



Drumbeat: August 7, 2010

Posted by [Leanan](#) on August 7, 2010 - 9:27am

Topic: [Miscellaneous](#)

[Not So Easy](#)

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Maybe not. Sending humans to the moon and safely returning them to the Earth is easy. Been there, done that. Feeding 9 to 9.5 billion people or more by 2050? Not so easy. We've never done that. And there are good reasons to believe we might not be able to.

her on the body.

Judging from the overwhelmingly negative response to my departure from the hallowed halls, I chose the perfect age to change life pursuits. All people older than my 49 years (now 50, if you're keeping score) claim they don't have the energy, at their advanced age, to do what I've done. All people younger than I claim they don't have the money to do what I've done (as if they could not join others, as I have done, by necessity *and* choice).

[Tanker Damage Caused by Attack, Inquiry Finds](#)

While tankers are slow and hard to maneuver, making them easy targets, attacks against tankers have been extremely rare. Modern tankers typically have twin hulls, many separate compartments to store oil, and are sturdy enough to withstand a direct hit from rocket-propelled grenades, for instance.

Aside from the attacks on ships that occurred during the Iran-Iraq war, the attack on the *Limburg* is the only other instance analysts cite of a tanker being attacked by terrorists. That attack, carried out by a small fishing boat packed with explosives, was believed to have been the work of Al Qaeda operatives in Yemen, and was the group's first successful strike against an oil target.

The *Limburg* was crippled and leaked some oil, but did not sink.

[Pakistan on red alert for more floods](#)

More than 252,000 homes are thought to have been damaged or destroyed across Pakistan and 558,000 hectares of crop land flooded, and it could take weeks before electricity is fully restored. Authorities in Sindh said assessments of the damage to agriculture were in progress after farmers saw their livelihoods washed away. "Our cattle died and the cotton crop (was) destroyed," said Mohammad Bakhsh, 50, a resident of Qasim Ghot village.

[Pakistani Police Kill 3 People Protesting against Power Failure](#)

Pakistani police shot dead three protestors on Friday after a protest for electricity failure turned into a gunfight in Swabi district in the northwestern region of the country, reported local media.

According to the media reports, hundreds of people, protesting and shouting slogans against the government, became violent when police tried to stop them to burn the official record and furniture of the electricity department.

[India: Police open fire as farmers seeking fertilisers turn violent in Parbhani](#)

AURANGABAD: The police fired at least five rounds in the air when a group of farmers, seeking fertilisers for the Kharif season, turned violent and pelted stones at police and government officials in Pathri taluka in Parbhani district, about 150 km from Aurangabad, on Friday. At least 13 policemen, including senior officials, and about 25 farmers, sustained injuries in the scuffle involving stone pelting and lathi charge.

[Governments Go to Extremes as the Downturn Wears On](#)

Plenty of businesses and governments furloughed workers this year, but Hawaii went further — it furloughed its schoolchildren. Public schools across the state closed on 17 Fridays during the past school year to save money, giving students the shortest academic year in the nation and sending working parents scrambling to find care for them.

Many transit systems have cut service to make ends meet, but Clayton County, Ga., a suburb of Atlanta, decided to cut all the way, and shut down its entire public bus system. Its last buses ran on March 31, stranding 8,400 daily riders.

Even public safety has not been immune to the budget ax. In Colorado Springs, the downturn will be remembered, quite literally, as a dark age: the city switched off a third of its 24,512 streetlights to save money on electricity, while trimming its police force and auctioning off its police helicopters.

[BP: Future use of reservoir 'not currently under consideration'](#)

BP clarified that the future use of the oil spill reservoir that gushed millions of gallons of crude into the Gulf of Mexico is "not currently under consideration," according to a company statement issued Friday evening.

[Ecuador pledges no oil drilling in Amazon reserve](#)

Ecuador has agreed to refrain from drilling for oil in a pristine Amazon rainforest reserve in return for up to \$3.6bn (£2.26bn) in payments from rich countries.

Under a pioneering agreement signed with the United Nations, the oilfields under the Yasuni reserve will remain untapped for at least a decade.

[Buy Gold—And Commodities ETFs](#)

What I'm arguing is that it's undeniable that demand from places like India, Brazil and especially China is a huge part of the price of oil and other materials. China may be heading for some near-term correction as it grapples with hard-to-fill skyscrapers in cities like Shanghai, but it seems to me the writing is on the wall. China is here to stay, and it will tax supplies of critical resources, most conspicuously oil.

The other piece of the petroleum story is that it's getting harder to find. I'm not exactly buying into the peak oil theory geologists such as Kenneth Deffeyes have been describing, but I think it's fair to say finding and extracting whatever oil there is on the planet is getting more expensive.

[Is the Philippines heading for a nuclear future?](#)

Like many developing countries, the Philippines is in search of alternative energy supplies to ease its reliance on costly imported oil, gas and coal. A new government plan includes wind, solar, hydro, biomass and nuclear power among potential energy sources for the country.

[How eco-friendly is your favorite brewery?](#)

A rating of the world's 15 largest breweries finds the most famous ones aren't necessarily the greenest.

[South gets first ultra-efficient, passive-rated home](#)

Corey Saft wanted a sheltered area for his young kids to play. He could have put up a

fence around his large corner lot in Lafayette, La. But this architecture professor had a different idea.

"I could do a long thin house" that hugs the property's edge and creates a courtyard, he recalls thinking. "It would be an occupiable fence."

The result is the first house in the South to be certified by the Passive House Institute, which requires homes use up to 90% less energy than regular ones. Begun in Germany, this rigorous rating system is relatively new in the United States but is gaining popularity.

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[Crude Oil Futures Drop on Lower-Than-Projected U.S. Company Payroll Growth](#)

Crude oil fell for a third day as weaker-than-forecast growth in U.S. company payrolls bolstered concern that economic growth in the world's biggest oil-consuming country is slowing.

Oil slipped 1.6 percent after the Labor Department said private payrolls that exclude government agencies rose by 71,000, less than forecast, after a gain of 31,000 in June that was smaller than previously reported. A report on Aug. 4 showed that U.S. fuel supplies increased last week as demand dropped.

[Weekend pump prices up a few cents](#)

Motorists heading out for back-to-school shopping trips or a late-summer vacation will pay a few cents more for a gallon of gas this weekend.

Pump prices rose this week because of a rally in oil, yet they aren't expected to spike in the weeks ahead because of typical light trading in the oil market in August, still-ample supplies and fairly weak demand.

[Pemex to Add Offshore Rigs, Seek Bigger Budget to Stem Drops in Production](#)

Petroleos Mexicanos, Latin America's largest oil producer, plans to increase the number of leased offshore drilling rigs to 60 from 52 as the state-owned company requests a bigger budget to arrest output declines.

"We need more rigs than the ones we're using," Carlos Morales, director of exploration and production, said yesterday in a telephone interview. It is "likely that we're going to renew all the contracts that are expiring this year."

[Top Iran Oil Company Official: Persian LNG Project Suspended](#)

LONDON -(Dow Jones)- Iran is suspending some liquefied natural gas projects, including Persian LNG, and shifting focus on pipeline exports instead, the head of the country's state oil company was quoted as saying Saturday.

Iran's LNG schemes largely depend on key technologies owned by Western companies.

But Western companies have been deterred by mounting sanctions, with Repsol YPF recently ending talks to start Persian LNG. In an interview with Iran's oil ministry website Shana published Saturday, Ahmed Ghalebani, managing director of the National Iranian Oil Co., said some LNG projects have been suspended.

[TransCanada pipeline to Oklahoma under scrutiny](#)

ANCHORAGE, Alaska -- TransCanada, which is working with ExxonMobil to build an Alaska natural gas pipeline, is now under scrutiny for a pipeline it plans to build in the Lower 48.

The federal government says TransCanada is in violation of statutes protecting Kansas wetlands. The 2,100-mile pipeline is being built from Canada through Kansas to Oklahoma.

[Bengal minister asks transporters to defer strike](#)

West Bengal Transport Minister Ranjit Kundu has asked transport operators to defer by 10 days their proposed strike seeking higher sops to offset the fuel price hike but the later are yet to take a final decision on it.

The state's bus, minibus and taxi operators announced a three-day strike Aug 10-12 to protest against the state government's decision not to increase fares after the recent fuel price hike.

[Coverage Turns, Cautiously, to Spill Impact](#)

Newsrooms are grappling with the same questions that the rest of the country is, after spending months watching oil gush into the water: Is the oil spill really over? And how damaging will it ultimately be to the gulf's environment and economy?

The conundrum for television, print and online journalists alike has been that no one wanted to declare "Mission Accomplished" on the gushing oil portion of the calamity prematurely. But no one wanted to be the last to report that the leak had been plugged.

[US-Vietnam nuke deal will likely allow enrichment](#)

WASHINGTON – The Obama administration has told U.S. lawmakers that a nuclear cooperation deal with Vietnam is unlikely to include a coveted promise by the Hanoi government not to enrich uranium, congressional aides say.

[Plant Repository at Risk in Russia](#)

The world's largest collection of European fruits and berries — at the Pavlovsk Research Station outside St. Petersburg, Russia — is at risk of being plowed over so developers can build homes there, international environmental groups say.

[Illinois: Invader Carp May Have Been at Home](#)

A 3-foot-long Asian carp discovered in a Chicago waterway near Lake Michigan appears to have spent most of its life there and may have been planted by humans who did not know the environmental risk it posed, researchers said Thursday. Tests suggested it was not a recent arrival to the waterway and probably did not get there by evading an electric barrier meant to prevent the species from infesting the Great Lakes, said Jim Garvey, a biologist at Southern Illinois University Carbondale.

[Even facing an emergency, the GOP fizzles on energy](#)

When most Republicans and some oil- and coal-state Democrats oppose even mild measures to reduce dependence on fossil fuels and curb excesses, it's a sign that special-interest politics trumps even a national emergency. The need to tighten rules on offshore drilling will never be more apparent than they are at this moment.

[Pressure Building on Future of 2 Coal-Burning Power Plants](#)

Mayor Richard M. Daley has repeatedly billed himself as a green mayor and recently vowed to use "every available tool" to reduce the city's carbon footprint, but critics say

City Hall has failed to grapple with Chicago's two most significant sources of greenhouse-gas pollution.

[U.S. Changes Plan for Capturing Emissions From Coal](#)

WASHINGTON — The Energy Department abruptly shifted course on Thursday on a flagship federal effort to capture and sequester carbon dioxide from coal-fired power plants, saying it would not finance construction of a new plant in Mattoon, Ill.

Instead of underwriting that project, which would have turned coal into a hydrocarbon gas, filtered out the carbon and burned the hydrogen, the government said it would contribute \$737 million to remake an obsolete oil-burning plant in Meredosia, Ill.

[Has a Warming Russia Outpaced the World?](#)

Better known for long, bitterly cold winters, Russia is well on the way to becoming the poster child for the perils of global warming this summer.

[UN talks flounder as climate impacts mount, say delegates](#)

PARIS (AFP) – UN climate talks tasked with curbing the threat of global warming are backsliding, delegates from both rich and developing nations said Friday at the close of a week-long session in Bonn.

Even as evidence mounts that deadly impacts are upon us, negotiators said, chances for a compromise deal under the 194-nation UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) are slipping away amid furious finger pointing.

[Worst Impact of Climate Change May Be How Humanity Reacts to It](#)

The paper notes that efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by constructing dams for hydropower generation can cause substantial damage to key freshwater ecosystems as well as to the flora and fauna in the flooded valleys. It also notes that the generally bogus concept that biofuels reduce carbon emissions is still being used as a justification for the felling of large swathes of biodiverse tropical forests.



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