



## DrumBeat: May 7, 2008

Posted by [Leanan](#) on May 7, 2008 - 9:08am

Topic: [Miscellaneous](#)

### [Oil surges to new highs, dealers focus on diesel](#)

NEW YORK (Reuters) - Oil prices rose 1.4 percent on Wednesday, extending further into record territory amid intensifying worries over tight world supplies of diesel fuel.

U.S. crude leapt \$1.69 to settle at \$123.53 a barrel, before hitting an all-time peak of \$123.89. London Brent rose \$2.01 to \$122.32.

Crude prices have doubled in a year and risen sixfold since 2002 on rising demand from China and other developing countries, adding pressure to economies already hard hit by a housing and credit crunch.

U.S. President George W. Bush will ask the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries to increase production when he visits Saudi Arabia next week, a senior White House official said, adding to a slew of recent calls from consumer nations for more oil from the cartel.

### [Big Oil Strike in Brazil has Tongues Wagging, but We Continue Towards Peak Oil](#)

Since the 1980's, the world has discovered every year less oil than it has consumed, with the difference having been enlarged and reaching such an outrageous level in recent years that almost no-one wants to think about it. In recent years, despite a considerable increase in exploratory activity and the application of the most up-to-date quadra-dimensional seismic technology, annual discoveries amounted to between 4 and 6 times less than what was being consumed at the same time from known and proven reserves. That is, in the words of the geologist Mariano Marzo, we are pawning our grandmother's jewels in order to throw the proceeds away.

### [Drive out of poverty with a car](#)

*A good, reliable automobile can make the difference in getting up from the bottom, and some groups want to give a leg up.*

...Despite car-ownership costs, including insurance, repairs and fuel, the majority of even the poorest Americans own cars, according to U.S. Census data - and for good reason. In

this country, life without one can be difficult at best and unmanageable at worst.

Even cities with solid public transportation networks are set up to do one thing well: move people in and out of central business districts. "It takes a long time if you aren't doing exactly that," said Margy Waller, executive director of the policy research group Mobility Agenda.

And these days, she pointed out, the best jobs usually aren't in the center of the city.

### [Exxon lifts force majeure on Nigeria oil exports](#)

LONDON/LAGOS (Reuters) - Exxon Mobil has lifted a force majeure on its crude oil exports from Nigeria, traders said on Wednesday.

All of Exxon's oil production in Nigeria, which averaged 800,000 barrels per day last year, were disrupted by a union workers' strike late in April. Output has since resumed.

### [Congress takes on gasoline prices](#)

NEW YORK (CNNMoney.com) -- Gas prices are expected to keep up their record rise this spring, soaring well past \$4 a gallon in some areas. Now Congress wants to know what to do about it.

### [OPEC to earn over US\\$1-trillion on oil](#) - *Net earnings to leap 57% on record prices*

WASHINGTON -- Thanks to record crude oil prices, OPEC members will likely earn over US\$1-trillion this year from oil exports, according to the U.S. government's top energy forecasting agency.

Net oil export earnings from the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries are forecast to skyrocket 57% from last year's US\$674-billion to US\$1.06-trillion this year and then decline to US\$990-billion in 2009 after an expected contraction in oil prices, the Energy Information Administration said in its new forecast.

### [Russia and Vietnam oil firms win Siberian fields](#)

MOSCOW (Reuters) - A consortium of Russian and Vietnamese state oil firms, ZarubezhNeft and PetroVietnam, has won a tender to develop four oil blocks in West Siberia, sources in the Russian firm and regional government said on Wednesday.

### [Economy of Clay](#)

Moscow is flush with oil money. But the new President Dmitry Medvedev needs to do more than just redistribute it to bring his nation back to fiscal health.

### [Russia clears plan to boost Kazakh oil transit](#)

MOSCOW (Reuters) - Russia said on Wednesday it had lifted its opposition to a plan to double the capacity of a Kazakh transit oil pipeline in a move to allow Chevron and other energy majors to boost exports via its territory.

### [France launches international wing of nuclear agency](#)

PARIS (Reuters) - The French cabinet passed a decree on Wednesday allowing the country's Atomic Energy Commission to promote French nuclear expertise and safety standards globally.

The Commission's new international division will help other countries build nuclear power stations safely and without harming the environment, while ensuring the technology is not used for weapons, the government said in a statement.

### [Sask. energy minister warms to nuke plant idea](#)

Saskatchewan Energy Minister Bill Boyd says he welcomes the possibility of his uranium-rich province, and not Alberta, being home to Western Canada's first nuclear power plant.

### [Canada faces Kyoto probe](#)

OTTAWA – Canada could be barred from international carbon trading if a United Nations probe finds it broke Kyoto Protocol rules for greenhouse-gas reporting.

### [Gas Prices Expected to Peak in June](#)

Analysts' forecasts for the price of gasoline over the next few years run as high as \$7 a gallon.

### [Rising cost of food is wreaking havoc on Central America](#)

Much of Latin America has benefited from soaring global prices for agricultural commodities and petroleum. Venezuela and Mexico are flush with oil profits. Good times

are rolling for soybean farmers in Argentina and Brazil.

But in Central America, a major importer of grain and oil, the price increases are wreaking havoc on already fragile economies. The region's presidents are slated to gather here today for an emergency summit on food security. Aid agencies are warning of rising social tensions in countries where a typical day's wages won't buy a gallon of gas and food inflation is breaking family budgets.

### [A minor inconvenience for Americans](#)

Despite the fact that many countries still have most of their population in agriculture, they have such low farm productivity that they import much of their food supply. With basic foods making up more than half the expenditures of families in poorer countries, the doubling of prices puts a substantial strain on the incomes of the world's poorest. Thus the food riots in Haiti, Somalia and Yemen.

But the problem in these societies is not expensive food per se; it is their failure to experience the economic growth that would raise incomes and make food prices unimportant. Shipping subsidized food to these countries will not solve that long-term problem.

### [Liberalizing Food Trade to Death](#)

Billions of people are struggling to afford food because of the huge disparities and inequalities that have been exacerbated by the current economic system -- neo-liberal globalization. Over the last 30 years, almost all states across the world have adopted neo-liberal economic policies. Neo-liberal policies have favored giant corporations' interests over those of people and have enabled a handful of companies to gain a virtual monopoly over the human food chain and make massive profits. The poor, however, have suffered consequences of neo-liberal policies: if people can't afford the prices these monopolistic companies charge, they don't get food.

### [Romania: Farmland prices set to triple due to rising food prices](#)

The soaring prices of agricultural products in recent months have raised investors' interest in cultivating grain on ever-larger areas, which is driving up the price of agricultural land.

At present, the average price per one hectare of agricultural land stands at 1,500 euros and players in the field say this is going to triple in the next three years.

### [It's a small-car world](#)

Automakers are working on a new generation of ultra-tiny cars. And some of them could make it to the U.S.

### [APTA asking N.B. to cut tax on diesel by 10 cents](#)

DIEPPE, N.B. -- The executive director of the Atlantic Provinces Trucking Association is calling on the provincial government to provide relief from rising fuel costs by trimming tax on diesel by at least a dime a litre.

### [Public water, privately bottled profits](#)

On April 7, more than 1,500 villagers defied a police cordon and marched to Coca-Cola's bottling plant in Mehdi Ganj village, Varanasi, in Uttar Pradesh state, demanding that the company immediately shut down its bottling plant. In January, the New Delhi-based Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) advised Coca-Cola to shut a bottling plant in the drought-stricken state of Rajasthan.

### [Congress considers the steel penny](#)

WASHINGTON (AP) -- Further evidence that times are tough: It now costs more than a penny to make a penny. And the cost of a nickel is more than 7 1/2 cents.

Surging prices for copper, zinc and nickel have some in Congress trying to bring back the steel-made pennies of World War II, and maybe using steel for nickels, as well.

### [Kasane imposes fuel ban on Zimbabweans](#)

VICTORIA FALLS: Zimbabwean fuel dealers in Victoria Falls are in a quandary after Botswana immigration officials at Kasane Border Post banned the cross-border traders from importing fuel from Botswana last week.

### [U.S. Sen. John Cornyn: Energy - Near-term Relief, Long-term Security](#)

The U.S. is now transitioning from reliance on fossil fuels to a broader-based energy supply that will include increased solar, wind, biofuel, nuclear, coal conversion and other sources. We need all of this supply. Both government and private industry are spending billions of dollars annually to promote this change, and speed it along.

But for the next decades, oil, gas and coal will remain the dominant source of energy generation. The free market could likely provide those supplies through new exploration-but the federal government has prevented that from happening.

### [Should We Drive 55 MPH?](#)

"We get this question all the time," said Bernie Arseneau, Minnesota's top traffic engineer with the Department of Transportation. "Current law says speed limits should be safe and reasonable. Lower speeds don't necessarily equate to safer speeds."

According to Arseneau, research indicates that when the government sets a speed lower than the reasonable speed the road was designed to handle, a "small percentage obeys the limit no matter what. The rest drive what they feel is comfortable."

In other words, a large percentage of people ignore the artificially low speed limits. The end result of that is a minor improvement in fuel conservation and a higher risk of crashes.

### [Myanmar lifts fuel import ban after storm](#)

BANGKOK (Reuters) - Myanmar's military government has lifted a ban on private companies importing fuel to try to ease a chronic energy shortage in the wake of Cyclone Nargis, a Yangon-based diplomat said on Wednesday.

### [Uganda: Long Queues As Fuel Shortage Persists](#)

THE fuel shortage in Kampala and other parts of the country has persisted for a second week, leaving several filling stations dry. There were long queues of motorists at many of the city filling stations yesterday.

East Africa is facing an acute shortage because a big ship, carrying diesel, broke down at the high sea and had to be sent back to the Gulf for repair.

### [Petrobras Hiring 14,000 Geologists, Oil Rig Workers](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Petroleo Brasileiro SA, Brazil's state- controlled oil company, plans to add 14,000 engineers, geologists and drillers within three years as it develops the biggest crude discovery in the Western Hemisphere since 1976.

Petrobras, as the company is known, plans to expand its workforce 23 percent to about 74,000, surpassing Chevron Corp., the second-largest U.S. oil producer. The hiring binge is part of a \$112.7 billion expansion that may allow Brazil to overtake the output of all OPEC members except Saudi Arabia.



## [Pemex Says Fire Shuts Refinery Unit, Injures Workers](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Petroleos Mexicanos, the state-owned oil company, said a leak and fire at its refinery in Guanajuato state forced the shut down of a lubricant-making unit and injured two workers.

## [OTC: Technology key to Mexico's future oil production](#)

With subsalt plays and poor recovery efficiency for existing fields, Mexico needs improved oil recovery and innovative technology to help extend the productive life of its reservoirs, Ley stressed. Operators are finding Mexico's fractured reservoirs challenging because they are difficult to characterize, model, and simulate. "We need a new generation of reservoir simulators," he said.

## [Selectboard cuts Peak Oil Task Force](#)

BRATTLEBORO -- After thanking the Peak Oil Task Force for a job well done, the Selectboard disbanded the group with the caveat it might call on the members to pursue mitigation strategies to reduce the town's dependence on fossil fuels and cut down on its production of greenhouse gases.

## [Michael J. Economides - Oil at \\$120: Here's Why](#)

I have no aversion to wind or solar. I love the sun, I am Greek. But they are eminently unreliable and, even in their best case, without government subsidies, they make \$200 to \$2000 oil still attractive. It is that simple.

...There are no alternatives to fossil fuels for decades to come and the transition will be long and painful. We will continue to be a fossil-fuel dependent economy for the foreseeable future. To boot, the US imports now almost 70 percent of 21 million barrels per day of oil demand. Hugo Chavez, Vladimir Putin and Mahmoud Ahmedinejad have noticed.

## [Newt Gingrich - My Plea to Republicans: It's Time for Real Change to Avoid Real Disaster](#)

...Here are nine acts of real change that would begin to rebuild the American people's confidence that Republicans share their values, understand their worries, and are prepared to act instead of just talk. The Republicans in Congress could get a start on all nine this week if they had the will to do so.

**1. Repeal the gas tax for the summer, and pay for the repeal by cutting domestic discretionary spending** so that the transportation infrastructure trust fund would not be hurt. At a time when, according to The

Hill newspaper, Senator Clinton is asking for \$2.3 billion in earmarks, it should be possible for Republicans to establish a "government spending versus your pocketbook" fight over cutting the gas tax that would resonate with most Americans. Lower taxes and less government spending should be a battle cry most taxpayers and all conservatives could rally behind.

**2. Redirect the oil being put into the national petroleum reserve onto the open market.** That oil would lower the price of gasoline an extra 5 to 6 cents per gallon, and its sale would lower the deficit.

**3. Introduce a "more energy at lower cost with less environmental damage and greater national security bill" as a replacement for the Warner-Lieberman "tax and trade" bill** which is coming to the floor of the Senate in the next few weeks (see my newsletter next week for an outline of a solid pro-economy, pro-national security, pro-environment energy bill). When the American people realize how much the current energy prices are actually a "politicians' energy crisis" they will demand real change in our policies.

### [How to Get Cheap Gas](#)

The good news is that *prices for oil and gasoline are made on the margins* — if America cuts its oil use by 10% or even 5%, that should send the price lower ... maybe a lot lower.

After all, 5% of the 20.6 million barrels we use every day is about 1 million barrels per day. That's more than the current spare capacity on the global market.

So let me tell you what we need to do to get there — and I'll start by saying you aren't going to like it.

### [Disruptions In Oil Supply May Extend Price Rise](#)

"May is the lowest-demand month of the year, so it's really important that we see some buildup of stocks ahead of the summer," said Adam Robinson, an oil analyst at Lehman Brothers. "And here you have a couple of factors chipping away at that seasonal cushion."

### [Kyrgyzstan Imposes Another Limit on Power Supply to Population](#)

Bishkek: Another limit has been imposed on the supply of electricity to the population in Kyrgyzstan, says a press release circulated today by the Severelektro [North Electricity] company, which is engaged in power supply to the northern districts of Kyrgyzstan.



From now on, the supply of electricity to the houses and flats of residents living in population centres in Chuy and Talas regions as well as in the Kyrgyz capital will be suspended not only from midnight to 0600 hours in the morning but also from 1300 to 1800 hours local time.

### [School district's conservation efforts paying off after rate hike](#)

The Juneau School District is estimating that efforts it took to conserve energy before last month's avalanches caused electric rates to rise sharply could save between \$60,000 to \$100,000 during the city's energy crisis.

...Means said the changes the district enacted last year were simple, such as using less light for school spaces that aren't in use.

### [NASA scientist to receive Scripps' Nierenberg Prize](#)

LA JOLLA: James E. Hansen, a NASA scientist who says the Bush administration attempted to censor his warnings about the perils of global warming, will be honored tomorrow night at 7 at the Forum Theater of the La Jolla Playhouse at the University of California San Diego.

The Scripps Institution of Oceanography will give Hansen its 2008 Nierenberg Prize for Science in the Public Interest. Hansen will receive a bronze medal and a \$25,000 award.

### [Analyst sees oil surging to \\$200](#)

Jim Burkhard, global oil group managing director for Boston-based Cambridge Energy Research Associates, said his firm released a "break point scenario" (one of three predictions based on events) in late April that envisioned oil at \$150 US.

"There are many similarities with what we're seeing today," he said.

"In an environment with little spare capacity, with sluggish oil supply growth, momentum builds toward ever higher oil prices."

### [Survey shows rise in U.S. honey bee deaths](#)

SAN FRANCISCO - A survey of bee health released Tuesday revealed a grim picture, with 36.1 percent of the nation's commercially managed hives lost since last year.

Last year's survey commissioned by the Apiary Inspectors of America found losses of about 32 percent.

### [Gasoline powered robot](#)

Peak oil is a concept crated by Luddites and fear-mongers who invariably want to change everyone's behavior to what they consider a more moral and virtuous pattern. Me, I think there is nothing more beautiful than a soccer mom loading her kids into a big safe SUV and driving around town in order to maximize her choices in food, clothing, education and work. I'll take freedom and choice over living in a cave any day. So the BS about peak oil is that it is a straw man—some absurd concept that does not really prove any valid point.

### [The Rising Price Of Gas: Will Old Tech Habits Last?](#)

So if folks will be using their cars less often, and commuting less time per use on average, why would they want to load them up with lots of electronics gadgets? Couple that with a decreased per capita automobile statistic going forward, and I think you'll understand the underpinnings of my opinion. To be clear, I remain highly optimistic about the under-hood and within-chassis stuff...monitoring and control of the engine, brake system, clutch and transmission...along with the incremental technology needed to service the inevitable transition to hybrid and alternative fuel-based vehicles. But all the cockpit toys? Label me highly skeptical.

### [Back to the future with fuel prices?](#)

I don't know of anyone who still cans peaches, and very few who tend a vegetable garden.

And do they still build fruit cellars in new houses?

Yet according to Lance Meredith, the co-ordinator of the Chatham-Kent Oil Age Planning Group, most Canadians will be forced to turn to their own vegetable gardens and to more "local food" in the not-too-distant future, as high fuel prices make it more costly to import food from great distances.

### [Fiction review: Prescient 'World Made by Hand'](#)

"World Made by Hand" is far from a typical postapocalyptic novel. It caters neither to a pseudo-morbid nor faddishly slick vision of the future. Though grim with portent, it is ultimately, as Camus' novel "The Plague," an impassioned and invigorating tale whose ultimate message is one of hope, not despair.

### [Monsanto Company and Mendel Biotechnology Announce Cellulosic Biofuels Collaboration](#)

Mendel and Monsanto have worked together on the development of biotechnology traits for more than a decade in many crops, including corn, soy, cotton and canola. In this new collaboration, the two companies will apply Monsanto's expertise in crop testing, breeding and seed production to perennial grass seed varieties Mendel is developing for use in biofuels and other commercial applications.

### [No Drop in Oil Demand Seen](#)

Oil prices pushing well past \$100 a barrel will do little to stop worldwide demand, said the economics chief of the International Energy Agency, which advises 27 member countries.

Subsidies in China, India and oil-producing countries will combine with strong economic growth in those areas to support demand even with prices rising, Fatih Birol of the IEA told a panel at the energy industry's Offshore Technology Conference in Houston. That prospect runs counter to history, he said.

### [Georgia says "very close" to war with Russia](#)

BRUSSELS (Reuters) - Russia's deployment of extra troops in the breakaway Georgian region of Abkhazia has brought the prospect of war "very close", a minister of ex-Soviet Georgia said on Tuesday.

...Georgia, a vital energy transit route in the Caucasus region, has angered Russia, its former Soviet master with which it shares a land border, by seeking NATO membership.

### [Iraq March Oil Revenue Up 12% On Month At \\$5.644 Billion - Ministry](#)

AMMAN -(Dow Jones)- Revenues from Iraq's oil sales rose 12% in March despite Iraq exporting more crude oil in February, oil ministry figures seen by Dow Jones Newswires Wednesday show.

### [World may be heating quickly: scientist](#)

Climate change is happening faster than predicted and the world could be as much as seven degrees hotter by the end of the century, a CSIRO scientist says.

New Australian research showed current policies did not go far enough to manage the risks posed by climate change, according to Dr Roger Jones, a climate risk analyst with CSIRO's energy transformed flagship.

### [Flood risk fear over key UK sites](#)

Hundreds of UK power substations and water treatment plants are potentially at risk from flooding, a confidential government study suggests.

### [Israeli President Sees Eco-Fuel Fighting "Terror"](#)

JERUSALEM - Israeli President Shimon Peres on Monday hailed his country's new weapon against the threat of "terrorism" from its Middle East neighbours -- the electric car.

### [Palm oil wiping out key orangutan habitat: activists](#)

JAKARTA (AFP) — One of the biggest populations of wild orangutans on Borneo will be extinct in three years without drastic measures to stop the expansion of palm oil plantations, conservationists said Wednesday.

"For Central Kalimantan, the species will be gone as soon as three years from now," Centre for Orangutan Protection director Hardi Bhaktiantoro told a press conference.

### [Indonesia adopts stringent "green" palm oil standard](#)

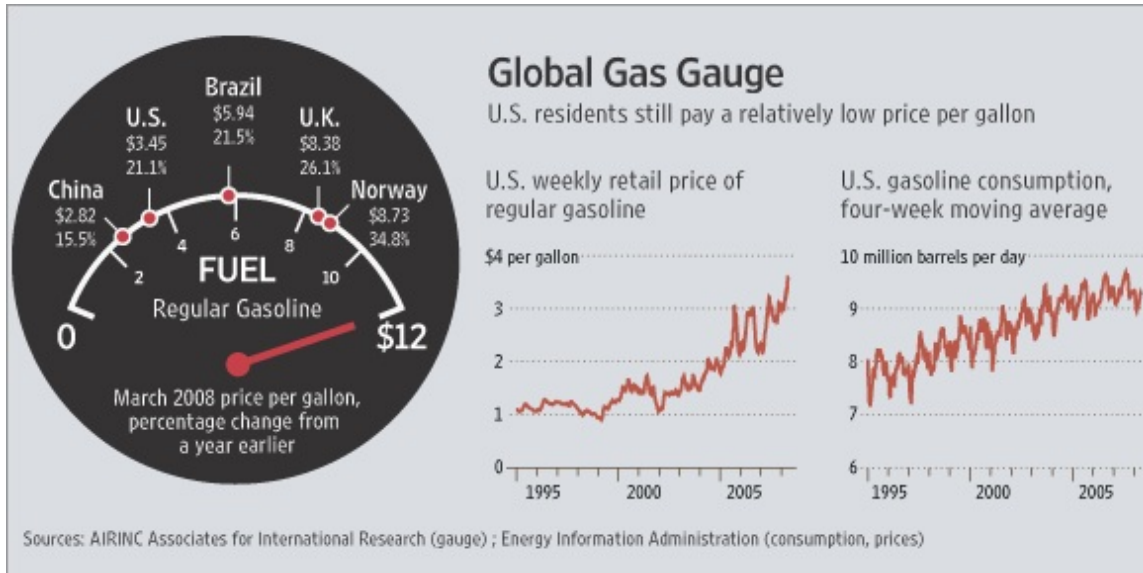
JAKARTA (Reuters) - Indonesia, the world's biggest palm oil producer, plans to take firm measures aimed at ensuring palm oil firms meet stringent standards before labeling their products as eco-friendly, an industry watchdog said on Wednesday.

The rapidly expanding palm oil industry in Southeast Asia has come under attack by green groups for destroying rainforests and wildlife, as well the emission of greenhouse gases.

### [Germany Defends Biofuels, Hedges Bets on Energy Goals](#)

Germany cannot reach its climate change goals unless it dedicates land to growing biofuels, Germany's agriculture minister Horst Seehofer said after talks in Berlin on Tuesday, May 6. Seehofer defended biofuels against growing criticism that they are responsible for food prices increasing globally, which has caused rioting and hunger in developing countries.

### [Some See Oil At \\$150 a Barrel This Year](#)



"It's not that the genie is out of the bottle -- it's that 100 genies are out of the bottle," said Daniel Yergin, chairman of Cambridge Energy Research Associates. Normally known for optimistic forecasts of lowering oil prices, Mr. Yergin's firm now says the price could rise to \$150 a barrel this year.

The world's diminished spare production capacity remains the strongest single catalyst for high prices, Mr. Yergin says. The world's safety cushion -- the amount of readily available oil that could be pumped in a moment of crisis -- is now around two million barrels a day, according to most estimates. That's just 2.3% of daily demand, and nearly all of the safety cushion is in one country, Saudi Arabia. Everyone else is pretty much pumping all they can, which makes the world vulnerable to political or other shocks.

### [Oil prices bubble under 122 dollars per barrel](#)

LONDON (AFP) - World oil prices neared record levels close to 122 dollars per barrel on Wednesday as traders awaited a crucial weekly update on American energy reserves amid concern about tight global supplies.

New York's main oil futures contract, light sweet crude for June delivery, eased ten cents to 121.74 dollars, after hitting a lifetime peak of 122.73 dollars on Tuesday.

The price of London's Brent North Sea crude for June delivery gained seven cents to 120.38 dollars. The contract had struck a historic pinnacle of 120.99 on Tuesday.

### [Obama Ready To Lead On Day -261: Nigerian Cease Fire And Oil Impacts](#)

What is MEND? Why is there so much violence in the Niger delta? And why should we care?

There's an excellent primer on the situation over at The Oil Drum, a site devoted to discussing resource depletion in general and peak oil in particular. In March of 2007, Jeff Vail wrote a piece titled "[Nigeria: Energy Infrastructure Firestorm.](#)"

### [Japan, China tout progress on gas feud at summit](#)

TOKYO (Reuters) - The leaders of Japan and China touted progress towards settling a feud over energy rights in the East China Sea on Wednesday, and agreed at a summit in Tokyo that peaceful cooperation between the two Asian powers was their "only option."

### [UK: Who is to blame for the soaring oil price?](#)

With the oil price above \$100 a barrel, who makes the most money out of a gallon of petrol at the pump? Is it:

- A. Greedy oil companies.
- B. Greedy Opec members.
- C. Our glorious Government.

### [Soaring oil price could drive 'weaker airlines' out of business](#)

The soaring oil price will drive "weaker" rivals out of business, easyJet claimed this morning, despite seeing its own losses treble over the last six months.

With oil hitting a new record of \$122 a barrel yesterday, and Goldman Sachs forecasting it could hit \$200 a barrel this year, easyJet predicted carnage in the airline industry.

### [Militants in Nigeria oil area seek mediation by Jimmy Carter](#)

LAGOS, Nigeria - The main militant group in Nigeria's oil-rich southern region said Tuesday that it is willing to cease hostilities if the federal government agrees to mediation by Jimmy Carter.

The Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta said the former U.S. president had accepted their invitation to help negotiate an end to the long-running conflict that has disrupted petroleum exports and contributed to the sharp rise in oil prices.

### [Russians face double-digit gas, power, railway price hikes](#)

Russia's Cabinet yesterday cleared double-digit price rises for gas, power and railway



services for this year and the next three years, ignoring inflation fears and public discontent. State-capped prices in some sectors will rise as high as 40% per year.

### [Oil 'Choke Point' Nears](#)

As oil blasted to a new record above US\$122 a barrel yesterday, a new report suggests a "choke point" of US\$150 a barrel could slam growth in the United States and cause a rout in stocks similar to the early 1980s energy crunch.

### [High inflation in Kuwait a national challenge](#)

KUWAIT CITY - Central Bank governor Sheikh Salem Abdulaziz al-Sabah warned on Wednesday that oil-rich Kuwait was faced with a "national challenge" after inflation hit 9.5 percent in January.

Sheikh Salem called for "coordination in various national economic policies to curb rising inflation," in a statement carried by the official KUNA news agency.

"Inflation constitutes a national challenge and was the result of local and foreign factors," he said.

### ['Lazy, short-sighted and irresponsible'](#)

A leaked government memo to British MEPs about how the UK plans to reach the EU's ambitious target of increasing its use of renewables in energy consumption tenfold to 15% by 2020 from the current 1.5% has provoked anger and disbelief among green campaigners.

"Lazy, short-sighted and irresponsible," is how Caroline Lucas, Green MEP, describes it.

### [Family Science Project Yields Surprising Data About a Siberian Lake](#)

Although it is known that warming is more intense at high latitudes, as in the Baikal area, and that water is warming in other major lakes, including Lake Tahoe in Nevada and Lake Tanganyika in central Africa, many scientists had thought that Lake Baikal's enormous volume and unusual water circulation patterns would buffer the effects of global warming.

Instead, the researchers report, surface waters in Lake Baikal are warming quickly, on average by about 0.4 degrees Fahrenheit every decade. At a depth of about 75 feet, the increase is about 0.2 degrees per decade, they say, enough to jeopardize species "unable to adapt evolutionarily or behaviorally."

### [Australia's koalas threatened by global warming: study](#)

SYDNEY (AFP) - Australia's koalas are threatened by global warming because higher temperatures and increased carbon dioxide in the atmosphere could cripple their food supply, new research showed Wednesday.

### [Green movement forgets its politics](#)

Organisations campaigning on climate change need to learn the lessons of the anti-slavery and anti-apartheid movements. By focusing on individuals rather than governments, initiatives such as the recent Energy Saving Day are bound to fail in their bid to reduce emissions.

### [Climate link with killer cyclones spurs fierce scientific debate](#)

PARIS (AFP) - Climate scientists have begun to debate whether global warming is producing more powerful storms, after Nargis smashed into Myanmar -- brutally changing gear from a Category One to a Category Four cyclone just before it made landfall.

Nargis wasn't an isolated incident: Hurricane Katrina laid waste to parts of the US Gulf Coast in 2005.

And in 2007, super-cyclone Gonu the Arabian peninsula was hit by a super-cyclone, Gonu.

Are these events -- massively costly in lives and treasure -- all linked?

Could they be part of an alarming trend of weird, more powerful storms stoked by global warming?



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