



Drumbeat: September 7, 2010

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Topic: [Miscellaneous](#)

[Iran stores abundant fuel oil on supertankers](#)

Iran has been storing straight-run fuel oil on supertankers for at least three months, in an unprecedented move prompted by China's poor feedstock demand and financing difficulties faced by buyers due to Western sanctions, industry sources said on Friday.

At least 550,000-600,000 tonnes, two full VLCC loads, are being held at sea at any one time, traders said.

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ica's last frontier to get a glimpse into what their futures may hold. They ooh and ah at breaching whales, a calving glacier and waterfalls. But they've come to Alaska because of something unsightly: spilled oil.

[Putin says nuclear energy only alternative to oil, gas](#)

Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin said on Monday that nuclear energy is the only alternative to traditional energy sources.

The global gas market has been recovering from the recent economic downturn, but demand for energy sources will soar over the next few years, Putin told a meeting with the Valdai International Discussion Club in the Black Sea resort of Sochi.

The premier cited the current energy crisis in the United States, where, he said, "the situation with shale gas... is very difficult."

['Floating Chernobyls' to hit the high seas](#)

China and Russia agreed to expand co-operation over nuclear power, specifically on uranium exploration and safer power plants – but also on floating nuclear reactors.

"It's a case of Homer Simpson meets the Titanic," says Ben Ayliffe, a senior climate campaigner at Greenpeace. "The idea is just mind-boggling."

[Australia Unlikely to Rival Qatar 'Soon' on LNG, Macquarie Says](#)

Australia is unlikely to challenge Qatar as the biggest liquefied natural gas exporter "any time soon" and has too many proposed projects competing for customers, Macquarie Group Ltd. said.

Only a "fraction" of the projects planned in Australia may proceed, analysts Adrian Wood, Gavin Maher and Kirit Hira wrote in a report today. While LNG demand may double to 372 million tons a year by 2020 from current levels, supply is "more than up to the challenge," their report shows.

[Explosion Mexico refinery explosion](#)

MONTERREY, Mexico — An explosion ripped through a major refinery in northern Mexico Tuesday, state oil company Pemex said, but officials were unable to confirm reports that several people were killed.

Local media in northern Mexico reported that seven people had died in the explosion at Pemex's Cadeyreta complex, Mexico's most sophisticated oil refinery and the country's third largest, with a capacity of 275,000 barrels per day.

[Ukraine pays Russia gas bill](#)

Ukraine's state-owned energy company Naftogaz said today it paid Russia in full for its August gas deliveries, amid concerns over the country's ability to buy dollars to pay for the resource.

[Iran says is self-sufficient in gasoline-state TV](#)

TEHRAN (Reuters) - Iran has raised its gasoline production to attain self-sufficiency in the strategic product and foil sanctions targeting its energy needs, the state TV website reported its oil minister as saying on Tuesday.

"We attained a production of 66.5 million litres a day in the country's refineries," said Massoud Mirkazemi, according to IRIB's website.

He said that prior to the increase Iran had domestic production of 44 million litres and imported 20 million litres to meet the market's needs.

[Iraq sets 2011 output targets for 10 Basra oilfields](#)

BAGHDAD (Reuters) - Iraq's South Oil Co. and its foreign partners have set quarterly 2011 production targets for Iraq's southern oilfields including a 1.25 million barrel per day year-end target for workhorse Rumaila, SOC documents show.

The documents obtained by Reuters show the SOC expects production to rise to 2.285 million bpd from all 10 oilfields it is involved with, including super giants Rumaila, Majnoon and West Qurna Phase One, by the end of next year.

[Iraq unable to meet current power demand until 2013](#)

BAGHDAD — Iraq will need at least another three years before it is able to satisfy current electricity demand, the US general charged with the military's reconstruction efforts in the Middle East said on Tuesday.

But Brigadier General Kendall Cox acknowledged that his projection was based on present levels of demand, which continue to rise as Iraqis purchase more consumer goods for their homes such as refrigerators and air conditioners.

[Oil majors say ops unaffected by tropical storm](#)

HOUSTON (Reuters) - Major Gulf of Mexico oil producers said on Tuesday that their offshore operations were unaffected by the one-day passage of Tropical Storm Hermine through the western Gulf of Mexico on Monday.

[MRRT fears weigh on resources](#)

FEARS are rising in the oil and gas industry that billion-dollar gas projects could be further delayed amid calls for another tax summit.

As energy players fretted about uncertainty, miners remained split on the Gillard government's mineral resources rent tax that was struck through negotiations with BHP Billiton, Rio Tinto and Xstrata.

[Peugeot Citroen Bets on Vehicle-Lease Programs to Power Electric-Car Sales](#)

PSA Peugeot Citroen, Europe's second-biggest carmaker, aims to unlock demand for electric cars with leasing programs that include gasoline loaners for trips beyond the reach of a single battery charge.

[Commuters walloped by strikes in France, London](#)

PARIS – Strikes hobbled public transit across France and in London on Tuesday, forcing tourists and commuters to alter their plans as they bore the brunt of a wave of discontent over government cost-cutting measures — a wave expected to soon prompt walkouts elsewhere on the continent.

French unions staged a nationwide walkout over plans to raise the retirement age from 60 to 62, cutting service on trains, planes, buses and subways. London Underground workers unhappy about job cuts closed much of the city's subway system — the first in a series of 24-hour strikes planned for the fall.

[Peak Oil and the Doomsday Myth](#)

In the 1990s, a group of retired geologists began flooding the media with warnings that an abrupt and imminent decline in oil supply would soon bring about the collapse of modern civilization. Some even claimed that it would push us 2.5 million years back in time to when our ancestors roamed the east African plains. This alarmist view, still so common today, is preposterous.

[Oil, health, and health care](#)

Experts on peak oil and health experts have examined this challenge together at three workshops, and some common themes emerge. These concern the need for simpler more robust systems that are capable of local maintenance, and the importance of fairness regarding access to food, water, transport, and essential health care. The text below summarises possible features identified as characteristic of a healthy prosperous society in the future. Because the workshops explored success not failure the goals may appear idealistic. The alternative could be very different.

[New Denver councillor addresses greenhouse rumours](#)

New Denver councillor Kevin Murphy's greenhouse proposal has recently been hit with some rumours damning the project, according to the councillor. So, in an attempt to clear up some of the fog, Murphy has listed these points so people may understand it better. They are as follows:

1. In February, 2010 the Healthy Housing Society initiated a study, funded by Columbia Basin Trust (CBT), and hosted a series of forums on "Building A Healthy Economy" to determine the best options for community resilience in regards to "peak oil," climate change and related trends. "Greenhouses" were defined as the idea most likely to succeed.

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[Crude Oil Falls for a Second Day on Speculation U.S. Fuel Demand Will Drop](#)

Oil declined to a three-day low as falling equity markets reinforced doubts about the global economic recovery while the end of the U.S. summer peak consumption season signaled lower demand from refiners.

Yesterday's U.S. Labor Day holiday marked the end of the driving season. Refiners often idle processing units for maintenance in September and October as gasoline demand drops and before heating-oil use increases. The Stoxx Europe 600 Index fell 0.6 percent and the dollar strengthened against the euro, reducing the investment appeal of commodities.

[Japanese help ease LNG fears](#)

Japan, the world's biggest buyer of natural gas shipped by tanker, stepped up imports by 9.5 per cent in the first half of the year, the government reported today.

The new data are the latest sign that a downturn in the liquefied natural gas (LNG) market has not been as severe as predicted, and boosts the fortunes of Abu Dhabi, Qatar, and other Gulf exporters, analysts said.

[Asia to Buy First European Naphtha Cargoes in Three Months](#)

Asian petrochemical companies will import naphtha from Europe for the first time in three months in September as demand rises in China.

[Tropical Storm Hermine Crosses Rio Grande After Making Landfall in Mexico](#)

Heating oil for October is a “stronger” because Hermine may affect operations at three refineries in Corpus Christi, Carl Larry, president of Oil Outlooks & Opinions LLC in Houston, said yesterday.

Valero Energy Corp.’s Corpus Christi East and West refineries, with a combined capacity of 315,000 barrels a day, made “preliminary storm preparations” before Hermine’s landfall, Bill Day, a company spokesman, said yesterday in an e-mail. “No decisions have been made regarding changes in production.”

[Chevron and BP take China deep-water plunge](#)

US supermajor Chevron has taken operating stakes in three South China Sea blocks, and the Chinese government has given the nod for BP to take an interest in some of the deep-water acreage despite the Macondo disaster, China National Offshore Oil Corporation (CNOOC) said today.

[Salazar: Arctic oil drilling must wait](#)

Interior Secretary Ken Salazar is making it clear that he's in no hurry to open the door to new exploratory oil and gas drilling in the offshore Arctic -- not, he said, until more is known about the potential pitfalls.

[Libya denies investing in foreign oil firms](#)

(Reuters) - Libya has no investment in BP, Italy's ENI or any other oil foreign firm, the OPEC member's government said in a statement on Tuesday.

It said the communique was issued to counter previous statements by unnamed Libyan officials about the country's investments abroad.

[BP biggest Google Adwords spender in 2010](#)

Beleaguered oil giant spent \$3.6 million in the month when Tony Hayward gave his unpopular Congress testimony.

[Brazil Extends Sovereignty Over Oil Drilling Before UN Border Approval](#)

Brazil expanded the offshore area where drilling for crude or prospecting for minerals requires government authorization as it seeks to increase control over natural resources.

[EU energy boss sees Poland-Russia deal](#)

European Energy Commissioner Gunther Oettinger is confident of finding a compromise with both Poland and Russia over a proposed gas supply deal, his spokeswoman said today.

[China to Import More Russian Coal, Lend \\$6 Billion](#)

(Bloomberg) -- China, the world's biggest coal consumer, agreed to increase imports of the commodity from Russia by two-thirds in return for a \$6 billion loan.

[Unsolved Coal Ash Problem](#)

In December 2008, a gigantic storage pond belonging to the Tennessee Valley Authority near Kingston, Tenn., effectively burst at the seams, spilling a billion gallons of mainly toxic coal ash from a T.V.A. power plant into surrounding lands and rivers.

It was the perfect moment to right a long-festering environmental wrong. The Environmental Protection Agency promised tough new regulations governing the disposal of coal ash. Industry complained. The White House hesitated. Nothing happened.

[Pakistan: Policemen exchange blows in public](#)

GILGIT: The level of anxiety and frustration, triggered by the shortage of petroleum products in Gilgit-Baltistan, can be gauged from an incident that took place in Khaplu, a town in the remote valley of Skardu, late Saturday.

Two policemen, one maintaining order in a rowdy filling station and the other, a diesel seeker, exchanged punches and kicks in front of a crowd. Both suffered serious wounds before people intervened to stop them.

[Iran: barred U.N. inspectors gave "false" information](#)

(Reuters) - Iran has the right to reject U.N. inspectors who give "false" information about its nuclear programme, a senior official said on Tuesday, rejecting criticism by the U.N. atomic watchdog.

[The glittering Gulf states' dark labor secret](#)

Tiny Qatar is just one of the examples. The leading exporter of liquid natural gas is smaller than Connecticut, but state-funded Al Jazeera News is a powerful regional voice, and Education City, built in association with Georgetown, Northwestern, and four other US universities, is seen as a beacon of progress for the Arab world.

But not far from the futuristic campus, Rajan Sapkota and many like him are working in conditions that activists liken to indentured servitude.

[Review: "The Witch of Hebron" by James Kunstler](#)

The Witch of Hebron picks up a couple of months after *World Made by Hand* ended. Returning to the small upstate New York town of Union Grove, the new book further defines the post-apocalyptic setting, adds depth to characters who played only minor parts in the first story, ties up loose ends from the previous book and introduces some all new dilemmas. And it does all of this against the backdrop of a full-moon Halloween, lending a delicious sense of foreboding to the proceedings.

[Turkey Joins Europe, Electrically Speaking](#)

Turkey may be frustrated in its bid to become part of the European Union, but by the end of September, it will join Europe's electric grid.

[The Errant Economics of Detrimental Dams and Ruined Rivers](#)

Lessons from the massive flooding that has beset Pakistan, uprooting 14 million people, underscore the need for a new economic paradigm. River engineering (a mainstay of the old economic paradigm) in the Indus Basin reduced small and medium floods, but set up the conditions for millions to be harmed when larger floods occurred.

[When It Comes to Car Batteries, Moore's Law Does Not Compute](#)

Silicon Valley may be an epicenter of the nascent electric car industry, but don't expect the battery revolution to mimic the computer revolution, one of I.B.M.'s top energy storage scientists advises.

"Forget Moore's Law — it's nothing like that," said Winfried Wilcke, senior manager for I.B.M.'s Battery 500 project, referring to the maxim put forward by Gordon Moore, an Intel founder, that computer processing power doubles roughly every two years.

[Uranium reserves to be over by 2050](#)

Energy experts warn that an acute shortage of uranium is going to hit the nuclear energy industry. Dr Yogi Goswami, co-director of the Clean Energy Research Centre at the University of Florida warns that “the proven reserves of uranium will last less than 30 years.”

Current nuclear plants consume around 67,000 tonnes of high-grade uranium per year. With present uranium deposits in the planet having been estimated at 4-5 million tones, this means the present resources would last 42 years.

[Garbage-to-energy? California has second thoughts](#)

The Long Beach plant, for all its promise when it began operations roughly 20 years ago, still churns out megawatts. But it is a relic, a symbol of how California, one of America's greenest states, fell behind other countries in the development of trash-to-energy technology.

"I am having a hard time explaining why California is so far behind," said Eugene Tseng Tseng, a UCLA law professor who spent the last three months leading delegations on overseas tours.

[Commuters' bodies to heat Parisian building](#)

A Parisian public housing project is hoping to lower its carbon footprint by harnessing excess body heat and using it to produce energy. Paris Habitat is planning to redirect the heat created by commuters' bodies from the underground passages in the city's subway systems to heat exchangers and pipes in one of its properties on rue Beaubourg.

[Greens Seek 'Fast, Furious' Movement on Climate If Gillard Leads Australia](#)

The Australian Greens plan “fast and furious” action to establish a climate change committee and impose a price on carbon emissions under a government led by the Labor Party’s Julia Gillard.

[London's Capital Markets Can Spur Green Investment, Climate Minister Says](#)

London should be the clearinghouse as private investors provide at least half the funding needed to fight global warming in developing nations, U.K. Climate Change Minister Greg Barker said.

“It’s likely that at least half, if not considerably more” of the \$100 billion a year that will be required to fund new infrastructure and cleaner sources of energy will come from private financing, Barker said today in an interview before his speech at the London Stock Exchange.

[Japan to Sell Carbon Credits Backed by Home Solar Power, Electric Car Use](#)

Japan's government plans to sell carbon credits backed by greenhouse-gas reductions that households make using solar power systems or electric cars, a trade ministry official said today.

The government will earn credits when homes use subsidies to install equipment to lower their carbon footprints under the program, Tadahiko Kozaki, deputy director of the environment office at Japan's Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry, said today in an interview. The credits will be sold to companies that want to offset their own emissions, he said.

[Rainforest Carbon Monitoring Gets Boost From 3-D Satellite Mapping Model](#)

Monitoring carbon emissions from remote tropical forests is becoming easier with the help of 3-D and satellite technology, giving a boost to efforts to reduce output of the global warming gas, scientists said.

[Climate change not linked to African wars](#)

In his popular 2008 book *Climate Wars*, the US journalist and military historian Gwynne Dyer laid out a daunting scenario. Climate change would put growing pressure on fresh water and food over the coming century, he wrote, triggering social disorder, mass migration and violent conflict.

But is there real proof of a link between climate change and civil war — particularly in crisis-ridden parts of Africa — as many have claimed?

[Climate: New study slashes estimate of icecap loss](#)

Estimates of the rate of ice loss from Greenland and West Antarctica, one of the most worrying questions in the global warming debate, should be halved, according to Dutch and US scientists.



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