



Drumbeat: September 26, 2009

Posted by [Leanan](#) on September 26, 2009 - 9:30am

Topic: [Miscellaneous](#)

[One on One with Ali al-Naimi, Oil Minister of Saudi Arabia](#)

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AL-NAIMI: Number one is food. Number two is water. Number three, believe it or not, is energy and environment. These are the three areas of focus. Now, why do I say energy? It's a different energy. It's solar energy.

le (Venezuela) or their production is dwindling so quickly that they could be a net importer of oil within five years (Mexico). For every five barrels of oil America consumes a day, one comes from Canada. One barrel of every 20 now consumed in the United States is pumped straight out of the oilsands, a number that could triple inside of 15 years.

That leaves the United States with one stable long-term oil option. And we're it.

[Robert Bryce - America: A World Leader in Oil Exports!](#)

There has never been a more global, more integrated, more transparent market than the modern crude oil and oil products market. And yet, the calls for America to be "energy independent" continue to be heard from both the Right and the Left.

[Iran threatens oil transport route](#)

With the prospect of Israel bombing Iran's nuclear facilities looming, Tehran has renewed its threat to shut down the strategic Strait of Hormuz, through which up to 40 percent of the world's oil supplies pass, according to a report from Joseph Farah's G2 Bulletin.

[Iran's massive oil revenue discrepancies](#)

TEHRAN (UPI) -- Massive discrepancies between Iran's oil revenues and official statistics over the last four years are being covered in the national press.

Wednesday, Tehran's reformist daily E'temad carried a report headlined, "Find the \$25 billion."

[Venezuela, Petrobras to build \\$12 billion refinery in Brazil](#)

PORLAMAR (MarketWatch) -- Venezuela state-run energy firm PdVSA and Brazil's Petrobras plan to ink an agreement Sunday to move forward with plans on building a refinery together, a top Venezuelan official said Friday.

Soaring cost estimates for the Brazilian refinery had in recent months threatened to kill the project before it begins. But Venezuelan Oil Minister Rafael Ramirez, who also is president of PdVSA, said the issues are being ironed out.

[Ukraine seeks new natural gas suppliers](#)

KIEV, Ukraine (UPI) -- A top Ukrainian official said Ukraine should review its existing natural gas contract with Russia in order to purchase natural gas from Central Asia.

[One day, all houses will be built this way](#)

Social housing tenants could soon be living in state-of-the-art green homes built from natural materials such as clay, hemp and sheep's wool, which are being pioneered as part of Prince Charles' campaign to create beautiful sustainable property.

[The next wave](#)

Cars with bodies and parts made from seaweed and powered by biofuel derived from algae and saltwater could be the wave of the future if a couple of companies have anything to say about it.

[Ethiopia embraces renewable energy](#)

ADDIS ABABA, Ethiopia (UPI) -- The Ethiopian Electric Power Corporation has signed contracts with three Chinese companies for renewable energy projects.

[One on One with Ali al-Naimi, Oil Minister of Saudi Arabia](#)

GHARIB: But Mr. Naimi, when you -- what are you going to focus on? What will be the biggest growth industry outside of oil ultimately?

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[Oil and gas reforms announced after B.C. bombings](#)

DAWSON CREEK, B.C. — In the wake of six bombings targeting natural-gas pipelines on the B.C.-Alberta border, the B.C. government announced Friday a package of reforms aimed at improving relations between the oil and gas industry and residents.

[Pemex oil theft case nabs second exec](#)

The president of an Edinburg gas company pleaded guilty today in Houston federal court on charges relating to theft of an oil product from Mexico's oil giant, Pemex.

[Oil prices impact Mexico's budget](#)

MEXICO CITY (UPI) -- Mexico's Chamber of Deputies speaker urged those dissatisfied with the president's 2010 budget to present options not based on high oil price projections.

El Universal reported Thursday that Speaker Francisco Ramirez Acuna of the Partido Accion Nacional suggested that legislators who disagreed with President Felipe Calderon's proposed 2010 budget offer options not based either on an increase in debt or high expectations regarding oil production and sales.

[Ghana: Fuel shortage hits Tamale Metropolis](#)

The Tamale Metropolis is facing fuel shortages as most of the petrol filling stations in the area had not received supplies, causing most motorists to park their cars and motorbikes.

Some of the fuel stations the GNA visited had only diesel on sale and the only fuel station with petrol was the Total station one along the Tamale Teaching Hospital road, which was crowded with buyers struggling for hours to buy the commodity.

[Connecticut: Price war pumps up gasoline business](#)

The statewide average is \$2.52 a gallon. It was \$3.70 a gallon at this time last year, according to the AAA Fuel Gauge Report. But prices dropping a penny at a time were a

regular occurrence Friday as two stations battled for the lowest price.

[Carbon Emissions Can Really Build Up](#)

The challenge of climate change usually brings to mind images of industrial smokestacks or gas-hungry SUVs. But commercial and residential buildings consume nearly two-fifths of all energy produced worldwide and spit out 8.4 billion tons of CO₂ emissions each year, or 30 percent of the global total. And while the price tag for reducing greenhouse gas emissions is cheaper for buildings than for transportation or hard industries, construction of more energy-efficient buildings won't pay for itself through lower energy bills. Pure market incentives aren't enough; governments must get involved.

[Canada MIA in carbon talks](#)

With climate negotiations limping into the home-stretch, the United Nations pulled out all the stops this week. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon brought 100 heads of state together to tackle greenhouse gas emissions in a bid to re-energize bargaining.

While world leaders exchanged ideas, Canada's Prime Minister Stephen Harper sent his environment minister, Jim Prentice, to listen in, take notes, and make excuses.

[S.D. farm products take a price dive](#)

Going into the 2009 harvest, all the state's major farm products and ethanol are well below record highs set the past few years. Impatience is rampant as producers are looking for a recovering economy to jump start demand that will help use up stored grain and spur new production of milk, meat and renewable motor fuel.

Making that itch even more prickly is a projected bumper corn crop that would further upset the supply-demand balance.

[Area pushes for rapid transit system](#)

A group of community leaders plans to meet with U.S. Sen. Bill Nelson, D-Fla., to request federal money for a rapid transit system that would link east and west Gainesville, the University of Florida and Santa Fe College, and major shopping and employment centers.

The estimated cost is \$185 million and would include money from developers of several large projects along the route.

[Mother knows breast](#)

Breastfeeding saves energy, cuts greenhouse gases and uses fewer natural resources.

[Oil-related firms feel impact of credit curbs](#)

ITS Tubular Services (Holdings) says that economic conditions and the fall in available credit facilities have had a major impact on operators' capital investment programmes.

Directors of the Aberdeen-based provider of specialised products and services to the global oil and gas industry say this has resulted in cancellations or delays in activity.

They add in their annual report for 2008, which has just been released by Companies House, that the near-term outlook is difficult to assess given the state of credit markets.

[Rhine Barge Rates for Oil Products Advance on Low Water Levels](#)

(Bloomberg) -- The cost of shipping oil products on the Rhine River advanced as lower than usual water levels reduced the amount of fuel barges can carry.

[Time to put pressure on Russia](#)

What a difference a slump makes. Chief executives of the big western oil and gas companies met a kinder, gentler Vladimir Putin on Thursday in Salekhard, Western Siberia. The Russian Prime Minister had invited them to a town with a population of 36,000, right on the polar circle, to highlight the promises of the gas fields of the Yamal Peninsula, and to throw open the doors to Western investment and technology.

[Venezuela says France's Total to invest \\$25B in heavy oil production](#)

PORLAMAR, Venezuela - Venezuela's state oil company says France's Total SA will invest \$25 billion in the nation's Orinoco Oil Belt.

[Natural Gas Declines on Concern Demand Will Increase Slowly](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Natural gas futures declined for the first day in four as a government report showing a drop in orders for durable goods signaled that a recovery in fuel consumption may be slow.

Demand for goods meant to last several years dropped 2.4 percent, the worst performance since January, the Commerce Department said today in Washington.

Economists expected an increase. Purchases by industrial users such as carmakers and chemical plants account for about 29 percent of consumption.

[U.S. Gas Fund May Shrink With CFTC Rules, Hyland Says](#)

(Bloomberg) -- U.S. Natural Gas Fund, the largest exchange-traded fund in the fuel, may be forced to shrink if U.S. regulators tighten limits on energy speculation, said John Hyland, the fund's chief investment officer.

The Commodity Futures Trading Commission may cap energy investments amid concern speculators contributed to record-high commodity prices last year. New limits may force the fund to reduce shares, Hyland said in a Bloomberg television interview.

[Natural gas crusader](#)

Randy Eresman's job description is changing, and it is not just because EnCana Corp., the naturalgas and integrated oil company he now leads, is spinning off its oil and refining operations into a new company called Cenovus Energy Inc. He's a petroleum engineer by training but increasingly is becoming a lobbyist and marketer for the natural-gas industry. His challenge? To convince legislators, auto manufacturers and consumers that natural-gas vehicles are the way of the future. Goodbye drill bit, hello podium. Mr. Eresman sat down with the Financial Post's Carrie Tait to explain his changing role and the challenges in his way.

[Phibro Fund Rose 22% as Commodity Indexes Fell, Document Shows](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Phibro LLC, the Citigroup Inc. energy-trading unit that the bank may be forced to sell, said funds that it manages for outside investors rose 22 percent since the start of 2008 as commodity indexes fell, a solicitation document showed.

[Schlumberger ranks high on list of 'green' companies](#)

Horseheads, N.Y. - This week's issue of Newsweek magazine ranks America's 500 largest corporations according to how "green" they are, and a company planning to build a controversial facility in Horseheads fared pretty well.

[GE Energy bulking up in Houston](#)

If the global energy complex were a giant roulette table, GE Energy would have a chip down on nearly every number. From wind turbines and solar panels to offshore oil and gas equipment and coal and nuclear power plants, the Atlanta-based arm of U.S.

industrial and media conglomerate General Electric Co. is in the business. And a growing portion of that business is being done in Houston, GE Energy CEO John Krenicki said during a visit to local company facilities this week

[The End of Oil?](#)

Oil is the curse of the modern world; it is “the devil’s excrement,” in the words of the former Venezuelan oil minister Juan Pablo Pérez Alfonzo, who is considered to be the father of OPEC and should know. Our insatiable need for oil has brought us global warming, Islamic fundamentalism and environmental depredation. It has turned the United States and China, the world’s biggest consumers of petroleum, into greedy, irresponsible addicts that can’t see beyond their next fix. With a few exceptions, like Norway and the United Arab Emirates, oil doesn’t even benefit the nations from which it is extracted. On the contrary: Most oil-rich states have been doomed to a seemingly permanent condition of kleptocracy by a few, poverty for the rest, chronic backwardness and, worst of all, the loss of a national soul.

We can’t be rid of the stuff soon enough.

[Oil shipping sector heading for downturn: Teekay](#)

"Today's voyages are barely paying owners enough to get the ship from point A to B. It's just paying for the fuel and certainly not paying enough for owners to pay back their bank financing and debt costs," Chan said.

This in turn is leading to poor maintenance of ships by some owners who are running out of cash, he added.

[Mexico's Cantarell oil field may be stabilizing](#)

MEXICO CITY (Reuters) - Mexican oil production fell again in August but state oil company Pemex said it had some early indications the rapid fall in output at its giant Cantarell field may be slowing.

Mexico pumped 2.542 million bpd in August, a decline of 7.9 percent on a year ago but production at Cantarell edged higher for the first time in more than two years.

[Oil price to rise on stronger demand: Goldman Sachs](#)

(Reuters) - Goldman Sachs said oil prices are likely to be higher in the future due to a recovery in demand and a decline in production, and expects European integrated oil companies to struggle to sustain the current level of production.

[Tank farm opposition files petition Community Strength asking judge to repeal Petroplex permit](#)

VACHERIE – A community group is asking a Baton Rouge judge to appeal the state's approval of an air quality permit for a proposed petroleum storage tank farm along the Mississippi River near Vacherie.

[The New Case for Natural Gas](#)

Natural gas has recently emerged as a vital but neglected complement to the paragons of low-carbon energy: renewable energy and energy efficiency. Recent developments in technology, from gas wells to home appliances, suggest a need to fundamentally reevaluate the role of natural gas in the energy system. Together with renewable energy and energy efficiency, natural gas should be a cornerstone of strategies to advance energy security and reduce the threat of climate change - a conclusion that has recently been supported by U.S. environmental leaders, including Robert Kennedy, Jr., John Podesta, Carl Pope, and Tim Wirth.

[Hartwick College picks 'energy' as 2009-10 theme](#)

On Oct. 16, the college will present "Energy Roundtable: Peak Oil" from noon to 1 p.m. Associate Professor of Education Mark Davies will lead a discussion of issues surrounding peak oil.

...The theme will include educating the Hartwick community about fossil fuels, peak oil and alternative-energy sources, involving the campus and community in efforts to reduce their ecological impact. Local energy topics such as natural-gas drilling in the Marcellus Shale will also be addressed.

[Worldchanging Interview: Paul Hawken](#)

Hawken was this year's Sustainable Industries: Economic Forum keynote speaker. During the event, Hawken asked the 300 plus sustainably-minded business leaders, entrepreneurs and political heads to truly look at the data: dangerous levels of atmospheric CO₂, peak oil, peak soil - peak everything. Despite this, he said he remains optimistic. He focused much of his talk on solutions such as innovative solar design and collaborations, like linking green banking with affordable, green housing, food and transportation.

[U.S. Chamber of Commerce in climate rift](#)

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. - A rift widened between the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and

some utilities as another major power provider quit over the business group's hard stance on pending climate regulation.

The Public Service Company of New Mexico, the state's largest utility, quit the chamber Friday just days after California's largest utility, Pacific Gas and Electric Co., said it was leaving because of the chamber's "extreme" positions.

[California funds biggest energy efficiency plan](#)

LOS ANGELES - California is embarking on the most aggressive energy efficiency plan among U.S. states, having earmarked \$3.1 billion to retrofit homes and other programs that will cut power needs equivalent to three medium-sized power plants.

[Some grapes are purple, but this winery has gone green](#)

The air conditioning runs 24 hours a day, seven days a week in the new building. His first electric bill for the new structure was \$49.

That's because Carroll, his wife, Christine, and son Tom Jr. care about the environment and spent a small fortune to use the latest technology, geothermal heat and solar roof panels to power their business.

Tom Carroll is a prime example of what state Rep. Steve Santarsiero, D-Bucks, and Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection's John Hangar want to see as they are working to push House Bill 80 through to passage.

[Talking transportation – NuRide: The secret way to a cheaper commute](#)

I have the solution to highway congestion — a simple plan to cut traffic by 50 percent. All we have to do is get every SOV (single-occupancy-vehicle) driver to carry one additional passenger who'd otherwise be driving alone. But don't call this "carpooling" or it'll never succeed.

[Scrubbing the Atmosphere](#)

Governments are doing practically nothing to study the removal of carbon dioxide directly from the atmosphere, but this technology could be a much cheaper form of climate protection than photovoltaic cells and other approaches getting lavish support, according to an article published today in *Science*.

["An Idea Whose Time Has Come"](#)

The OECD has just released a new book: "The Economics of Climate Change Mitigation: Policies and Options for Global Action beyond 2012." To quote from the Executive Summary (pp. 5-6): "Closing the gap between domestic and international fossil fuel prices could cut GHG emissions drastically in the subsidising countries, in some cases by over 30% relative to BAU levels by 2050, and globally by 10%." Further, "Energy subsidy removal would also raise GDP per capita in most of the countries concerned, including India and, to a lesser extent, China."

[Inhofe on why global warming isn't real: 'God's still up there. We're going through these cycles.'](#)

On C-Span's Washington Journal this week, Sen. James Inhofe (R-OK), the godfather of global warming deniers, said that he will travel to the climate change summit in Copenhagen this fall to present "another view." "I think somebody has to be there — a one-man truth squad," he said.

[Indian PM on climate deal: 'I'm not an astrologer'](#)

PITTSBURGH, Pennsylvania (AFP) – Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh said Friday he could not predict whether the world will meet a deadline on a climate deal, saying a summit here only took up global warming in broad terms.

"I'm not an astrologer," Singh told a news conference when asked if a December conference in Copenhagen would succeed in sealing a successor framework to the landmark Kyoto Protocol.

[Calif. OKs fee to pay for global warming program](#)

Despite industry objections and threats of lawsuits, California air regulators on Friday approved the nation's first statewide carbon fee on utilities, oil refineries and other polluting industries.

[Bill McKibben: Why 350 is the most important number on the planet](#)

We've been running a huge campaign – it's blown up into the first real grassroots global political protest about global warming – called 350.org. The number comes from new science that followed the shocking melt of Arctic ice in the summer of 2007. Researchers became convinced that climate change was happening faster than they had previously expected, and that they had enough data to put a real number on it. That number was 350, as in parts per million CO₂ in the atmosphere. Above that level, in the powerful (and peer-reviewed) words of Nasa scientist James Hansen, we can't have a planet "similar to the one on which civilisation developed or to which life on earth is adapted".

[Unusual Arctic Warmth, Tropical Wetness Likely Cause for Methane Increase](#)

Unusually high temperatures in the Arctic and heavy rains in the tropics likely drove a global increase in atmospheric methane in 2007 and 2008 after a decade of near-zero growth, according to a new study. Methane is the second most abundant greenhouse gas after carbon dioxide, albeit a distant second.

[Science Report: Climate Change Speeding Toward Irreversible Tipping Points](#)

Losses from glaciers, ice-sheets and the Polar Regions appear to be happening faster than anticipated, and melting of the Greenland Ice Sheet surface also seems to be accelerating. In the summer of 2007, the rate of melting was some 60 percent higher than the previous record in 1998.

Some scientists are now warning that sea levels could rise by up to two meters (6.5 feet) by 2100, drowning low-lying countries and coastal cities.

[So Shall You Reap: How Climate Change Will Affect Farms](#)

Many farming communities think global warming won't hurt them. They're wrong.

You might think a little global warming is good for farming. Longer, warmer growing seasons and more carbon dioxide (CO₂)—what plant wouldn't love that? The agricultural industry basically takes that stance. But global warming's effects on agriculture would actually be quite complicated—and mostly not for the better.



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