



DrumBeat: July 6, 2007

Posted by [Leanan](#) on July 6, 2007 - 9:03am

Topic: [Miscellaneous](#)

[New battery packs powerful punch](#)



Until recently, large amounts of electricity could not be efficiently stored. Thus, when you turn on the living-room light, power is instantly drawn from a generator.

A new type of a room-size battery, however, may be poised to store energy for the nation's vast electric grid almost as easily as a reservoir stockpiles water, transforming the way power is delivered to homes and businesses. Compared with other utility-scale batteries plagued by limited life spans or unwieldy bulk, the sodium-sulfur battery is compact, long-lasting and efficient.

[Global warming threatens alternative-oil projects](#)

Oil-sand, oil-shale, and coal-to-oil projects – alternative fuel sources that could enhance US energy security – have always faced one hurdle. They look good only when oil prices are high. Now, they have another challenge: global warming.

[Gazprom will invest \\$420b in gas industry by 2030 to meet demand](#)

Russian gas monopoly Gazprom will invest \$420 billion in the gas sector by 2030 to ensure enough supplies to the domestic market and exports, its chairman said in remarks published yesterday.

[Iran's Oil Industry: A House of Cards?](#)

...Iran's energy sector is a house of cards. It is neglected, crumbling and underinvested. Many of its oil and gas fields are in dire need of foreign technical expertise to help reverse their natural decline. An analysis published last year in Proceedings, a journal of the National Academy of Sciences, asserts that, "Iran is suffering a staggering decline in revenue from its oil exports, and if the trend continues, income could virtually disappear by 2015." Iran's deputy oil minister, Mohammed Hadi Nejad-Hosseinian, confirmed recently that, "if the projects for increasing the capacity of the oil and protection of the oil wells will not happen, within ten years there will not be any oil for export."

[Peru: Oil Industry Told To Keep Off Land](#)

Oil companies from all over the world have been warned by Peru's national indigenous peoples' organization not to explore for oil in areas where uncontacted tribes live. The tribes face extinction from an oil boom in Peru that has seen 70% of the Peruvian Amazon opened up to exploration.

[China, Russia sign supply deal](#)

CHINA'S state-owned Sinopec Group has signed an agreement with Russian oil firm Rosneft to transport additional crude supplies via Mongolia.

[India races for the world's cheapest car](#)

The telecom revolution in India has made cheap mobile telephones accessible to even the country's poorest, and now India's underclass is likely to be able to go from two wheels to four when the cheapest entry-level autos hit the roads in the near future.

[Frozen gas supply dreams to meet cold, harsh reality](#)

Take a world hungry for new energy, suggest a huge untapped trough of frozen gas on the doorstep of the biggest consumers, and it's easy to fathom why some governments are salivating over methane hydrate.

But even proponents say the cost, technology and environmental hurdles in developing

the resources -- mostly subsea deposits that promise vast gas reserves -- mean it could be a decade or longer before any real results are delivered.

["Running on fumes"](#)

"The Coffeyville refinery going down is a major blow to supply as things were just returning to normal," said petroleum analyst Bryant Gimlin of Fort Lupton-based Gray Oil Co.

"The refinery is likely down for the long-haul," he said. "Some area refiners were quick to post (price) increases. Those that have it are going to take advantage of those that need it. This part of the country has been running on fumes since February."

[ConocoPhillips Reports Malfunction at Refinery at Borger, Texas](#)

ConocoPhillips, the second-largest U.S. refiner, reported a malfunction at its refinery in Borger, Texas, causing the flaring of about 500 pounds of sulfur dioxide, according to a report on a state-administered Web site.

[Valero: 4Q Work at Calif., Texas, New Jersey Refineries](#)

Valero Energy Corp. (VLO) said Thursday that it plans work that will impact production at its refineries in Texas City, Texas, Paulsboro, N.J., Benecia, Calif., and Wilmington, Calif., during the fourth quarter.

[BP Carson Refinery to Lower Rates for 10 Days](#)

BP Plc's Carson, California, refinery will run at lower rates for about 10 days to allow Europe's second-largest oil company to repair a compressor, a person familiar with the plant's status said.

[1.2 Billion Reasons Why Our Energy Crisis Cannot Be Averted](#)

Whether or not you believe peak oil is about to (or already has) occurred, our world is growing astronomically. But will the world continue to grow if oil exits the main energy stage within the next two decades?

[Dave Cohen: Gas Subsidies and Iran](#)

Violence erupted in Iran last week when Ahmadinejad's government imposed gasoline rationing, limiting drivers to 100 litres (26.39 gallons) per month of petrol at the subsidized price of about \$0.42 per gallon. Angry protesters burned gas stations as they denounced the belt-tightening measure and the politicians who imposed it (photo below, source). Sanctions on Iran, the Islamic Republic's policies, and subsidies on gasoline in other countries adversely our ability to cope with a liquid fuels peak that is likely to arrive by 2015. The rioting also revealed the sacrosanct nature of driving, and just how tough it's going to be to change people's transportation habits all over the world to mitigate the effects of the crisis.

[Cattle Producers Urge Equal Opportunity Energy Policy](#)

The National Cattlemen's Beef Association says it supports efforts to reduce the nation's dependence on foreign oil by investing in renewable and alternative energy resources. But NCBA does not support the proposed increase in mandates for corn-based ethanol to 15 billion gallons of renewable fuels from feedgrain products by 2015.

"Sky-high mandates for feedgrain-based ethanol are not the solution," says Jay Truitt, NCBA vice president of government affairs.

[UK: Nigeria fears push oil over \\$76](#)

Oil prices have surged past \$76 a barrel amid growing concern that unrest in Nigeria will hit exports.

The kidnap of a three-year-old British girl this week has been seen as an escalation of the violence that has plagued the oil-rich Delta region.

Brent crude climbed as high as \$76.01 a barrel, before falling back to trade 1.6% higher at \$75.94. In New York, US light crude added 61 cents up \$72.42.

[Battle for final frontier](#)

Canada is marching north to assert sovereignty in the Arctic, to repel Danes and claim Hans Island, a rock the size of a football field between Ellesmere Island and Greenland. It is not quite war but it is enough for Canada's Prime Minister to tour the Arctic Circle to assert Canadian control of the Northwest Passage.

A mad scramble is under way for Arctic riches: fish, diamonds, oil and gas.

[Strange season to top off the tank](#)

Crude oil is now trading for \$72 per barrel.

But by the Citigroup analyst Tim Evans' account, it should be \$62.

"There's no shortage of crude oil. And yet the market seems to be pricing in an imminent shortage," Evans said. "In my view the markets are relatively overvalued here, and the prices cannot be sustained."

[Consumers shift to smaller engines amid high gas prices](#)

The percentage of four-cylinder engines in U.S. vehicles has been rising slightly since 2002, but it still was only 25.4 percent of the U.S. engine mix in 2006, according to data collected by Ward's Automotive Group.

Still, in mid-sized vehicles where consumers have a choice, the majority has picked four-cylinder engines so far this year in nearly all of the best-selling models made by the top five U.S. auto sellers.

[Stearn Orbo Demo delayed until further Notice](#)

Irish Stearn has delayed the demo of their free energy technology Orbo until further notice.

Initially the company wanted to demonstrate Orbo already on July 4th in the Kinetica museum in London. They had to postpone the demo to Thursday as reported yesterday. Today Stearn says on their site that the demo is delayed to an unannounced future date.

[Abundant oil](#)

More bad news for "peak oil" enthusiasts — those wishful thinkers and doomsday peddlers who say the world is running out of oil. BP's annual "Statistical Review of World Energy" shows "proved oil reserves continue to exceed 1.2 trillion barrels, equivalent to current production levels for more than 40 years."

[A craving to stay cool challenges power grid anew](#)

With the state's first heat wave of the year, California's power grid operators warned residents to conserve energy or face rolling blackouts as the state did in 2000 and 2001.

[Australia reliant on Middle East oil: experts](#)

Oil and its refinery by-products play a fundamental role in just about every part of Australian life, and a large amount of it originates in the Middle East.

Graeme Bethune, chief executive officer of energy advisory firm EnergyQuest, explains.

"Only about 13 per cent of the crude oil that we import comes from the Middle East, but we import increasing amounts of refined petrol and diesel from Singapore and Singapore gets most of its feed stock from the Middle East," he said.

[Iraqi Kurds to win oil battle](#)

While the US may succeed in procuring the passage of draft legislation securing the privatization of Iraqi oil fields and revenue sharing, the Kurdish Regional Government (KRG) is pushing ahead with plans premised on future carbon domination.

[Nicaragua: Energy Crisis Rears its Ugly Head](#)

With an energy deficit hovering between 20-30% of the nation's demand, embattled power-distribution company Unión Fenosa in mid-June began again implementing rolling blackouts across the country, shutting down whole cities for 6-10 hours at a time.

[Fuel shortage causing problems on Flinders Island](#)

The cost of flying to Flinders Island could go up if a critical shortage of aviation gas on the island is not resolved soon.

Airlines of Tasmania has had to restrict the number of passengers it carries because it can no longer refuel on the island.

A previous contract to supply the fuel has been scrapped because of the costs involved.

[When Building Green Ain't so Green](#)

Look at the web site for the next green builder you see on TV or in the daily paper. Does the site show plans for a home with trees and no parking garage? Or, is it another house plan that tells you how many cars the garage will hold and says nothing about trees? Many green architects and builders are doing their best to create environmentally friendly homes. But most have a narrow focus on eco-techniques. They rarely understand that current construction is actually making environmental problems worse.

[Saudi Aramco To Sell Crude to the US At Lower Price](#)

Saudi Aramco, the world's largest state oil company, cut prices of its crude oil to be exported to the U.S. in August. It raised prices for Europe.

Aramco cut prices of all grades it sells to the U.S. by between 35 cents and 50 cents a barrel, the Dhahran, Saudi Arabia-based company said in an e-mailed statement late yesterday. Aramco said it raised prices for shipments to Europe in August by between 40 cents and 70 cents a barrel.

[Oil hits 11-month high of \\$75](#)

Oil prices rose on Friday to \$75 a barrel for the first time since August on renewed unrest in Nigeria's delta oil producing region.

[Nigerian Militants Snatch Five Foreigners in Volatile Delta](#)

Gunmen overran an oil flow station in Nigeria's restive Niger Delta Wednesday, seizing five expatriate workers, officials said.

Two New Zealanders, one Australian, a Venezuelan and a Lebanese were taken a day after the oil-rich delta's most outspoken militant group, the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND), said it would not extend a month-long truce with the government.

[Nigeria kidnappers threaten to kill girl](#)

The kidnappers of a 3-year-old British girl are threatening to kill her and then come after her parents if their demands aren't met, the girl's sobbing mother said Friday.

[Protesters, Police Clash Near Oil Fields in Ecuador](#)

Scores of police and protesters have been injured in clashes around the facilities of a Chinese oil company in the eastern Ecuadorian province of Orellana, authorities and human rights activists said Wednesday.

[Food vs fuel wars just beginning](#)

In 2005, easily extracted oil from the oilfields peaked. From now on, the flow will be at a reduced rate, eventually running dry. Oil extracted from the more difficult oilfields, requiring more technology and consequently more expense, is expected to peak in four years, according to some experts in the United Kingdom. Since the global demand for oil exceeds supply, oil prices are going to continue rising.

[Fire Damages Petrobras' P-50 Platform](#)

A fire broke out at about 4 p.m. local time (1900 GMT) in a room containing gas compression units, Petrobras said in a release. No one was hurt and no oil leaked into the sea.

Oil production was temporarily interrupted, but was already partially restarted Wednesday evening, the company said. The company didn't disclose what the amount of the damage was.

[UN climate change chief warns of impact on poverty, hunger](#)

The UN's top climate change scientist on Thursday urged the world body to take greater account of the impact of global warming on hunger and poverty.

[Al Gore's inconvenient tax](#)

The former vice president (and almost president) wants to replace the current payroll tax with a consumer tax on fossil-fuel use.

This "carbon tax" would, of course, raise the price of gasoline and home heating/cooling. And it would put the burden of generating the same level of federal revenues on consumers while reducing the tax burden on labor and capital (workers and employers). Unless the poor get a break on this consumption tax, it will hit them harder than wealthier folks.

[Global warming ravaging Mount Everest, sons of conquerors say](#)

The sons of Sir Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay told British newspaper The Independent that their fathers would no longer recognise the world's highest mountain, saying the base camp is now 40 metres (132 feet) lower than it was 53 years ago

..."Base camp used to sit at 5,320 metres. This year it was at 5,280 metres because the ice is melting from the top and side. Base camp is sinking each year," said Peter Hillary, who himself has twice reached Everest's summit.

[Could this be the global-warming generation?](#)

The "Live Earth" shows that start Saturday in Australia are meant to be more than a planetary party. Event founder Al Gore hopes they will kick-start a global civic crusade

to combat climate change and to inspire individuals everywhere to do their part.

Will the event mark the debut of a "Global Warming Generation" – a significant shift in attitudes and behavior? Or will it simply be a fun, musical follow-up to Mr. Gore's film, "An Inconvenient Truth," that resonates little beyond the current advocates?



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 United States License](http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/).