



DrumBeat: June 27, 2007

Posted by [Leanan](#) on June 27, 2007 - 8:48am

Topic: [Miscellaneous](#)

[US lawmakers warned on anti-OPEC bill](#)

OPEC president Mohammed Al Hamli warned US lawmakers on Wednesday they were taking a "really dangerous step" in seeking legislation to sue the oil group.

The US Senate last week approved a plan that would enable the federal government to take legal action against OPEC for price manipulation, but the White House has threatened to veto the measure.

"It's a really dangerous step. We are in the process of fighting that," Hamli said at an oil conference in Turkey.

[Thomas Friedman: This baby is just plain ugly, folks](#)

The whole Senate energy effort only reinforced my feelings that we're in a green bubble - a festival of hot air by the news media, corporate America and presidential candidates about green this and green that, but, when it comes to actually doing something hard to bring about a green revolution at scale - and if you don't have scale on this you have nothing - we wimp out.

Climate change is not a hoax. The hoax is that we are really doing something about it.

[The Energy Challenge](#)

To be sure, the deaths and lingering effects at Chernobyl are tragic. But the disaster should have forced Americans to redouble their efforts to build the safest nuclear plants on the planet. Instead, we did something uncharacteristic of Americans: We stopped building, stopped inventing, stopped pushing the frontiers of technology.

What if we had reacted in the same manner in April 1947, when a port explosion in Texas City, Texas, triggered a massive fire at an oil refinery and killed 500 people? Should we have stopped drilling, pumping, exploring and transporting oil; should we have reverted to windmills; should we have turned back to firewood?

[High-priced gas can lead to innovation](#)

As I've said before, strangely I'm not all that sad about high fuel prices. Thanks to our wonderful free enterprise system, high prices create a very rich ocean of incentives for inventors.

[Energy bill may gouge consumers](#)

Price controls and taxing our way to energy security backfired in the 1970s, draining billions of dollars from domestic oil and natural gas development, and they won't work now.

[Tapis, World's Costliest Oil, May Gain Against Brent](#)

Malaysia's Tapis, the most expensive oil benchmark in the world, may appreciate further relative to Brent and West Texas Intermediate crudes because of demand for low-sulfur grades to produce diesel and gasoline in Asia.

[Analysis: Turkey's energy future](#)

Turkey is a crucial transit country for the world's oil and natural gas market, and a top Foreign Ministry official says its role will increase as the industry brings more sources to market and demand continues to rise.

[Australia: Energy profile](#)

Australia is rich in energy resources and leads the world in total coal exports.

[Bottoming out](#)

After sliding for six weeks, gasoline prices may be about to hit bottom.

[BP Makes Significant Investment to Boost UK Gas Supplies](#)

BP released plans for significant investment in its southern North Sea business, which will lead to an increase in recoverable gas reserves and create opportunities for further development offshore.

[Making 300% Gains Off Our Energy Crisis](#)

Peak oil is just the beginning of our problems. The increased interest in Canadian oil is causing grave concerns over their natural gas production. And it may already be too late to act.

[Energy debate must include all options](#)

In a nutshell, oil depletion (along with climate change) is probably the most serious crisis ever to face industrialised society and yet governments around the world are still incredibly ill-prepared to meet the extraordinary challenge this will pose. Virtually every single item we possess or need is due to oil in one form or another. However, no clear consensus has emerged on what happens next. Will existing hydrocarbon technologies be adapted to new realities or will radical new technologies emerge, like hydrogen fuel cells, to complement renewable energy sources like solar and wind energy?

[Geothermal: Out from under a rock](#)

Old Faithful and expensive contraptions in the basement that never really worked - that's what many people think of when they think geothermal energy.

But thanks to advances in technology, a better political climate and rising electricity prices, geothermal is quickly losing its status as renewable energy's most unloved sector. In fact, investment in the sector jumped nearly fourfold over the last two years, to about \$100 million last year.

[China's first hydrogen engine successfully ignited](#)

China's first independently developed high efficiency and low discharge hydrogen engine was successfully ignited in Chongqing, by ChangAn Auto Co. Ltd on June 18th. The high efficiency and low discharge hydrogen engine is the only main hydrogen fuel project that was established by the national "863" plan. The successful ignition marks a breakthrough in the progress of China's technology research, and lays a foundation for national hydrogen engine industrialization development.

[Iran oil exports at risk in UK ship sanctions plan](#)

A British proposal to target Iran's national shipping lines under a draft U.N. sanctions resolution could temporarily curb Tehran's ability to export oil to world markets, maritime sources said on Tuesday.

The confidential draft, obtained by Reuters on Friday, suggests denying rights of

passage to Iranian merchant ships in foreign waters. The withdrawal of landing rights for Iranian aircraft is also suggested.

[Global efforts to substitute for oil: Learning by doing ourselves in](#)

Contemporary discourse concerning the potentially enormous problem of dealing with peak oil overlooks the “own demand” of substitution. It takes a lot of oil to substitute for oil. A closer look reveals that the structural gyration of historical proportions associated with the process is up to its chin in the stuff.

[Ships still held up at Nigerian port after general strike](#)

More than 80 ships, many carrying fuel, were blocked and waiting to dock at Lagos port on Wednesday, port sources said, three days after a paralyzing general strike ended in Nigeria.

[The oil market is basically all about psychology](#)

“This is simply because since 2003 the price of a barrel of oil has spiralled, while China continues to experience a rapid rate of industrial growth. These are the ‘subjective’ reasons why the BP report is more likely to cause alarm in New Delhi than complacency.”

[Energy Crisis Approaching Bulgaria](#)

An energy crisis currently evident in Greece might spread to Bulgaria, Novinar daily reported.

Miners from Maritsa-Iztok mines plan to strike in case their wages remain unchanged. At the same time Sofia residents complain of power cuts.

[Bolivia reclaims oil refineries](#)

Bolivia has taken full control of two oil refineries from the Brazilian state-owned energy company, Petrobras, after a compensation deal last month.

[Still Apart Over Gas Row, China and Japan Agree to Compile Plan by Fall](#)

Japan and China remained apart Tuesday over main points of contention in the dispute

over gas exploration rights in the East China Sea, but they agreed to continue to expedite efforts to compile a plan to jointly develop the disputed gas fields by the fall, a Japanese negotiator said.

[Venezuela oil boom raises inflation spectre](#)

Endemic consumption and vibrant economic growth have been triggered by public spending on a massive scale, doubling over the past two years owing to a sixfold rise in the price of oil since President Hugo Chávez came to power in 1999.

But this effervescent economy – averaging about 12 per cent growth in the past three years – has unleashed one of the highest inflation rates in the world. And as growth slows, which some fear it is doing, inflation could continue to rise.

[Germany mulling programme to boost energy efficiency](#)

The German government is considering launching a plan worth billions of euros to boost energy efficiency and cut the use of oil, electricity and gas, a newspaper reported on Tuesday.

[Transit riders avoid high gas prices](#)

"I can't start my car for what it costs to ride a bus," Abbot said. For \$1 -- the cost of a senior day pass -- Abbott can ride the bus all day, and for \$2 she could head over to Wilsonville to do some shopping rather than drive a car. With gas prices exceeding \$3 per gallon and a car that gets a little more than 20 miles per gallon, public transit is definitely more economical.

[ABF, BP and DuPont to Build \\$400M Bioethanol Plant and Biobutanol Demonstration Plant](#)

Associated British Foods (ABF), BP and DuPont will invest around \$400 million for the construction of a major bioethanol plant alongside a demonstration plant for biobutanol. Although initial production of the primary plant will be bioethanol, the partners will explore converting it to biobutanol production once the required technology is available.

[The Next Generation of Biofuels](#)

New ethanol study examines global trends, opportunities and challenges in this emerging market.

[71% Think Global Warming Has Nothing to do With Man's Actions](#)

Pocket Issue and AOL have issued a press release that shows the results of 4000 people polled with almost 3 out of 4 believing that human actions aren't causing global warming, with 65% going further to agree with the notion that scientific findings on this issue are "far fetched." What strikes me as odd is how people all over the radio are claiming this as proof that global warming just isn't our fault. "If that many people believe it isn't true, then it must not be true," goes the logic...

[Climate Change Threatens North Africa Food Supply](#)

Increasingly frequent droughts in North Africa will force governments to import more food, placing their economies under severe strain unless global warming is checked, a senior UN climate expert said.

[Opec must lift oil supply: energy report](#)

THE price of oil will soar in the coming months, unless the Opec crude cartel ramps up output, the Centre for Global Energy Studies said in a report published on Monday.

"The world needs more oil if another price surge is to be avoided," the London-based energy research group said in a monthly study.

[OPEC Outlook: Demand For OPEC Oil By 2010 Below 2005 Level](#)

The Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries Tuesday said it expected demand for its members' crudes within three years will be almost 1 million barrels a day below 2005 volumes, largely because of growth in natural gas liquids production from non-OPEC producers.

[OPEC president: Countries need to enhance oil, natural gas capacity](#)

OPEC President Muhammad bin Dhain al-Hamili said on Tuesday that various countries needed to enhance oil and natural gas capacity, the semi-official Anatolia news agency reported.

[Shell Won't Re-Enter Nigeria's Western Delta This Year](#)

Royal Dutch Shell PLC is unlikely to go back into Nigeria's troubled Western Delta this year despite the area contributing around 500,000 barrels a day to the company's crude oil production, a Shell executive said Tuesday.

[Venezuela: ExxonMobil, ConocoPhillips to End Presence in Orinoco Projects](#)

ConocoPhillips (COP) and Exxon Mobil Corp. (XOM) are negotiating exit terms from their interests in multi-billion dollar projects in Venezuela's Orinoco heavy oil belt.

[Venezuela Exit Would Challenge ConocoPhillips Output Targets](#)

The most immediate effect of ConocoPhillips' decision to exit Venezuela's oil-rich Orinoco river basin and seek redress through arbitration will be to challenge the U.S. oil company's short-term production goals.

[The "New York Times" Smears Peak Oil](#)

The *Times* has joined oil companies in denouncing concerns that peak oil is near. Like all good propaganda, the *Times* disguises it as news. Last March, it smeared those warning of peak oil with an editorial hidden within a featured news article "Oil Innovations Pump New Life into Old Wells"...

[Nuclear power is what U.S. needs](#)

As the last in the line of hopper cars approached, my car count reached 103, not quite as many as usual. Each of those cars holds 100 tons of Wyoming coal. That's 10,000 tons in that train, headed for a big coal-fired electric plant somewhere east.

A typical 1,000-megawatt plant needs to burn that whole train load every day. I think of the 1,000 tons of ash and the carbon dioxide that plant emits every day, plus all the pollution produced from mining and transporting the coal.

[Free Software as Part of the Anarchist Toolkit](#)

So the question is, should we fail the above challenges and humanity enters a long slide downwards and the decay of industrial society, will this era of rapid global communications, vast amounts of digital storage and spare time to write software - disappear, only to be a short lived and unique phenomena in the history of humankind? In other words will the problems we face overwhelm the infrastructure needed to support all these technologies? (And which is suggested in the original Club of Rome reports. These were published in the 1970s and identified not just resource limits, but the possibility of a pollution crisis too as overwhelming industrial society and causing its downfall.) Of course the answer won't be found here but I think a small part of finding the solution is in fact here in the form of free software.

[Debts beyond our means](#)

Imported oil from the Middle East and manufacturing from China are pushing our national account imbalance to more than \$800 billion this year. Peak oil will explode our national debt to other nations. The correction of this imbalance will cause the dollar to drop in value, meaning our kids will work longer for less.

[UN: Floods, heatwaves send signal about global warming's impact](#)

Recent floods in Asia and Britain, and heatwaves in southern Europe, show the world must be better prepared to cope with the impact of climate change, the United Nation's top disaster prevention official said Wednesday.

[Iranians attack gas stations amid rationing](#)



Angry Iranians attacked several gas stations in protest after the government suddenly began long-threatened fuel rationing, while many others rushed to fill their tanks.

The Oil Ministry announced the start of rationing Tuesday night only three hours before it was due to begin at midnight. The sudden announcement sparked long lines at stations as Iranians tried to get one last fill-up before the limitations kicked in.

[Power cuts hit Cyprus in summer scorch](#)

Power cuts hit Cyprus in the midst of a scorching heatwave on Wednesday as electricity workers called a strike over authorities' plans to introduce LNG to the market in the next three years.

[May oil output slips at Mexico's Cantarell field](#)

- Crude oil output at Mexico's huge but aging Cantarell offshore field declined in May, according to data published on the energy ministry's Web site on Tuesday.

Cantarell, closely watched by the oil industry after sharp dips in output, produced an

average of 1.579 million barrels per day versus 1.592 million bpd in April.

The figure meant Cantarell accounted for just 51 percent of Mexico's overall crude oil output last month.

[Why experts on Mideast are always wrong](#)

The greatest error repeated by experts of all persuasions, by Arabophiles and Arabophobes alike, by Turcologists and by Iranists, is also the simplest to define. It is the very odd belief that these ancient nations are highly malleable.

[Building a Bug to Harvest Oil](#)

Microbes dwelling in oil fields and coal beds could inspire new methods of extracting fossil fuels from the depths of the earth. That's the hope of Ari Patrinos, a genomics pioneer who helped run the Human Genome Project and is now the president of Synthetic Genomics, a Maryland-based biotech startup founded by J. Craig Venter. Synthetic Genomics's goal is to use genomics to develop new energy technologies. As part of a new partnership with oil giant BP, Synthetic Genomics will study microbes that naturally feed off hydrocarbons for clues into biological means of extracting and processing oil and coal.

[Biodiesel to Become Cheaper Than Light Oil in 4 Years](#)

The price of biodiesel, an alternative energy source to light oil, will become lower than light oil as early as 2011, securing its economic feasibility, according to a recent report by the Korea Energy Economics Institute (KEEI).

[The Great Corn Con](#)

The ethanol madness continues! Last week, the Senate passed an energy bill mandating the production of 36 billion gallons of ethanol per year by 2022—a sevenfold increase over current levels. Senators congratulated themselves for their environmental foresight. The president, a biofuels advocate, has enthusiastically endorsed the ethanol surge. But it's almost certainly a fantasy, since no one in Washington seems to have thought for five minutes about where or how that much ethanol could be produced.



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