nauseating \$3 per gallon line again, it's time to look at ourselves in the mirror again:

Don't complain about the prices when you're driving your gas-guzzling truck, SUV or muscle car.

### [Oil Industry Keen on Biofuels](#)

The oil barons (or energy companies, as they preferred to be called) are increasingly tying up with biofuel and chemical companies to diversify their sources. From BP to Chevron to Shell, investments in ethanol and biodiesel are opening the doors to their refineries to alternative fuels.

### [Saudi cautious on oil plans as demand uncertain](#)

Saudi Arabia's reluctance to commit to boosting oil production capacity beyond 2009 is a response to the potentially huge impact on future demand of energy efficiency, alternative fuels and high prices.

Demand uncertainty is providing little incentive for oil producers to risk investing billions of dollars on long-term projects to boost capacity, as they worry it will lie idle.

### [Surge in biofuels OPEC headache](#)

Increased use of biofuels and other measures that steer consumers away from oil could prompt OPEC to rethink its investment plans, an official from the crude producer group said yesterday.

..."We have great concerns about this ... about policies which discriminate against oil," Fuad Siala, alternative energy sources analyst at the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries, said at a Hart energy conference in Brussels. "We have legitimate concerns to revisit our investment plans."

### [Chevron Says Hit by Two Separate Nigeria Militant Attacks](#)

U.S. oil major Chevron Corp. (CVX) on Wednesday said four foreign contractors working for the company were abducted Tuesday evening following one of two attacks by militants on offshore oil barges.

### [Iran's Oil Ministry is set to begin gasoline rationing on May 22](#)

Iran's Oil Ministry is set to begin gasoline rationing on May 22.

However, with only 12 days left until the rationing plan is to be implemented, no decision has been made on how many liters each car will be allowed to consume per day or month at the fixed price of 1000 rials per liter.

### [China Energy Watch: Oil Strike Spurs New Exploration Hopes](#)

PetroChina Co.'s (PTR) confirmation of huge oil reserves near Tianjin may revitalize exploration in the shallow northeastern waters that lap the Chinese mainland, and tempt back major oil companies scared away by a string of dry wells more than a decade ago.

But analysts warned the estimated 7.33 billion barrels of oil equivalent found at the



Nanpu block of the Jidong field may also harden attitudes in China's government against foreign oil companies being given access to new acreage.

### [China says threat from global warming 'urgent'](#)

China this year faces its greatest threat in a decade from typhoons, floods, droughts and other extreme weather caused by climate change, state media reported on Thursday.

### [Climate change issue heats Capitol Hill](#)

Even as the climate change issue spurred debate among U.S. lawmakers, a demographer said that while Americans take this matter seriously, they are lukewarm about taking any tough action to control it.

### [Bangkok turns lights out to highlight global warming](#)

Thailand's capital turned the lights out Wednesday in an effort to raise awareness of global warming, with six Bangkok neighbourhoods plunged into partial darkness for 15 minutes.

### [Warming in Asia, Africa, threatens US :military brass](#)

An energy crisis could be sparked if rising sea-levels flooded the Niger delta or storms resulting from climate change damaged oil installations.



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