



Drumbeat: November 3, 2010

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Topic: [Miscellaneous](#)

[Deflated, economy in decline: a talk with Nicole Foss](#)

Loughrey: Many in the peak oil community believe higher oil prices created our economic crisis. You disagree. Why?

Foss: You don't need to postulate a shortage of energy to precede a financial crisis. Because financial bubbles are Ponzi schemes, and are therefore inherently self-limiting, they reach a top and they crash on their own. The spike in mid 2008 to \$147 per barrel was a massive speculative bubble. We said at the time that it would be followed by an enormous price crash, and it was. This smaller speculative bubble will end the same way. Oil prices could go down quite sharply to as low as \$20 a barrel.

story. The world's population went from an estimated 5 or 10 million when we first started farming, to a billion when we started serious coal digging, to about 7 billion today. We also got incredibly richer in terms of material goods and could sure get around much faster.

In retrospect it was an incredible couple of centuries, with some, but not all, aspects of civilization reaching new highs. Mankind's greatest omission during this period was the failure to use our newfound sources of energy and knowledge to make all these wonderful benefits sustainable. We simply dug the coal, pumped the oil, and contaminated the atmosphere as fast as economically feasible. Now these golden centuries are drawing to a close.

[The winners and losers from this election, hidden amidst the noise](#)

The USA faces many challenges as we enter a new century. A demographic transitions, with the aging of the baby boom. Financial, coping with our past debts and lavish promises of future spending. Geopolitical, adjusting to the arrival of new great powers and the evolution of a new global financial system. Economic, such as the approach and arrival of peak oil. Many of these will require strong Federal action. Simple-minded and angry ideologues, relying on an imaginary invisible hand and examples of rugged individualism of an imaginary past, probably will put this nation on the track to ruin.

[Weekly Oil Roundup: Oil Supplies Still Building](#)

Crude oil briefly touched an overnight high at \$85 on the heels of an industry report

showing across-the-board declines in US inventories. Prices, however, fell back, as the time for the release of the US Energy Department's weekly inventory report approached.

Justifiably so. The government's definitive data showed a 2.0-million-barrel build in domestic crude stocks to 368.2 million. Supplies had been seen falling by 4.1 million barrels, according to estimates by the American Petroleum Institute. Analysts' forecasts were divided, as some called for inventories to increase by 1.2 million to 1.5 million barrels, and others eyed a 2.0-million-barrel decline.

[Petrobras questions BG reserves boost](#)

Brazilian state-run Petrobras today questioned British gas producer BG Group's move to boost its oil reserve estimates for discoveries in Brazil, saying the company should await the completion of wells being drilled there.

[Goldman Cuts Estimates On Marathon Oil, Cites Gulf Production](#)

Goldman Sachs lowered its earnings estimates on shares of Marathon Oil through 2015 as production from the Gulf of Mexico is expected to slow. In the report, Goldman maintained its neutral rating and set a new price target of \$35 per share.

[Australia military head warns of Pacific climate instability](#)

SYDNEY (AFP) – Australia's military chief has warned that his troops are likely to be sent to the Pacific more often and on bigger missions as small island states become increasingly unstable due to climate change.

[Facebook Under Pressure to Be Greener](#)

PARIS — Facebook, the giant social networking site, is under fire from Greenpeace International, the environmental campaigner, over its construction of a data center in Prineville, Oregon, that will be powered by PacifiCorp, a company that gets 58 percent of its energy from burning coal.

Storing and transmitting messages, pictures and other information through Facebook uses a vast and rapidly increasing amount of energy, as the network continues to expand. Its membership passed the 500 million mark in July this year.

[Successful Ormat Waste Heat Recovery Test Could Green Dying Oil Fields](#)

Normally the hot water that drives a geothermal turbine system comes from naturally occurring geothermal hot springs.

But Ormat is developing a way to conserve underground resources by re-injecting used drilling fluids used in oil extraction back into the Earth to be reheated and used again.

[Sustainable Bonds Hope to Help Fix the Planet](#)

Sean Kidney, chairman and co-founder of the Climate Bonds Initiative — an international network that advocates raising money through the bond market for climate protection projects — argues that “themed” bonds have long been a way to raise large sums of money for specific purposes.

For example, “the U.S. civil war was financed with war bonds,” Mr. Kidney told delegates at a carbon conference in Singapore last week. “Although these war bonds were targeted at retail investors, most of the money raised came from institutional investors.”

[Deflated, economy in decline: a talk with Nicole Foss](#)

Loughrey: Many in the peak oil community believe higher oil prices created our economic crisis. You disagree. Why?

Foss: You don't need to postulate a shortage of energy to precede a financial crisis. Because financial bubbles are Ponzi schemes, and are therefore inherently self-limiting, they reach a top and they crash on their own. The spike in mid 2008 to \$147 per barrel was a massive speculative bubble. We said at the time that it would be followed by an enormous price crash, and it was. This smaller speculative bubble will end the same way. Oil prices could go down quite sharply to as low as \$20 a barrel.

[Argentina's collapse and the grassroots of resilience](#)

Another important early discovery was that beyond the collapse of complex systems, which often do not serve a community's best interests, people learned what was real to them. Real things included not only those necessary for survival but also items which strengthened the community overall. Barter markets level societies in unexpected ways. This lesson was hard-learned by public servants who were the last reluctant segment to join the barter markets. Physicians, in particular, valued their services initially on par with farmers and other experienced food production laborers. As the government collapse continued and economic pressures mounted, they swiftly found themselves adjusting their prices downward. Many professionals learned that their knowledge and education could not compete with those of organic farmers, bee-keepers and even those who manufactured musical instruments.

[Scientists answer Guardian readers' toughest energy questions](#)

Nine of the world's top energy scientists answer your questions on topics from peak oil to nuclear fusion.

[Persian Gulf faces supertanker shortage for first time in a year](#)

The Persian Gulf, the world's biggest crude oil loading region, lacks sufficient supertankers to take the fuel for the first time in almost a year, potentially helping to sustain a rally in freight costs.

There are 1 percent fewer very large crude carriers, or VLCCs, for hire over the next 30 days than there are cargoes, according to the median estimate of eight shipbrokers and owners surveyed by Bloomberg News today. There was a 20 percent surplus a week ago.

[Sinopec plans record crude runs amid diesel shortage](#)

BEIJING (Reuters) - Sinopec, Asia's top oil refiner, plans to process a daily record 583,000 tonnes, or 4.26 million barrels per day (bpd) of crude oil in November amid increasing domestic diesel supply tightness, state news agency Xinhua said on Wednesday.

Government-mandated power rationing to factories aimed at achieving Beijing's energy saving goal has slashed China's diesel exports as plants rush to fire up stand-alone diesel generators.

[Natural-Gas Growth Seen Slowing As Hedges Expire](#)

The natural-gas industry is growing on borrowed time.

A surge in new natural-gas supplies available through shale-gas drilling has caused sustained downward pressure on prices in North America over the last two years. Producers have continued to increase production despite falling prices in large part because of financial hedges put in place when the market was stronger.

['More shutdowns for Statoil maintenance'](#)

Oil platforms operated by Statoil off Norway will shut down more often in future to cope with maintenance issues, trade union SAFE's leader Terje Nustad said today.

"You will have more shutdowns, more often than before," said Nustad, head of the union representing some 2300 Statoil employees to Reuters.

"It is one of the bigger problems due to the lack of maintenance on the equipment."

[Gazprom makes Algeria hit](#)

Gazprom International has made its first commercial gas discovery on the African continent in Algeria, its head Boris Ivanov said today.

[Russia's Rosneft raises '10 output to 119 mln tonnes](#)

(Reuters) - Russia's largest oil producer, Rosneft increased its crude output target for 2010 to 119 million tonnes (872 million barrels) the company said in a press statement on its website on Wednesday.

"Preliminary data shows that 2010 production will grow by 7-7.5 percent compared to last year and reach 119 million tonnes," the statement said.

[Analysis: Majors Dominate Top 10 of Platts' Global Energy Company Rankings](#)

Integrated oil and gas (IOG) companies continue to dominate the 10 top spots in the 2010 Platts Top 250 Global Energy Company Rankings, despite an unprecedented drop in natural gas demand and slump in oil prices that resulted in a more than one-third decline in 2009 profits.

[Action pledged on soaring food prices](#)

ABU DHABI // Global food prices are to be tracked on a central computer database to help to predict potential shortages.

The database will be ready within a year, Sultan al Mansouri, the Minister of Economy, said in a letter to the FNC yesterday.

"It will produce reports on the food situation and expectations in the UAE and other countries," the minister said. "This system will play a crucial role in warning of impending food shortages."

[PSO threatens to stop oil imports](#)

ISLAMABAD: With its receivables touching a record Rs160 billion, the Pakistan State

Oil (PSO) on Tuesday informed the government that it had decided to defer oil imports for a week and to cancel import orders 'in the pipeline' within a week unless it was paid a minimum of Rs40 billion upfront.

An 'emergency support' of Rs40 billion from the federal government would only help PSO to avert default on international payments, but it will still need more money to meet the fuel requirement for power generation to avert a more serious power crisis in winter months.

[Protest against price hike](#)

Employees of the government-run power sector burn effigies representing the International Monetary Fund (IMF) during a protest against a rise in fuel and electricity prices in Lahore yesterday.

[President orders early wind, solar projects](#)

KARACHI - President Asif Ali Zardari on Tuesday presided over a number of meetings and briefings on various development projects at Bilawal House Karachi, advising the government to step up the projects so that maximum benefit could be provided to the people.

Presiding over a meeting on Alternate Energy Options, the President called for stepping up search for out of box, imaginative and bold solutions to meet the country's energy needs through alternate sources such as wind and solar power. Those who attended the meetings included Sindh Chief Minister, relevant federal and provincial ministers and senior officials of the federal and provincial governments.

[Siemens launches first wind turbine apprenticeship in UK](#)

Siemens has joined forces with REpower and Weir Group to launch the UK's first wind turbine apprenticeship scheme to tackle the engineering skills shortage in the energy sector.

[GM strengthens ties with Chinese partner](#)

NEW YORK (CNNMoney.com) -- General Motors announced closer ties with its Chinese partner SAIC Motor Corp. on Wednesday, in a partnership aimed at designing new vehicles for global markets.

[Saudi Aramco working on long term strategy to reduce emissions](#)

Saudi Aramco, the world's biggest oil producer, is working on a long term strategy to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions, an official from the company's EXPEC Advanced Research Center said.

[BP's Alaska pipelines in danger of rupturing](#)

The huge pipeline system that moves oil, gas and waste between BP's operations in Alaska is plagued by severe corrosion, an internal maintenance report says.

The document, obtained by the independent investigative journalism group ProPublica, shows that as of October 1, at least 148 BP pipelines on Alaska's North Slope received an "F-rank" from the company.

[Oil Rises to a Six-Month High on U.S. Stimulus Bets, Fuel Supply Forecast](#)

Oil advanced to a six-month high of more than \$85 a barrel on signs U.S. crude inventories are dropping and speculation stimulus measures by the Federal Reserve will weaken the dollar.

Crude stockpiles in the U.S., the world's biggest oil consumer, dropped 4.1 million barrels last week, the most since July, the industry-backed American Petroleum Institute said yesterday. The Energy Department will release its own report today. The Fed, wrapping up a two-day meeting today, may announce a plan to purchase at least \$500 billion in long-term securities, according to economists surveyed by Bloomberg News.

[LNG's Asia Premium to U.S. Gas Advances to 20-Month High](#)

The premium of Asian liquefied natural gas over U.S. benchmark prices for the fuel, at the highest level in 20 months, may increase amid colder-than-normal weather in China and rising use by factories.

[Saudi Aramco Raises December Prices on All Grades to Asia, U.S. Price Cut](#)

Saudi Aramco, the world's largest state-owned oil company, raised official selling prices for all crude grades for customers in Asia for December as processing profits for refiners have climbed.

[Saudi Arabia Has Enough Crude for 80 Years, Naimi Says](#)

SINGAPORE (UPI) -- Saudi Arabia can maintain its current crude oil production levels

for at least 80 years, the country's oil minister said at a Singapore energy conference.

Saudi Oil Minister Ali al-Naimi told delegates at an energy summit in Singapore that his country has plenty of oil left to exploit.

"With 264 billion barrels of proven reserves, at current production levels, the kingdom could continue to supply crude oil for another 80 years even if we never find another barrel," he was quoted by Bloomberg News as saying. "However, we are finding those new barrels."

[UAE energy minister upbeat about current oil prices](#)

ABU DHABI-- The current oil prices ranging from \$75- 80 per a barrel are reasonable for producers and consumers as well, said the UAE Energy Minister Mohammed bin Dhaen Al Hamili, while touring Abu Dhabi International Petroleum Exhibition and Conference (ADIPEC).

[Nuclear Power Gains in Republican House Victory; 'Cap and Trade' Suffers](#)

Electricity producers such as NRG Energy Inc. and Southern Co. will benefit as Republicans, projected to have won control of the U.S. House yesterday, promote nuclear power as part of clean-energy legislation.

Requirements for the use of renewable power to reduce carbon emissions and encourage U.S. energy independence may win passage if nuclear plants are added to the wind turbines and solar panels favored by environmentalists, said David Crane, chief executive officer of Princeton, New Jersey-based NRG.

[Ethanol Credit for Archer Daniels May Be Target as Republicans Seize House](#)

Republican election victories yesterday may spell trouble for U.S. subsidies that benefit ethanol producers including Archer Daniels Midland Co., after the party pledged to cut government spending.

[EU energy minister courting Russia?](#)

MOSCOW (UPI) -- The Nord Stream and South Stream natural gas pipelines could find significance in a European energy strategy, a Russian energy minister said.

Russian energy company Gazprom is moving ahead with its Nord Stream and South Stream natural gas pipelines for Europe.

Spats with Ukraine, which is a transit site for the bulk of Russian gas bound for Europe,

exposed vulnerabilities in the regional energy sector, prompting a push for transit diversification.

[Russian ex-PM, Gazprom founder Chernomyrdin dies](#)

MOSCOW (Reuters) – Viktor Chernomyrdin, who founded the world's biggest gas company Gazprom and helped steer Russia through the chaos that followed the collapse of the Soviet Union, died Wednesday aged 72.

The longest serving prime minister in post-Soviet Russia, Chernomyrdin played a decisive role in supporting former President Boris Yeltsin during some of the darkest moments of the 1990s, negotiating with Chechen rebels and even holding the reins of power while Yeltsin underwent heart surgery in 1996.

[Statoil bids to boost Norway exploration](#)

State explorer Statoil said today it has submitted an application for new production licences in the Barents Sea and the Norwegian Sea in the country's 21st licensing round in a bid to boost activity off Norway.

[Statoil Falls Most Since May After Cutting Oil, Gas Output Target for 2010](#)

Statoil ASA, Norway's largest oil and natural gas company, fell the most since May in Oslo trading after cutting its full-year production target because of halts at fields and missing analysts' estimates for adjusted profit.

The company cut its production guidance for the year to 1.9 million barrels of oil equivalent a day, from 1.925 million to 1.975 million a day, the Stavanger-based company said in a statement today. Adjusted net income fell 8 percent to 8.5 billion kroner (\$1.4 billion), missing the average estimate of 9.2 billion kroner in a survey of analysts.

[Pipeline leaks hit Enbridge results](#)

Pipeline operator Enbridge Inc. says its third-quarter profit weakened as it dealt with two pipeline leaks in the U.S. Midwest and clean-up associated with the spills.

The company says profits dropped to \$157-million, equal to 42 cents per share, compared to \$304-million or 83 cents a year ago.

[Gas glut thumps Cimarex](#)

US independent Cimarex Energy cut its full-year production forecast, as it unveiled lower-than-expected third-quarter profits on the back of a drop in natural gas prices in North America.

[Russia's Gazprom Neft beats Q3 net profit fcst](#)

MOSCOW (Reuters) - Gazprom Neft, the oil arm of Russia's gas giant Gazprom, said on Wednesday its third-quarter net profit rose by more than 2 percent to \$865 million as sales increased, beating analyst forecasts.

Analysts, polled by Reuters, expected net income to edge down to \$826 million on the back of declining oil production.

[Gas price cap 'hampers' development](#)

Government price caps on natural gas are holding back the development of shale and other unconventional reserves that could solve the Gulf's gas shortage, international oil executives say.

If governments allowed power utilities and industry to pay higher prices, Gulf states could replicate a boom in gas production in North America, led by development of difficult shale gas reservoirs, said Jonathan Evans, the general manager of BP Oman.

[BG's \\$15 Billion Australia LNG Project Sparks 'Dash for Labor' With Rivals](#)

BG Group Plc's \$15 billion liquefied natural gas project in Australia's Queensland state will spark a "dash for labor" as the U.K.-based energy producer and rivals compete for skilled workers, Sanford C. Bernstein & Co. said.

BG committed Oct. 31 to the Queensland Curtis LNG venture, the first of four Gladstone developments to start construction. "We now move from the 'dash for gas' to the 'dash for labor' phase," said Neil Beveridge, a Bernstein analyst in Hong Kong.

[Germany quietly dishes out onshore blocks](#)

Germany's most populous state, North-Rhine Westphalia, home to mining and utilities, has awarded exploration licenses to ExxonMobil and nine other companies to search for unconventional gas, Green Party enquiries have revealed.

[BP's Dudley Embraces Deepwater Risk in U.S., Brazil After Spill](#)

BP Plc Chief Executive Officer Robert Dudley expects to drill in the U.S. Gulf for 20 years as the company exploits its experience searching for oil miles below the sea.

“Companies like BP, one of the roles they play in the industry is working in riskier areas,” Dudley, 55, said in an interview at BP’s worldwide London headquarters yesterday. BP “is now going to become incredibly focused on managing the risks, for example, of deep-water. It’s not going to shy away from the risk, it’s going to get even better at it.”

[A Collaborative Effort to Prevent the Next Spill](#)

Soon after the Deepwater Horizon explosion and oil spill, the two chairmen of the presidential commission appointed to look into the catastrophe and some other officials raised the idea of the offshore oil industry’s doing what the nuclear industry did after the Three Mile Island meltdown of 1979: create an industry-wide organization that would conduct peer-to-peer audits and identify “best practices” that could be cloned from place to place to improve safety.

[Toxic chemicals found deep at BP oil spill site](#)

WASHINGTON (Reuters) – Toxic chemicals at levels high enough to kill sea animals extended deep underwater soon after the BP oil spill, U.S. researchers reported on Tuesday.

They found evidence of the chemicals as deep as 3,300 feet and as far away as 8 miles in May, and said the spread likely worsened as more oil spilled.

[Spill Cleanup Proceeds Amid Mistrust](#)

But despite the debates about where the oil has gone, the most visible effects of the spill are steadily disappearing. Of the roughly 580 miles of oiled shoreline, only about 30 miles are showing “heavy oil” effects, Rear Adm. Paul Zukunft of the Coast Guard said at a recent press conference.

As fishermen keep their eyes peeled for slicks and voice concerns that they may be fishing in contaminated waters, some scientists suggest that these fears may be misplaced. The most serious worries about the spill’s damage at this point lie not in lingering surface oil and tainted seafood, they say, but in long-term damage already done to breeding populations of fish, crabs and other commercially important species.

[Norway's oil fund to start buying real estate soon](#)

(Reuters) - Norway's \$500-billion-plus sovereign wealth fund will start investing in real estate in the "near future" and will probably broaden its portfolio further with infrastructure assets, the central bank chief said on Tuesday.

Norges Bank runs Norway's wealth fund on behalf of the government, which siphons away the bulk of the North Sea state's taxes from oil and gas activities into the offshore fund.

[Yemen Plans Tighter Security for Energy Companies After Pipeline Blast](#)

Yemen plans to tighten security for energy companies operating within its borders as it investigates the cause of an explosion at a crude pipeline yesterday, the country's oil minister said.

"We are working as a government on a plan to protect all oil companies, and I believe the companies are satisfied with what we've done already," Amir al-Aidarous said in Abu Dhabi today. "This is not Afghanistan. This is Yemen."

[Iran says West's 'arrogance' could doom nuke talks](#)

TEHRAN, Iran – Iran's president said Wednesday that upcoming talks with six world powers about its disputed nuclear program will fail if those nations continue along what he called a "path of arrogance."

Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's comments, made in an address to a crowd of thousands in northeastern Iran, cast doubt on any possible progress in talks that Tehran has said it is ready to hold with the six powers — the U.S. Russia, China, Britain, France and Germany — sometime after Nov. 10.

[Jeff Rubin: Quantitative easing is just devaluation](#)

As the Federal Reserve Board gets ready for yet another round of quantitative easing (i.e. printing more money), one may well ask: Why? If previous quantitative easing hasn't spurred domestic spending, why does the Fed believe that more of the same will suddenly produce results?

[Who Is Paying the Price Tag for the Coming Election?](#)

With enough money, one can achieve almost anything, so what happens when one

“follows the money” regarding the Tea Party? Looking at what the Tea Party is trying to accomplish immediately puts the “money trail” in the spotlight.

The most threatening issues for the big oil and coal companies is the possibility of man-made climate change, the result of too much CO₂ and other greenhouse gasses, and peak oil. If these two issues can be made to disappear, the problems are solved, and it's back to business and profits as usual.

[Technology seen as key to future of mining as sector faces lower grades](#)

PERTH (miningweekly.com) – Finding easily accessible resources would become increasingly difficult as global demand continued to grow, but Rio Tinto CEO Tom Albanese said that it was premature to speculate about mineral depletion.

Albanese, who was speaking at the China Overseas Investment Fair, said that the earth's geological endowment of minerals was “absolutely enormous” and that speculation on ‘peak metals’, like ‘peak oil’, was premature.

“That said, it will be increasingly more difficult to find potentially high-grade mineral resources,” Albanese added.

[Let's get fuel poverty policy back on track](#)

Data published on 13 October by the Department of Energy and Climate Change (Decc) shows that in 2008 there were 3.3 million fuel poor households in England. In the same document, Decc published estimated figures for 2010 indicating that four million households are currently in fuel poverty. Yet the Warm Homes and Energy Conservation Act 2000 requires the government to eradicate fuel poverty in England, as far as is reasonably practicable, by 2016.

[UK: Landlords face fines for energy inefficiency](#)

The government is to beef up legislation forcing landlords to pay a fine if they rent properties without proper insulation.

The new strictures on the quality of homes are included in the "green deal" which the government will announce today and put before parliament in December.

[Transition Voice Covers Peak Oil, Zombies and Economic Crisis](#)

The second issue of the world's only magazine on peak oil features full coverage of the World Oil Conference held in Washington, DC this fall, and analysis of how the impending

world energy crisis is already holding back the US economic recovery. The issue also features an essay on today's zombie craze, reviews of important books on energy and the economy, and features like Thanksgiving recipes, a photo gallery of stunning barns from farms across the nation, and a report from Britain on pioneering work done to help communities plan to power down in the future while rebuilding their local economies and creating good jobs.

[How Peak Oil Shapes Energy Policy](#)

"Peak oil" is something of a hot potato these days. On one hand, advocates assert that we have arrived at the point of maximum output and will soon see oil production going into a state of escalating prices and terminal decline. Critics of peak oil rebuff these claims as being made by soothsayers of gloom and doom. No one really knows where oil comes from, let alone how much there is or how long it will last.

The issue is not simply a matter of academic theory. At stake are energy policies involving jobs, corporate revenues, international relations between consuming and supplying nations and the security and stability of nations.

[Living Smart course](#)

The innovative Living Smart course covers all aspects of modern and sustainable living: energy, water, food, biodiversity, the healthy home, transport, waste and our health.

Supported by the NSW Government's Climate Change Fund, the course explores how to take realistic initiatives and set achievable goals to deal with global warming, peak oil, food security and water deficiency.

[Root cellars part of eating local](#)

Pierre Clouthier, who lives on a rural property in Nova Scotia, hired a contractor to build a root cellar to store enough apples, beets, potatoes, carrots and parsnips to feed him and his wife from November to April.

"I'm not a survivalist fringe nut," he says, but he is concerned about "peak oil" and buys from local farmers to support regional agricultural infrastructure. To build the root cellar, he needed a backhoe to dig a hole in the earth. He then built an 8-by-8-foot room with cinder blocks, leaving the earth floor bare and two ventilation holes to allow air circulation and prevent mould growth. The domed roof was made of poured concrete, the arched design allowing condensation to drip down the walls rather than onto the produce below. The project cost him \$3,500.

[Japan's Auto Parts Makers Try to Anticipate Shift to Electric Cars](#)

HAMAMATSU, Japan — People here refer to it as “electric vehicle shock.”

Sooner or, more likely, later the electric car could render thousands of companies superfluous here in the heart of Japan's auto parts region.

No more engines. No call for exhaust pipes. Spark plugs? Gone with the electric-car wind.

Or so, in essence, warns a recent widely circulated study that predicts the eventual demise of much of Hamamatsu's gasoline engine economy. Spurred by that study and a general sense of foreboding, carmakers, parts factories and local governments in this sprawling industrial town are joining forces to prepare for a future of electric vehicles.

[China to Subsidize Electric Car Battery Development, Business News Reports](#)

China's State-owned Assets Supervision and Administration Commission will subsidize government-controlled companies for electric car battery development, the China Business News reported, citing an unidentified person close to the commission.

[First stage completed of China's largest wind power project in NW China](#)

China has completed building the first-stage of Jiuquan wind power base, the country's largest wind power project, in northwest China, local officials said at the ceremony to mark the completion Wednesday.

[S.Korea to build 8.2 billion-dollar offshore wind farm](#)

SEOUL — South Korea said Tuesday it would build a massive offshore wind farm off the west coast by 2019 to develop new sources of renewable energy and help wind turbine exporters.

Under the 9.2 trillion won (8.2 billion dollars) project, companies such as Hyundai Heavy Industries and Daewoo Shipbuilding and Marine Engineering plan to build 500 turbines, the Knowledge Economy Ministry said in a statement.

[German Solar Power Production Costs May Sink Below Gas, Coal in 5 Years](#)

Electricity from solar panels in Germany may be as cheap as power from new gas and coal plants within five to eight years, a study by A.T. Kearney Inc. showed.

Production costs for solar power could be as low as 12.6 euro cents (\$0.18) per kilowatt-

hour by 2020 compared, with about 15.6 cents for fossil-fuel electricity generation, according to the study, which was commissioned by Phoenix Solar AG, a solar array developer.

[S.Korea may send troops to UAE over reactor contract](#)

Seoul is considering sending about 150 soldiers to the United Arab Emirates to protect South Korean companies and workers who will be building nuclear power plants there, an official said on Wednesday.

[Nuclear Companies Face Bleak Outlook in the U.S.](#)

A third-generation pressurized water reactor, EPR is the first of its kind to hit the markets. But it seems less exciting now than it did when EDF and CEG first joined forces in 2007.

Less exciting, at least, in the U.S. The natural gas glut and resulting low prices have seen to that, along with the fact that the cost of building EPRs has skyrocketed. And now EDF has to find a new U.S. partner for its costly and complex project, which has already experienced repeated delays and cost overruns. Originally estimated at €3.5 billion, projections now sit at €5-6 billion.

[Woman Wanted by E.P.A. Is Arrested](#)

Ms. Deleon, 40, is the first woman to be listed on the E.P.A.'s two-year-old fugitives list, which includes people wanted for crimes ranging from dumping oil or contaminated soil to importing vehicles that fail to meet United States emissions standards.

She could face substantial jail time after extradition to the United States, given that she was convicted of 28 counts that carried penalties of 5 to 20 years, the E.P.A. said.

[National Parks Reach Out to Blacks Who Aren't Visiting](#)

Studies and surveys show that visitors to the nation's 393 national parks — there were 285.5 million of them in 2009 — are overwhelmingly non-Hispanic whites, with blacks the least likely group to visit. That reality has not changed since the 1960s, when it was first identified as an issue. The Park Service now says the problem is linked to the parks' very survival.

"If the American public doesn't know that we exist or doesn't care, our mission is potentially in jeopardy," said Jonathan B. Jarvis, who took over as director of the Park Service last year. "There's a disconnect that needs addressing."

[Professional climate change deniers' crusade continues](#)

In the media and the courts, the battle to undermine climate science and its researchers hasn't let up, warns climatologist Michael Mann.

[China Says Nations Have a 'Common Duty, Responsibility' on Climate Change](#)

A Chinese climate change official said countries share “a common duty and responsibility” to tackle the issue, even in the absence of an international agreement on what steps to take.

Nations shouldn't delay acting on climate change, Sun Zhen, deputy general counsel at the National Development and Reform Commission's department of climate change, said at a global warming forum in Hong Kong today. “Evidence of the effects of climate change is there,” he said.

[Full steam ahead on carbon plan](#)

Abu Dhabi's onshore oil company is so sure carbon dioxide is the key to unlocking the emirate's oil reserves it is to launch a second full-scale project by the middle of decade, executives say.

The project, approved by the Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC), will gather carbon dioxide from the company's gas-processing plant at Habshan and inject it into the giant onshore Bab field in the southwest of the capital.

[Voters overwhelmingly reject Proposition 23](#)

California voters overwhelmingly rejected a controversial measure to roll back the state's landmark climate-change law, sending a strong pro-environment message at a time of deep economic weakness.

With about 40 percent of the votes counted late Tuesday, state residents were voting by a margin of more than 19 percentage points to defeat Proposition 23, which would have suspended the state's 4-year-old greenhouse gas-reduction law, a cornerstone of outgoing Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger's political legacy.

"This is huge because it's the largest public referendum in history on climate and clean energy policy," said Fred Krupp, president of the Environmental Defense Fund.



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