



## DrumBeat: August 22, 2007

Posted by [Leanan](#) on August 22, 2007 - 9:04am

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### [Dean may shed light on OPEC/IEA debate](#)

OPEC countries adamant their policies are not to blame for oil's five-year rally may feel vindicated by the energy market's response to Hurricane Dean.

OPEC has said a shortage of refining capacity to make motor fuels, particularly in top consumer the United States, has been the main driver. Crude oil supplies, it says, are ample.

Consumer nations, represented by the International Energy Agency, want OPEC to pump more oil. Otherwise, they reason, oil stocks in consumer nations are headed for steep falls.

...The reaction of the global oil market to Hurricane Dean may give some insight into how investors view the situation.

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### [Myanmar arrests dissidents, squashes fuel protests](#)

Myanmar's military junta arrested 13 top dissidents and deployed gangs of spade-wielding supporters on the streets of Yangon on Wednesday to halt protests against soaring fuel prices and falling living standards.

Armed police also took up positions across the country's biggest city alongside truckloads of men from the army's feared Union Solidarity and Development Association (USDA). Many were carrying brooms and shovels, pretending to be road sweepers.

Despite the clampdown and the overnight arrest of the prominent activists, 100 people staged an hour-long march before being dispersed. Five women and a man were arrested, although there was no violence, witnesses told Reuters.

"Onlookers applauded but failed to join the march," one said.

### [Iraq: Power cuts getting worse, affecting lives](#)

In the backyard of the house of Jassim Abdel-Rahman, a 34-year-old resident of Sadr

City, a suburb of Baghdad, there are always six or so jerry cans which he refills daily with petrol for his small generator.

With less than four hours electricity a day and with a newborn baby at home, Abdel-Rahman refuses to leave his family sweltering in the hot weather so he spends at least half his US\$380 monthly salary repairing and refuelling his generator.

### [Blackout over for Gaza as EU agrees to resume oil shipments](#)

The European commission said it would allow the resumption of oil shipments to Gaza today after a move that left large parts of the area in darkness for four days.

### [India: Facing the energy crunch](#)

The Tata Consultancy Services' six story building in Gurgaon, Delhi, maintains five giant generators, with an underground tank of diesel of 20,000 litres. This is almost the same quantity of fuel one would find in a petrol pump. The reserve fuel can power the Tata building for up to 15 days. And power cuts average eight hours a day during shortage periods.

Perhaps the best place to look at corporate energy problems is in the heart of a company – the data centre; often a not-so-miniature metropolis of server computers that processes network transactions. As businesses grow, their data centres reach a breaking point. In most cases, computers on both ends of the network use – and waste – huge amounts of electricity.

### [Uganda: Electricity Prices to Drop By 50 Percent](#)

BUJAGALI hydropower dam will cut the cost of electricity by more than half the current rate in the early stages of completion, His Highness Prince Karim Aga Khan has said.

### [Nigeria's Electricity Dilemma](#)

The recurrent devastating economic and environmental impact of power black-outs, both planned and un-planned, underlines a need for urgent implementation of the long-term least cost generation expansion framework and proper maintenance of transmission and distribution networks to ensure enhanced energy supply and reliability in Nigeria.

### [Bazetta Twp. cuts fire station hours to save money](#)

[Fire Chief Clyde] McKenzie said the cost of fuel and insurance has gone up, and he said the current budget doesn't allow for the high prices.

### [Should beach towns be rebuilt again and again?](#)

The magnitude of Katrina's destruction — and concern that people will rebuild in the same way, in the same precarious places — have sparked calls for new regulations on a range of matters, including flood insurance and the funding of coastline restoration.

Such efforts, though, have foundered, largely over resistance from developers and politicians who fear that such changes would stem coastal development and the revenue it brings, says Oliver Houck, an environmental law professor at Tulane University.

Meantime, thanks to government help, "You'd be a fool not to live on the beach," he says. "We're building highways to them, causeways to them, sewage-treatment plants to them. We're paying their (flood) insurance to live there."

### [How to push the oil levers in the wrong direction](#)

By now, it should be clear to everybody that we are facing some problem with oil production. Facing a problem, the normal reaction is to do something about it. If crude oil is becoming scarce, the first reaction often is, "where can we find more of it?"

### [Far north Queensland plan to include climate change forecasts](#)

QCCCE officers are working with staff from the Department of Local Government, Planning, Sport and Recreation and Queensland Transport. The team is looking at the likely impacts of climate change and "peak oil" - or the date when the world maximum crude oil production is reached - on Far North Queensland, as well as planning adaptation strategies. This work will be of enormous benefit to local councils in particular to help them undertake proper planning.

### [East Woos West In Oilsands](#)

At the height of the market meltdown last week, Abu Dhabi National Energy Co. broadcast its intention to take advantage of depressed share prices and cashed-out balance sheets to expand aggressively in Canada's energy sector, where it hopes to become one of the top-10 producers.

### [Maine appealing electric ratepayer fees](#)

Representatives of the paper-products industry, unions and consumers joined Gov.

John Baldacci on Tuesday in support of Maine's appeal of a federal order that imposes what they call excessive and unjust fees to help expand generating capacity in southern New England.

### [Will the Real Transportation Fuel of the Future Step](#)

For macro reasons, I think that the next generation liquid fuels may be cellulosic ethanol and biodiesel or renewable diesel from algae. But those fuels will increasingly be sharing the roads with the long term transportation fuel of the future: electricity from renewable sources, especially wind. Wind will be important for electric transportation and electric transportation will be important for wind because, when you're already going to be charging batteries, you may as well do it when the electricity is cheap, which will be when the wind is blowing.

### [Black Swans: Highly Improbable Events in the Investment World](#)

That is why we try and focus on Black Swans in the investment world. You can read the newspaper to find out what happened yesterday. We try to focus on the events considered so statistically improbable that no major analyst would take them seriously. Most of these Black Swans have negative consequences, like Peak Oil... or a housing crash... or the collapse of the U.S. dollar. The history of financial markets shows that high-impact events are much more probable than statistical models would indicate.

### [Sony champions free recycling](#)

The company that invented the CD, the Walkman and the PlayStation will soon become an environmental pioneer, too: Sony says it will offer free recycling of all its products in the United States.

### [Gas station owners allege price fixing](#)

Nearly two dozen gas station owners in California sued Shell Oil Co., Chevron Corp. and Saudi Refining Inc., on Tuesday, claiming the companies conspired to fix prices for 23,000 franchise owners nationwide.

The case filed in U.S. District Court in San Francisco seeks class-action status for the plaintiffs. It is similar to another lawsuit filed in 2004 by other California gas station owners that was thrown out by the U.S. Supreme Court last year. The new group of plaintiffs hopes the court will consider a slightly different argument.

### [Dean Only Seen Causing Mild Disruptions to Mexico Oil Ops](#)

As Hurricane Dean heads into Mexico's main oil-producing zone, industry officials are optimistic it will only cause a blip in operations instead of the extensive damage the country remembers from Hurricane Roxanne over a decade ago.

### [Share slump and credit crunch: passing peak oil](#)

Regular readers may be surprised to see me offer commentary on the financial markets, given my dim view of such factories of speculation and greed. This is no sideshow, however. The unfolding turmoil may eventually be seen as a historic event. Another turning point, the worldwide peak in oil production, is a key player in this unfolding drama, although its role goes unnoticed by most in the audience.

### [Iraq-Syria oil flows depend on security](#)

Iraq is interested in re-activating a pipeline linking its oil centre of Kirkuk to a Syrian port only if it could be secured, Iraqi Oil Minister Hussain Al Shahrstani said.

The two countries, which are at odds politically, have been discussing restarting the 880-km pipeline from Kirkuk to the Banias terminal on the Mediterranean.

### [Who resolves Arctic oil disputes?](#)

Russia's planting of a flag at the North Pole this month has set off a race for control of the Arctic, with five nations preparing to make claims to the seabed at the top of the world.

...Resolving disputes arising from the claims will represent a major diplomatic challenge to the five nations that surround the rapidly thawing Arctic Ocean. But experts say the track record for dealing with similar disputes is encouraging, suggesting it's likely that rival nations can work out a mutually satisfactory solution over the coming decade.

### [Norway Debates the Promise, Costs of New Drilling](#)

In little more than two generations, oil and gas have transformed Norway from a country recovering from World War II occupation into an economic powerhouse. But now its citizens and politicians are debating whether it should take advantage of Earth's warming to drill for more oil above the Arctic Circle, knowing that consumption of that oil will accelerate climate change.

### [Europe's gas monopolies may suffer as glut aids UK utilities](#)

A widening natural gas glut in Britain will bolster the profits of UK utilities and could threaten the dominance of gas monopolies in continental Europe, according to a leading gas industry forecaster.

### [Yankee plant closed but its waste remains](#)

With the site of one of the country's first nuclear power plants finally considered safe for public use, all that remains of the reactor that stood for 47 years in the woodsy town of Rowe is its radioactive waste.

The federal government announced this month that the Yankee Rowe site had been officially decommissioned. But 266,000 pounds of spent fuel is still sitting on about 3 acres of land, sealed in protective barriers in the Western Massachusetts town teetering on the Vermont border.

### [State windmill plan causing quite a flap](#)

The Pennsylvania Biological Survey has gone to bat for the bats in a swirling policy debate over whether commercial wind power development should be permitted in state forests.

The debate pits advocates of wind power as an alternative energy source against those who fear that windmills are harmful to bats and birds.

### [Environmentalists win White House suit](#)

A federal judge ordered the Bush administration to issue two scientific reports on global warming, siding with environmentalists who sued the White House for failing to produce the documents.

### [Climate change called security issue like Cold War](#)

Climate change is the biggest security challenge since the Cold War but people have not woken up to the risks nor to easy solutions such as saving energy at home, experts said on Tuesday.

### [Does Flying Harm the Planet?](#)

Airplanes operate on petroleum fuel, which means they release large amounts of carbon dioxide when they fly. Commercial air travel is currently responsible for a relatively tiny part of the global carbon footprint - just 3.5% of total greenhouse gas emissions,

according to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. But the unique chemistry of high-altitude jet emissions may produce an additional warming effect, while the explosive growth in air travel makes it one of the fastest-growing sources of carbon gases in the atmosphere. And unlike energy or automobiles, where carbon-free or lower-carbon alternatives already exist, even if they have yet to be widely adopted, there is no low-carbon way to fly, and there likely won't be for decades.



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