



## DrumBeat: July 19, 2008

Posted by [Leanan](#) on July 19, 2008 - 9:19am

Topic: [Miscellaneous](#)

### [Small, developing nations feel impact of food and energy crisis](#)

The Marshall Islands said Friday electrical power in the small Pacific nation may be switched off in September when its fuel supplies are expected to run out, as high food and energy prices have begun to hit hard some developing countries, particularly small islands isolated from the rest of the world.

'Unless urgent international action is taken, the Marshall Islands will exhaust its present fuel supplies this September,' said Rina Targo, a representative of the islands at the United Nations. 'This is a dire situation in which we may be left without electricity for the foreseeable future.'

### [Growing risk of a shooting war over energy](#)

Once again, the week's most important energy news has gone unreported by media in the U.S.

Most of the U.S. news media still doesn't understand that the important energy news is happening outside the United States. Once again this week, cameras rolled as the White House and Congress bickered for partisan advantage, this time over offshore oil drilling. Meanwhile, half a world way, three events – one indicative of the growing risk of a shooting war over energy – were completely ignored.

### [Threat from lack of gas capacity, expert says](#)

A lack of adequate gas storage has left Britain's energy market like a "house of cards", more vulnerable to supply shocks than any other country in Western Europe, according to a leading energy analyst.

Four years after becoming a net gas importer, Britain still has one of the lowest levels of gas storage capacity in Europe - enough to supply consumers for about two weeks. That is equivalent to about 4 per cent of annual demand, compared with 20 per cent in both France and Germany.

### [Pakistan: Agri sector faces acute shortage of water](#)

ISLAMABAD: Rising petroleum prices would affect the agriculture sector of the country as farmers are dependent on fuel to operate their tube-wells for getting water, which is the basic need for irrigation and growth of crops.

### [Fiji: Police deny fuel shortage claims](#)

SPECULATION that the police vehicles at the Nabua Police Station were without fuel for the third night last night has been blatantly denied by the police.

A source told Fiji Daily Post that police officers working night shift at the Nabua Police Station had to patrol the area walking.

It was also revealed that officers could not attend to reports from nearby areas because there were no vehicles to take them.

### [India: Energy scenario bleak as country faces sharp decline in power generation](#)

NEW DELHI: The lesser inflow of water into rivers and the declining levels in dams and reservoirs across the southern, western and north-eastern regions of the country have led to a sharp decline in power generation, particularly hydro-power. The gas-based stations have also been under-performing due to shortage of fuel, leading to outages, power cuts and blackouts in many parts of the country.

### [Vietnam: Exporters fear failure amid money, energy shortages](#)

Companies air their grievances at a conference as tightened monetary policy and a power shortage have left them without money or electricity.

### [Pakistan: IJT stages protest against power outages at PU](#)

LAHORE: The Punjab University students staged a protest against six-hour load shedding on the campus- for the second consecutive day- outside the press club on Friday.

Dozens of students, under the aegis of Islami Jamiat Talba (IJT), whilst holding placards, protested against the varsity's administration. They flayed the administration for failing to take steps to rectify the situation, as students were forced to take exams in scorching heat. The students also staged a sit-in outside the project director's office the other day, but to no avail.

### [Chevron-truckers union fray could cause fuel shortages, Nacional says](#)

SANTO DOMINGO - Fuel transport from the Dominican Petroleum Refinery was still halted Friday morning and only the tanker trucks that take avtur to the airports entered, newspaper Nacional reported.

### [Why the gas tax could go up](#)

Proposals for a gas tax holiday faltered over job losses - and now lawmakers need to come up with money to repair roads.

### [Utah DOT feels pinch in rising costs of asphalt](#)

The Utah Department of Transportation is experiencing an asphalt shortage. Several of UDOT's road construction projects have already experienced delays. It is because asphalt is now in competition with gasoline. The material that makes asphalt used to be considered waste left over from refining oil into gas but now the greater demand for gasoline is causing refineries to more efficiently squeeze every possible drop of crude oil into the more profitable fuel.

It means there is not a lot of asphalt to go around. To make matters worse the polymer that binds asphalt together is in short supply because it too is a petroleum byproduct, thus, driving the cost up.

### [Pemex Plans Fuel Supply Reduction](#)

In an unpopular move, Mexico's state-owned Pemex oil company announced it will reduce gasoline supplies for Baja California soon. Ramiro Zuniga Salazar, president of the Onexpo Baja Gasoline Station Operators Association, said Pemex informed gas station operators in a July 7 letter that it would begin reducing gasoline deliveries of the Magna brand from 80 million liters to 72 or 74 million liters per month. A gallon is equivalent to 3.8 liters.

...Pemex's decision was attributed to a 30 percent increase in demand for gasoline and diesel in Baja California during the past few months. Some blame the consumption surge on US citizens who drive across the border to take advantage of cheaper Mexican fuel prices and fill up their tanks.

### [Brazilian offshore oil workers end strike](#)

RIO DE JANEIRO, Brazil (AP) -- Brazilian offshore oil workers said Thursday they will

end a five-day walkout as scheduled, but warned they may call a new, nationwide strike against state oil company Petrobras next month.

### [Why gas prices vary from state to state](#)

With regional differentials pushing the price much higher in some places, drivers and small-business owners are finding it hard to cope.

But which states' motorists get the best deal, and in which states do drivers pay the most to fill-up?

### [NYC taxi fleets may have trouble shifting to hybrids](#)

DETROIT — This fall, New York City yellow taxis will start going green as fleet owners have to buy hybrids to replace the old Crown Victorias as they are retired.

The city's decision to mandate the move from an all-gas taxi fleet to a gas-electric hybrid fleet has received much applause, but as the effective date approaches, there's a worry: Inventories of hybrids have dried up across the country as gas prices skyrocket, leaving fleet owners to wonder whether they'll be able to buy hybrids for taxis when they need them.

### [How China's taking over Africa, and why the West should be VERY worried](#)

Reminiscent of the West's imperial push in the 18th and 19th centuries - but on a much more dramatic, determined scale - China's rulers believe Africa can become a 'satellite' state, solving its own problems of over-population and shortage of natural resources at a stroke.

With little fanfare, a staggering 750,000 Chinese have settled in Africa over the past decade. More are on the way.

The strategy has been carefully devised by officials in Beijing, where one expert has estimated that China will eventually need to send 300 million people to Africa to solve the problems of over-population and pollution.

### [Energy crisis of 1973 left a lasting impact](#)

The federal government began rationing diesel fuel to its own agencies and to private industry, including airlines and trucking companies.

Airlines started getting monthly fuel allotments based on how much they had used the

year before. They were forced to cut routes and eliminate flights that weren't booked to capacity.

By Nov. 21, Kanawha County officials were considering operating schools only four days a week to conserve energy.

Six days later, both Kanawha County and Putnam County school systems were saying they soon might have to end student bus rides altogether.

### [UN warns on biofuel crop reliance](#)

Biofuels are important for combating climate change, Mr Ban said, but new global guidelines needed to be established to maintain an adequate supply of food.

"The cost of inaction would be unacceptably high. Over 100m people could slide into hunger," Mr Ban said.

"We must act immediately to boost agricultural production this year," he added.

### [The impact of rising food prices on disparate livelihoods groups in Kenya](#)

The sustained rise in food and non-food prices is expected to accentuate food insecurity among the most vulnerable livelihood groups especially the urban, pastoral and marginal agricultural households.

### [Robert Bryce: Iran Rising](#)

The confidence that the Iranians displayed in Madrid is further confirmation of their growing influence in Europe and the Mideast. Indeed, their presence at the conference bolsters the belief that Iran may be the biggest winner of the Second Iraq War. And the oil and gas deals they are doing – with the Malaysians, Indonesians, Syrians, Venezuelans, Chinese, and others – provide evidence that America's ability to influence global energy policy, particularly when it comes to policies that involve sanctions against Iran, is diminishing.

### [How to grab a share of the Gulf's trillions](#)

Spain made its fortune plundering South America. And Rome was built on the spoils of conquest. But the Gulf States are managing to accumulate the world's wealth without even crossing their own borders.

### [U.N. Says Global Action Needed To Meet Food, Energy Crisis](#)

New York, NY (AHN) - Urgent changes in global agricultural policies are needed to meet the threats of soaring food and energy prices, the United Nations General Assembly President said on Friday.

Reducing subsidies and lifting tariffs and other trade barriers would stimulate food production and offer a route to development for 180 million small farmers in Africa, Srgjan Kerim told Member States as the Assembly met to discuss the two global crises, a U.N. press statement said.

### [Argentina ends grain tax hike](#)

After months of standoff with irate farmers, and a humiliating defeat in the Senate, the government rolls back the extra levy on farm exports.

### [Rising gas prices may stall school choice program](#)

Rising gas prices will pose a tremendous challenge for the Lee County School District in this school year and the next.

The school district is already bracing for a \$29 million shortfall — expected to be even higher next year after Amendment 1 changes the local tax roll — and constantly increasing fuel prices may bear a heavy burden on the budget.

### [High fuel costs top priority for farmers](#)

LEE COUNTY, GA (WALB) South Georgia farmers say high fuel prices are their number one concern as harvest time approaches. They say record petroleum prices have caused almost everything they use to grow crops to skyrocket in price, and pass even rain as their top worry.

### [Fuel crisis of our own creation](#)

Americans were convinced they had the right to cheap gasoline and no power in the world should take that right away from us. Now that the right has been sopped up, it ought to be clear that gasoline is an expensive commodity. Environmentalists warned every year that disaster was waiting just around the corner, but Big Auto insisted Americans wanted big cars and small trucks and especially SUVs, gas-consuming monsters rarely used either for sports or utility, but mostly to reinforce the masculinity of drivers. And Big Oil lobbied fiercely against any restraints.

## [McCain calls for tax credit to promote electric cars](#)

WARREN, Mich. — John McCain on Friday called for a tax credit to help American consumers buy electrically powered automobiles as part of an effort to decrease the U.S. dependence on foreign oil.

## [Let the Sunshine In: Sick of high energy bills, our columnist investigates solar options](#)

This month, I've spent hours tramping across my roof with energy experts. We've measured its pitch, calculated how closely it faces true south and used high-tech tools to determine what times of day and which months the rooftop will be shaded.

The goal: to figure out how much the sun's free power can offset my home's hot-water and other energy needs.

## [Global Heating: Why We Must Shift to Carbon-Free Fuel \(Part I\)](#)

Even among the Merely Moderately Enlightened, Global Warming is no longer an issue. The Bali Roadmap of last December and the forceful reports earlier last year by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) have, at long last, produced basic agreement that we have to get serious about fighting global warming.

The elephant in the room is, "How"?

## [Oil prices tumble in biggest weekly drop ever](#)

With oil recording yet another drop on Friday, some industry experts who just days ago thought there was more juice left in oil's meteoric run are reconsidering.

"If this is not the bubble's implosion, than it's a reasonable facsimile," analyst and trader Stephen Schork said in his daily market commentary. "Time will tell. Nevertheless, for the time being we no longer care to hold a bullish view."

## [New Hampshire accepts Venezuelan oil: The state scorned the free assistance two years ago, but costs have risen](#)

CONCORD, N.H. -- Two years ago, New Hampshire refused to accept heating oil from Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez, the pro-Castro U.S. critic who once called President Bush "the devil." But with fuel prices rising, well, free oil is free oil.



### [Alaskans suffer nation's highest gasoline prices](#)

ANCHORAGE, Alaska (Reuters) - Think you're feeling pain at the gas pump? Consider the residents of Lime Village, Alaska, an isolated Denaina Athabascan Indian community where gasoline prices have hit \$8.55 a gallon.

The price is severely curtailing movement around the interior Alaska village, where four-wheelers are sitting idle, said Ursula Graham, administrator for the Lime Village Traditional Council.

### [Russia's energy drive leaves US reeling](#)

Last week, the gloves finally came off the Dmitry Medvedev presidency in Russia. It had to happen sooner or later, but few would have expected this soon. It was crystal clear US President George W Bush administered a diplomatic snub to Medvedev on the sidelines of the Group of Eight (G-8) summit meeting at Hokkaido, Japan.

### [Los Angeles is home to new rush of oil drilling: As energy prices surge, hidden rigs trap fertile fields under city](#)

Remember how Jed Clampett and his family struck "black gold" and moved to Beverly Hills? Today the black gold is IN Beverly Hills.

Beverly Hills is one of the most fertile oil fields in Los Angeles, producing nearly a million barrels a year. Many wells are camouflaged or hidden inside buildings. One on the property of Beverly Hills High School is covered in quilt-like floral blankets.

### [4 Dead, 7 Injured After Crane Collapse at Houston Refinery](#)

HOUSTON — One of the nation's largest mobile cranes collapsed at a Houston oil refinery Friday, killing four workers and injuring seven others in the latest of several fatal accidents that have raised concerns about the safety of construction cranes.

### [How to beat 60% rise in gas prices? Wear two jumpers \(sweaters\), says energy boss](#)

One of the UK's biggest energy suppliers came under fire yesterday after one of its senior executives said consumers struggling with record-high gas prices should keep warm by putting on two jumpers.

### [French nuclear firm admits uranium leaks at two plants](#)



The French nuclear giant Areva yesterday confirmed there was a radioactive leak from a broken pipe at a nuclear fuel plant in south-eastern France, a week after a uranium spill at another of its plants polluted the local water supply.

The latest incident comes as an embarrassment to the French government as it struggles to contain environmentalists' anger and reassure residents near its nuclear plants that they are safe.

### [Solar cars race to promote renewable technologies](#)

SIOUX FALLS, S.D.—Even as U.S. oil refiners scramble to increase the flow of Canadian crude from Alberta to Texas, a caravan of futuristic solar cars is racing that 2,400-mile route in reverse to show what transportation could look like without a drop of oil or gas.

### [Can plug-in hybrids ride to America's rescue?](#)

Davis, Calif. - If the United States breaks its oil addiction, a measure of thanks will no doubt be due to Andy Frank, who some have dubbed the "father of the plug-in hybrid" car.

### [Faithful Citizenship: Caring for God's creation](#)

Some 60 parishioners attended the presentation, "Energy Ethics in an Era of Global Climate Change and Peak Oil," during which Rauckhorst stressed the lead role that religious congregations must play in helping form both our individual and national conscience on energy and environmental issues.

### [Missing fossils could warn of extreme climate to come](#)

Did the tropics overheat during the Eocene some 55 to 34 million years ago? The answer holds the key to how our planet will respond to global warming, according to one climate researcher.



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