



DrumBeat: June 9, 2007

Posted by [Leanan](#) on June 9, 2007 - 9:31am

Topic: [Miscellaneous](#)

[Water Crisis Hits Baghdad](#) - *Some resort to digging wells as the capital's taps run dry.*

Muhammad Sa'ad wiped the sweat off his forehead after a hot day spent filling pots and plastic containers with water. It took him so long because there was barely a trickle from his kitchen tap.

For three weeks in a row, the city has suffered severe power shortages, now up to 23 hours a day, causing a water crisis in many areas.

...Some residents draw water from their taps using electric pumps powered by private generators, an illegal practice but one used by many households. But the continuing fuel shortage means that even this option is frequently ruled out.

John Michael Greer: [Is History on Anyone's Side?](#)

But then there's the last paragraph, and the passage that brought me to a dead stop: "[T]he one bright spot in this future is that peak oil and climate change represent the greatest hope for reallocation of wealth and justice in the world."

That's an astonishing statement, and the fact that similar statements can be heard all over the peak oil community is one of the more astonishing things about it.

[Groups seek answers about oil shale's impact on water](#)

Environmental groups Thursday demanded that companies hoping to develop Colorado's oil shale deposits explain how much water the process could consume and how it would affect water quality and supplies.

[Man-made microbe 'to create endless biofuel'](#)

A scientist is poised to create the world's first man-made species, a synthetic microbe that could lead to an endless supply of biofuel.

Craig Venter, an American who cracked the human genome in 2000, has applied for a

patent at more than 100 national offices to make a bacterium from laboratory-made DNA.

[The growing India-Brazil axis](#)

While their shared ambitions of getting permanent seats on the United Nations Security Council brought India and Brazil together, their common aspirations of becoming global powerhouses has contributed to the two countries joining hands to energize their economies. This was the unambiguous statement that came out of Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva's three-day visit to India.

[Qatar and Netherlands strengthen energy ties](#)

The Netherlands, aiming to become a distribution centre for liquefied natural gas, yesterday signed a memorandum with top LNG producer Qatar to strengthen their energy ties, the Dutch economy ministry said.

['I'm glad I sold the plane'](#)

He gave up a rock'n'roll lifestyle to become an eco-friendly farmer - so just how green is Alex James' home? To find out, he uses a scheme that's open to everyone.

[How to get out of your SUV lease](#)

So you've got two years left on the lease for your Lincoln Navigator, but filling the tank is beginning to take its toll.

Breaking the lease is not really an option. Fees can run to thousands of dollars. So more and more people are turning to the Web to find people who can take over the leases.

[The Thing About Technology](#)

The thing about technology is that, since the dawn of the human species, every technology we have introduced has ultimately, and inadvertently, made things worse. That statement sounds categorical, so let me explain.

[Argentina president threatens oil companies amid diesel shortage reports](#)

Argentine President Nestor Kirchner has again threatened oil companies with a 1974

"supply law" that allows the government to fine companies for allegedly failing to supply the market.

Kirchner's warning, delivered at a provincial public works ceremony Thursday, comes amid complaints by farm groups that diesel shortages have slowed the planting of this year's wheat crop. Previously, farm groups had complained that diesel shortages were slowing this year's record soy and wheat harvests, which are wrapping up.

[Debate on farm bill still rages in different era](#)

When President Franklin Roosevelt signed the first farm policy into law in 1933, he promised it would be a temporary measure.

Cotton prices plummeted after the stock market crash. Foreclosures took hundreds of thousands of farms. Droughts and dust storms hurt income and caused an exodus from rural America.

However, more than 70 years later, Roosevelt's plan still spirals - some farmers are dependant on payments to aid their farm income amid a tough farm economy that includes high fertilizer and fuel costs.

[Still afloat, no matter the cost](#) - *Boaters not deterred by gas prices*

Despite rising gas prices, Jim Cook's boats just keep getting bigger. The Hanna City resident is on his eighth and largest boat, called "Fool's Fun."

He knows the bigger the boat gets, the more expensive it costs to run, especially with how high gas prices are - more than \$3 for regular gasoline throughout the Tri-County Area.

But that still doesn't stop Cook from pumping \$1,500 into a double V-8 engine speedboat that gets one mile per gallon.

[Addicted to gasoline -- and unwilling to change](#)

A common sight: green light, punch gas, speed to next red light, hammer brakes, repeat.

Only two parties benefit from this herd mentality: oil companies and brake pad manufacturers.

[Schools' moves help curb fuel costs](#)

During the past few years, schools have reorganized morning and afternoon bus routes for efficiency and scheduled multiple sports teams to play in the same place to combine trips, school officials said. Regularly replacing older buses with newer, more fuel-efficient ones also helps, they said.

Stockbridge Valley Superintendent Randy Richards said at the end of June each year, the district tops off all buses and reserve tanks to get the greatest number of gallons at the current rate, before the new year's contract kicks in July 1.

[A Tale of Two Charlies](#)

To distinguish the two Charles E. Wilsons, the GM CEO was nicknamed "Engine Charlie" and the GE CEO was named "Electric Charlie."

Fast-forward fifty-some-odd years.

Engine Charlie's company is now the very emblem of what's wrong with the country, just starting to pull out of the worst slump in its history, at war with its shareholders over emissions, lagging behind a market becoming increasingly concerned with fuel economy and emissions, losing market share every year, and desperately trying to turn itself around to refocus on the vehicles of the future.

And his legacy is an albatross around our collective necks: A nation of 210 million cars, desperately hooked on oil, with ever crowded roads, stressed out drivers, befouled air, a fuel supply in decline, an unsustainable topology of communities, and few good options for transition to something else.

Not to mention a permanent military industrial complex that eats half of the country's budget every year . . . in large part, to protect the fuel supply for all those cars.

Meanwhile, Electric Charlie's legacy is helping to lead the way to a future of renewable energy.

[Be a good citizen by conserving gasoline](#)

As I expected, the recently designated "do not pump gas day" was ineffective as a protest against rising fuel costs. In fact it did just the opposite and prices went up. Such an action will make no impact unless we are willing to carry it into our daily lives.

[Gas prices too high? Some say not even close](#)

Seventeen Democratic governors, including Gov. Ted Strickland, recently sent a letter to President Bush calling on him to work with Congress to lower gas prices, which climbed above \$3.20 a gallon for regular unleaded recently in Ohio.

While political leaders strive to placate constituents forking over more of their income at the pump, there's a group of energy experts arguing that gas is too cheap.

Australia - [Carbon is the new Black](#)

An emissions trading scheme will bring a bonanza for many - with this year's election determining who the winners might be.

[Kucinich is hot over loss at pump](#) - *Says fuel expansion aids Big Oil, cheats consumers*

If you filled up your gas tank Friday, you probably got ripped off - and you will continue to be, as long as temperatures stay above 60 degrees.

[Gasoline Shortage On Cayman Brac](#)

Traffic was backed up for at least 3/4 of a mile in each direction on Wednesday afternoon, with cars trying to get to the fuel tanks at CB Motors, the Cayman Brac's busiest fuel station. According to Garson Grant, proprietor of the station, he does not know what triggered the alarm that there was a shortage of gas on the Island. He said that he is not aware of that being the case. "This is a very unusual sight in Cayman Brac," observed a bystander.

['Deal will make power costlier'](#)

As the 123 agreement trudged into the last stage of negotiations, the Indo-US nuclear deal faced further resistance from the Left. The CPM has alleged that it would only benefit American businesses and escalate power costs.

[Wind big part of Oklahoma's past and future](#)

To many a trip to a windmill museum seems about as exciting as fishing in an empty lake, but when such a museum stands in an area where its 100-year existence is grounded in the wind-powered machines, the same museum tends to become as fascinating as it is relevant.

[Port city of Sur is recovering](#)

Oman's eastern port city of Sur and adjoining areas in the Sharqiya region, which bore the brunt of tropical cyclone Gonu's fury when it struck the Sultanate soon after midnight on Wednesday, was recovering fast, key officials of the National Committee for

Disaster Control (NCDRC) said here yesterday.

...The Ministry of Oil and Gas said it was doing its best to produce and supply enough quantities of fuel. A shortage at petrol pumps, it added, was caused not by shortfall in output, but by tankers unable to reach filling stations because of transportation difficulties.

[Number Cruncher: An Economic Lab On Food Inflation](#) - *Why bees are important to your wallet*

Interest rates around the world are on the rise, in a bid to keep inflation under control. This week alone, we saw the European Central Bank hike, and the U.S. Federal Reserve rule out rate cuts. The Bank of Canada has said interest rates may rise soon too.

It's a sign of things to come, says Bank of Montreal's investment guru Don Cox. He sees global interest rates rising another 200 basis points in the next two years, mainly because of ... bees.

Qatar: [Diesel finds way to black market](#)

Diesel is still being sold on the black market despite the fact that Woqod (Qatar Fuel) has taken the necessary steps to end its shortage by augmenting supplies.

India: [City roads to see vans running on battery](#)

Punjab Energy Development Agency (PEDA), Chief Executive, Tejinder Pal Singh Sidhu has stressed upon the need for effective implementation of energy conservation programme.

Speaking at the launch of a battery-operated electra van in the city on Friday, Sidhu said: "Energy conservation programmes can play a vital role in improving the present dismal scenario of shortage of energy in all sectors including industry, transportation, domestic sector and buildings", said Sidhu.

[Tory will use gas taxes to build highways](#)

His platform also calls for increased investment in public transit to create "alternatives" for commuters across the province and identifies traffic gridlock as a preventable source of global warming. "In too many communities, this gridlock is getting worse," the campaign document says.

"It costs jobs and productivity. It steals time from our lives at home."

"And when cars idle, they are at their worst for creating greenhouse gas emissions," the document says.

[Peak Oil Passnotes: What Price Energy Security?](#)

If the quest for energy stability is one that the world's major economies want to pursue, then things are not going well. If you take a second to stand back and look at the countries that produce large quantities of energy then it seems obvious that we are destined to have some major problems. That is if you like cheap energy. If you like high prices then things look good.

The attempt by right wing fundamentalists in the U.S. and the U.K. to secure energy supply through bombs, tanks and the blood of hundreds of thousands is failing. And failing fast. Just like the state-capitalists of the Soviet Union failed in their own attempt in Afghanistan. Iraq may no longer pose a threat to U.S. power-interests, in as much as it will not be invading any of its neighbours any time soon, but the anticipated stream of cheap energy has distinctly failed to materialise.

[ENERGY-CUBA: A Light at the End of the Tunnel](#)

The government announcement that electricity supplies in Cuba now exceed demand during the hours of peak consumption was received with a collective sigh of relief by Cubans, who have not forgotten the frequent and lengthy blackouts that occurred, especially during the summertime, two or three years ago.

Pakistan - [Power riots: the saga continues](#)



Protests against power outages continued Friday, and demonstrations were held in many areas against eight-hour-long load shedding cycles. It has been a week since long spells of load shedding and the resultant riots first began.

Ghana: [Energy crisis to dampen gold's shine](#)

"The price of gold is expected to be firm and overall production in 2007 is not expected to be hampered by extraneous factors. On the other hand production costs are expected to rise mainly on account of the relatively high cost the mining companies incur in generating power," Mr Jurgen Eijgendaal, President of the Chamber told the 79th AGM of members in Accra.

The Philippines: [Biofuels Act: Will it Lessen Foreign Firms' Grip on the Local Energy Sector?](#)

At first glance, the Biofuels Act seems like a promising start on the road towards national energy independence, weaning the country away from dependence on imported energy sources.

[It Was Forty Years Ago Today ...](#)

Remember the first day you drove a car by yourself, with nobody supervising? You remember where you went that day, what you listened to on the radio and how completely empowered you felt. All of us have spent the rest of our lives trying to get back the incredible feeling we had on that day. It's called Freedom and all of us have spent the rest of our lives trying to get back to the way we felt on our first solo drive. For it is our weakness, the magic of car ownership.

[Fidel: Reflections on the Real World](#)

US agribusiness, also reined-in by sanctions and red-tape, has nevertheless done business with the island and for more than peanuts. In 2006, Cuba bought around \$570 million in food from almost 30 states, in spite of burdensome and expensive regulations imposed by President Bush in 2004.

...On the other hand, as the peak oil-horizon moves closer, Oil Gas Review magazine warns that the struggle for oil would take place in poor countries, where the trend is toward tighter state control over their natural resources.

[National oil companies could one day merge: Petronas chief](#)

The growing partnership between newly empowered national oil companies could one day lead to mergers, says the chief executive of Petronas, the Malaysian state oil firm that blazed a trail overseas 15 years ago.

[Biofuels, diapers and sails - oh my!](#)

Cargo ships with kite sails. An underground "diaper" that stores irrigation water. Low-cost solar cells made with "dirty" silicon. A biofuel you can drink made from sawdust,

railway ties or dead cows.

Ideas like these are coming alive as the planet warms and energy prices rise, propelling the market for green fuels, renewable energy, low-emission technology and the like. This is especially true in Germany, the host of the G8 Summit, where save-the-planet awareness is traditionally high and governments and investors are willing to throw money at ideas ranging from the weird to the workable.

[GM wants to drive green, but easy on the rules](#)

"Frankly, it's time to move beyond exclusive reliance on historical regulatory approaches that clearly haven't solved these critical problems ... and move forward to embrace solutions that will yield the results that Americans expect and deserve," [General Motors Corp. chairman Richard] Wagoner said.

"For example, it has become increasingly clear that, of anything we can do over the next decade, biofuels have by far the greatest potential to actually reduce US oil consumption, reduce oil imports, and reduce carbon gas emissions," he added.

[Britain tells nationals to leave Nigerian oil delta](#)

Britain on Friday advised all its nationals to leave three states at the heart of Nigeria's southern Niger Delta, Africa's top oil-producing region, where violence against foreigners has become commonplace.

[Greens win control of powerful transport committee](#)

THE Green Party yesterday won leadership of the powerful transport committee after a reshuffle of the Scottish Parliament's structure.

[There is a quiet revolution afoot, but the Government is not rising to the challenge](#)

People have had enough of cars and planes and are starting to have a good time again without them.

[Azerbaijan favors anti-missile idea](#)

Officials in Azerbaijan, a nation with a questionable human rights record and huge oil reserves, on Friday welcomed Moscow's call to use a Russian-leased radar installation in their country as the cornerstone of a proposed U.S. anti-missile system.



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