



DrumBeat: May 13, 2007

Posted by [Leanan](#) on May 13, 2007 - 9:08am

Topic: [Miscellaneous](#)

[Purdue Will Reinvestigate Its Professor Who Claimed Desktop Fusion](#)

The new inquiry goes beyond the focus of an earlier one, which looked at whether the professor, Rusi P. Taleyarkhan, improperly omitted himself as an author on two scientific papers. For the first time, a committee is examining whether the underlying research might have been fraudulent.

[Union: Overloaded grid ready to 'pop': Warns of blackouts, explosions](#)

Documents obtained by the Herald show more than 12,000 transformers from Attleboro to Ayer are operating at above 200 percent capacity, with some as high as 900 percent over design standards. Union officials, who last night reached an agreement in contract talks with National Grid, say the overloads are pushing the state's electrical system to the brink and could lead to widespread blackouts this summer.

[A future with less oil and more hard choices](#)

When you look at folks who don't believe that worldwide oil production has already peaked, do you think they're wrong or the data aren't convincing?

It's pretty convincing to me. From what I've read, they believe that there will be technology advancements that will cover the gap. I don't agree with that.

I've been in the business over 50 years now. I've drilled a lot of oil wells. It's expensive to find, and I think the big fields have been found. Today, you'd have to replace 30 billion barrels a year to keep up. And we don't even come close to that.

[State Closes Coal-Fired Plant That Failed to Limit Emissions](#)

Four years ago, a company that owns two local power plants settled a lawsuit with New York State by agreeing to install \$100 million worth of pollution control technology at one of them, its coal-fired plant here, or shut it down.

At the time, the company, Mirant New York, said it would move forward with the upgrades at its Lovett plant. But on Thursday, state officials announced a different outcome. In a news conference here, Attorney General Andrew M. Cuomo said the state was forcing the plant to close after Mirant failed to reduce emissions with new technology.

[Governments, schools face cuts as price of gas soars](#)

Consumers aren't the only ones hit in their wallets as gas prices rise. So are governments and school districts — and higher costs for them mean less in services for taxpayers.

[Raise tax to save gas](#)

OK, here's the real way to cut back on oil use: Raise the gas tax.

[Good news: Many share hope gas prices will rise](#)

Judging from the unprecedented reader response to Thursday's column, "Record gasoline prices great news for U.S.," (www.andresoppenheimer.blogspot.com) in which I said that gasoline prices should rise above \$4 a gallon to trigger a nationwide uproar that will force Washington to get serious about reducing America's dependence on foreign oil, there are many more Americans than I thought who share this view.

[Gas Prices 'Tremendous' Impact on Local Truckers](#)

The President of the Prince George Trucking Association says the recent hike at the gas pumps translates into an approximate \$500 increase in monthly fuel costs for most truckers.

Stan Wheeldon says it's difficult to plan for such dramatic upswings because it's often a year or more between adjustments for hourly truck rates.

[Canada: Politicians must reign in out of control gas prices](#)

It is highly unlikely that the province's energy critic has struck upon the solution to the Lower Mainland's out-of-control gas prices, but embattled consumers can derive some optimism from the fact that the nation's lawmakers are finally looking at how we are being hosed at the gas pumps.

[Gas prices spur calls for action](#)

Across the country, record-high fuel prices have dipped deeper into the pocketbooks of unhappy consumers, prompting some lawmakers to threaten new taxes on oil-industry profits and bringing new scrutiny on an industry practice of charging different prices to gas stations depending on their location.

Canada: [Motorists fume as gas prices soar](#)

\$1.30 A LITRE: Situation's become so bad that some have resorted to siphoning fuel.

[India ready to help Nepal tide over fuel crisis](#)

While India has increased its supplies of fuel by a small percentage, Nepal has asked India for more time to pay back outstanding dues and urged it to resume normal supply till the election to the Constituent Assembly is held later this year.

The Himalayan state has been witnessing a severe fuel shortage, with long lines at petrol stations, as supplies from Indian Oil Corporation had been curtailed by about 40 per cent, after Nepal Oil Corporation defaulted on regular payments.

Barbados: [No word yet on gas hike](#)

There is no Cabinet decision yet on any increase in the price of gas.

But at a time when international oil prices have moved steadily upwards in the past four months, Government may soon have to "look at the numbers" and decide if people should pay more to drive their vehicles on the nation's highways and byways.

Jamaica: [Pain at the gas pumps! Public sector spent more than \\$1 billion on petrol in the last two fiscal years](#)

Petrol purchases for government-owned vehicles is a tight squeeze on the public purse as more than \$1 billion has been spent at the pumps over the last two financial years to gas up the public-sector fleet.

As a result, Dr. Ruth Potopsingh, group managing director of the Petroleum Corporation of Jamaica (PCJ), is warning that the country cannot continue the current trend. "We have to do something about it. It is not sustainable," she said.

[Tainted gasoline costs drivers, damages autos](#)

While the number of gas stations that get in trouble for having bad gas varies from year to year, state regulators say, the number of complaints they get tends to spike when the price of gas goes up.

[Q&A With Venezuela's Energy Minister](#)

"The concept here is there can be no interest above our laws, our constitution, none. Those companies were at the margin of the laws in the hydrocarbon sector all these years. Last year, we offered a possibility to discuss a migration in the framework of our law. We spent a year intending to do that and, with that effort not being possible, President Hugo Chavez ordered the nationalization and a law was approved. What we say is that with that law there is no possibility, there is not much flexibility, the terms of the law have to be complied with, as in any sovereign country. And what we've said is if our legal framework and constitution are not respected, they'll have to leave the country."

[Auto industry needs to be saved from itself](#)

The court case in which the auto industry is challenging Vermont's auto emission standards has unveiled the kind of Alice in Wonderland thinking that has decimated the industry in the United States.

[Basin rig count remains strong despite softer prices](#)

"I don't know where the ceiling is on the rig count," said Ingham. "We had sharp growth in the rig count, then it was constrained by shortages of labor and equipment. As those problems were solved, the count began rising again. That shows me there was unmet potential. Prices have leveled off, but we see the rig count continue marching upward. As long as that number goes up, it's a solid indicator there's enough activity increase -- not just holding steady but an actual increase -- to offer continued economic stimulus."

[Sale of Carbon Credits Helping Land-Rich, but Cash-Poor, Tribes](#)

The market for carbon credits promises to be a boon for some land-rich but cash-poor tribes. Selling carbon sequestration credits early in the growth of a forest lets the tribe realize some money more quickly, rather than waiting for decades for the harvest.

[Silicon Valley Sets Sights On "Clean Tech"](#)

Microchips? Been there. Software? Done that. Dotcoms? Soooo 20th century. Now,

Silicon Valley is looking to become clean and green – and it could turn into the region's next big high-tech push.

Its new focus: so-called "clean technology" – technology that uses natural resources more efficiently or not at all, thereby reducing the environmental impact of products and cutting costs.

[Secret British Gas nuclear plans](#)

Centrica, parent company of British Gas, has opened secret talks with French energy giants EDF and Areva about building nuclear power stations in Britain.

[Infinifuel biodiesel plant in Wabuska uses geothermal energy and crops to create alternative energy](#)

Claude Sapp, principal for Infinifuel Biodiesel...is working to turn the oldest geothermal plant in Nevada into a biodiesel processing facility, where camelina oil seed and even algae is becoming diesel fuel.

[Iran nuclear diplomacy makes nations aware of energy crisis: ambassador](#)

According to the ambassador, countries will face crisis in meeting their energy needs because fossil fuels will one day be depleted.

..."Crisis of energy shortage in years after 2015 is a serious dilemma which should urge all countries to consider nuclear energy as a major source to meet future energy demands," he said.

"Given the lack of attention to the upcoming energy crisis, developing countries will turn into 'victims' in the next era." Referring to emerging international awareness about the importance of nuclear energy, he added that world nations overwhelmingly support Iran's rights to access peaceful nuclear technology.

[Banking on going green](#)

Citigroup is investing \$50 billion in green projects. But is this concern for the planet or mere opportunism? A bit of both, writes Dominic Rushe from New York.

[Amish In Ohio Turned On To Solar Power](#)

Their avoidance of technology does not mean they see such things as "evil". Indeed, the

Amish view modern advances such as electricity or automobiles as items that depend on the outside world, and therefore get in the way of their intended separation from that existence. For decades, they have relied on kerosene or natural gas as a source of light. The rise of solar power over the past several years, however, has created a safe alternative that keeps in tradition with their independence. In Ohio, in particular, there is a great increase in solar arrays on the roofs of the Amish -- something that's been drawing perplexed reactions from local residents not used to seeing such advanced technology.

[Jordan: Price increases curb demand for kerosene, diesel but boost JPRC's sales value by 43%](#)

Fuel price increases last year raised the sales value of the Jordan Petroleum Refinery Company (JPRC) but cut the firm's sales volume as a result of lower demand.

[Bob Hertzberg: Who needs the sun?](#)

Selling solar power in rain-drenched Wales might seem an uphill struggle. But for Bob Hertzberg, the fast-talking co-founder of venture capital outfit Renewable Capital, that's the whole point. He is bankrolling a company in Cardiff making solar cells that do not need direct sunlight to generate electricity.

[Are We Rome?](#)

The most salient comparison between modern America and classical Rome, as Murphy notes, is that both have been blessed, and afflicted, with a sense of exceptionalism. In America this begins with John Winthrop exhorting his Puritan flock, who were about to settle the Massachusetts Bay Colony, "that we shall be as a city upon a hill." Since then various presidents have described the United States in words that echo Cicero's description of the Romans and their shining city upon seven hills: "Spaniards had the advantage over them in point of numbers, Gauls in physical strength, Carthaginians in sharpness, Greeks in culture, native Latins and Italians in shrewd common sense; yet Rome had conquered them all and acquired her vast empire because in piety, religion and appreciation of the omnipotence of the gods she was without equal."



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