



Drumbeat: May 21, 2011

Posted by [Leanan](#) on May 21, 2011 - 10:12am

[Oil tanker terror hijacks easy, attacks complex](#)

NAIROBI, Kenya (AP) — Supertankers — the hulking, slow-moving ships that transport half the world's oil — have few defenses against terrorist hijackers like those envisioned by Osama bin Laden, security experts said Saturday.

Al-Qaida operatives with enough training could easily manage to capture ships carrying millions of gallons of oil or liquefied natural gas. All they would have to do is imitate the tactics of Somali pirates who already use small boats to overpower tanker crews in mostly remote locations, the experts said. Few supertankers have armed guards, due to gun import laws and the risk of accidental gunfire igniting explosive cargos.

[Saudi Aramco, France's Air Liquide in nitrogen deal](#)

KHOBAR, Saudi Arabia May 21 (Reuters) - French industrial gases group Air Liquide signed on Saturday a long-term agreement to supply nitrogen to state oil giant Saudi Aramco.

Under the 20-year deal, the French firm will supply at least 5 million standard cubic feet per day of nitrogen to support sea water injection in Aramco's oilfields, officials from Aramco and Air Liquide said during a signing ceremony.

[NATO widens Libya pressure amid questions on goal](#)

TRIPOLI, Libya (AP) — NATO widened its campaign to weaken Moammar Gadhafi's regime with airstrikes on desert command centers and sea patrols to intercept ships, the military alliance said Saturday, amid signs of growing public anger over fuel shortages in government-held territory.

[Yemen leader says he'll leave, warns of al-Qaida](#)

SANAA, Yemen (AP) — Yemen's president said Saturday he will sign a proposal by Gulf Arab mediators for him to step down, but he condemned the deal as a "coup" and warned al-Qaida will take control of the country.

[Pakistan: Heat, prolonged load shedding hit residents hard](#)

RAWALPINDI: The rising temperature and frequent unscheduled power outages have made the life of Rawalpindi residents miserable.

The residents are facing 12 to 14 hours unscheduled load shedding when the mercury in the city is touching 43 degrees Celsius.

[Protest Against Power Loadshedding](#)

A large number of people, including traders, transporters and students, staged a protest rally on Peshawar Road here on Friday against unannounced electricity loadshedding in the city and its suburbs.

[‘Saving energy only viable solution to power crisis’](#)

Karachi - Tormented by a persistent energy crisis and hostage to the rapidly rising cost of electricity, Pakistan’s only viable option is energy conservation; which is why it is the driving force behind the Energy Conservation Bill tabled in the National Assembly that calls for the use of energy-efficient products at home and industries.

[Solar energy vital to defeat power crisis in Karachi: study](#)

KARACHI: Turning Karachi into a solar city will help resolve the energy crisis, a recent study revealed. The concept of running major urban cities on solar energy is gaining popularity with every passing day, the study said.

[Govt must share burden of compensation for N-crisis](#)

TEPCO can't bear whole load.

We consider it unreasonable for the government to have TEPCO alone bear the costs related to the nuclear accidents. The government must clearly show that the responsibility will be shared collectively.

[Planner seeks city where you can walk home](#)

Greenberg describes how, intoxicated by the promise of unfettered automobility, planners and city dwellers alike embraced and internalized this latter vision of city-dwelling and accepted it as desirable, normal and permanent.

However, as he stresses, this type of city can have no permanence in an era of energy

scarcity, climate change and food insecurity.

[The Young and Hopeless Greek Return to their Cheaper Countryside. Could it Happen here?](#)

We all know what is happening in Greece: austerity, joblessness, bankruptcy, ongoing failed politics, corruption, and ineffectual government which has gone on for years. Now, for lack of better alternatives, Greece's younger generation is returning to the rural areas. They say that with any encouragement from their government, the movement would gain momentum.

No, the U.S. is not Greece... yet... and I don't want to sensationalize as that's not my style. But, there are some interesting parallels going on here that I can't help but point out and pose the question, "What if?"

[Study: Realtors Confirm Gas Prices Are Changing U.S. Housing Demand](#)

The word is already out that Americans would probably be healthier (and probably a lot happier) if we had shorter daily commutes.

Now it seems that the cost pressure of rising gas prices could be forcing us to do just that--rethink where we're living. If a new survey of real-estate professionals is any indication, American home shoppers are thinking more than ever about shorter driving distances and being closer to shops and services.

Back when gas prices surged in 2008, Americans were cutting back on spending and vacations but few families were doing anything so drastic as moving because of them.

Now, three-quarters of real estate professionals polled said that the recent surge in gas prices has influenced clients' choices on where to live, while 93 percent of real-estate pros said that if gas prices continue to rise, more home buyers will choose to live somewhere that allows for a closer commute to their work.

[Crude Oil Rises, Follows Heating Oil, on Report of Increase in Fuel Demand](#)

Oil rose for the second time this week, following heating oil, after the American Petroleum Institute reported that fuel consumption increased in April as economic growth bolstered demand for diesel by truckers.

Oil gained 1.1 percent as the API reported total deliveries of petroleum products, a measure of demand, climbed 5.2 percent last month from a year earlier. Heating oil, a distillate fuel like diesel and jet fuel, jumped 0.8 percent on the Nymex. Refineries such as Valero Energy Corp.'s St. Charles refinery in Norco, Louisiana, are restarting after planned work.

[Expect a pricey summer with rising energy costs: report](#)

Fuel prices in Canada will go up, and stay up, for the summer according to the National Energy Board.

In the organization's 2011 Summer Energy Outlook released Friday, the board said rising crude oil costs will drive up gas prices at the pumps.

[Federal agency releases revised environmental draft for Chukchi Sea petroleum leases](#)

ANCHORAGE, Alaska — The federal government released a revised environmental review Friday for petroleum leases in the Chukchi Sea off Alaska's northwest coast, but environmentalists said it still contains critical gaps.

[Louisiana Refinery, Residents Gird Against Flood](#)

In Krotz Springs, La., preparations continue as residents wait for an expected flood below the Morganza Spillway.

The Louisiana Department of Natural Resources says there are 592 oil- and gas-producing wells in the path the water is expected to follow down the Atchafalaya Basin.

"Operators are typically reporting that they are making preparations as they would for a hurricane event," says department spokeswoman Anna Dearmon.

[Why Oil Speculation Is Actually Necessary](#)

The downswing in oil prices over the past two weeks has once again introduced supply/demand questions while, at the same time, renewing suspicions that speculation is the cause of oil pricing instability.

Discussion of the supply/demand question usually gravitates to the "peak oil" debate: How much oil is left, and when will the markets conclude that over 50% of the total supply has been exhausted? This latter consideration has become a mainstay of the debate. That's because it cuts to the core of how traders view the relationship between available supply and price.

[Shell's U.S. Shale Gas May Be Refined Into Diesel, Jet Fuel](#)

Royal Dutch Shell Plc (RDSA), Europe's largest oil company, said a \$19 billion investment in Qatar may prove that abundant natural gas coaxed from shale rocks across the U.S. could be converted into diesel and jet fuel.

[Iran says finds light oil in offshore gas field](#)

(Reuters) - Iran has discovered a deposit of light oil offshore of an estimated in-place reserve of 756 million barrels valued at \$13.6 billion, the state TV website reported on Saturday quoting a senior oil official.

[Ahmadinejad has fuelled Iran's power struggle](#)

Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's disregard for the constitution has brought him up against both the supreme leader and parliament.

[Qaddafi Is 'Effectively' in Hiding as NATO Aircraft Attack Libyan Warships](#)

Libyan leader Muammar Qaddafi, who is "effectively" in hiding, has only limited ability to communicate with his loyalist forces as a result of NATO's air campaign, an alliance spokesman said.

"We've increased the pressure by striking military command and control centers," Wing Commander Mike Bracken of the British Royal Air Force said yesterday at the North Atlantic Treaty Organization headquarters in Brussels. The attacks have "limited Qaddafi's ability to give orders to his forces. It has also constrained his freedom of movement. Effectively, he's gone into hiding."

[Libya's defected oil minister seeks interim refuge in Algeria: report](#)

Libyan Oil Minister Shukri Ghanem, who has defected his country and crossed the border with Tunisia, is seeking an interim refuge in neighboring Algeria, Algerian An-Nahar newspaper reported on Friday, citing well-informed sources.

[Oil Tanker Explosion Kills at Least 15 in Pakistan](#)

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan — At least 15 people were killed when an oil tanker carrying fuel for NATO forces in Afghanistan exploded on Saturday in the northwestern tribal region, government officials said.

...The tanker was damaged when a bomb went off near a boys' college in Landi Kotal in the tribal region of Khyber Agency. "Fire brigade officials put out the fire but in the mean time, people from neighboring areas had gathered and were trying to take away the oil while another explosion took place, killing 15 people," said local government official Abdul Nabi.

[Belarus to sell gas pipeline to Russia - report](#)

(Reuters) - Belarus plans to sell its stake in the country's gas pipeline network to Russia for \$2.5 billion and to unify rouble exchange rates once it receives a bailout loan from Moscow, Prime Minister Mikhail Myasnikovich has said.

[Leak from Japan reactor 100 times more than permitted](#)

TOKYO (Reuters) - A water leak from Japan's tsunami-crippled nuclear power station earlier this month resulted in about 100 times the permitted level of radioactive material flowing into the sea, operator Tokyo Electric Power Co said on Saturday.

[Japan quake could raise concerns elsewhere](#)

They are not predicting another quake, Simons stressed in a telephone interview. But the area where the deadly March temblor struck "was believed by many to be not likely to produce a big quake, and that was wrong." So that raises questions about other, similar regions, he said.

"We learned we have to be much more suspicious about what we know for sure, and more explicit about what we don't know," Simons said. Monitoring the region will give scientists clues to the movement of the undersea plates that slipped in the quake.

[Who Will Reap the Dividends of Fuel Economy?](#)

There are two basic arguments over whether and how the country should respond to climate change and other environmental challenges. One focuses on government's right to regulate industry, and the other on the costs and benefits of such regulation.

A new, almost biblical twist to one of these arguments was presented at a recent conference organized by Ceres, a Boston-based nonprofit that brings together investors, companies and environmental organizations who embrace sustainable business practices. twist. When it comes to automobile fuel economy, two analysts suggested, the worst shall do best.

[The Fracking Debate, to a Funk Beat](#)

If you prefer your environmental journalism rapped to a funk beat, then you can't miss with "My Water's on Fire Tonight," a music video out of Studio 20, the media innovation lab at New York University's graduate school of journalism.

In a snappy two and a half minutes, the song outlines the pros and cons of fracking, the drilling technique that has unlocked vast new reserves of natural gas but come under sharp scrutiny for its apparent links to water contamination and other environmental harm.

[Are These Three Innovations the Path to a Greener Future?](#)

As the world continues to face the challenges of global warming, peak oil, and economic downturn, scientists are constantly searching for cheap and renewable sources of fuel or production. In recent years, researchers have developed innovations such as Bloom Boxes, BacillaFilla, and algae biofuels. But are these developments realistic answers to our energy problems?

[Prairie strong no longer? Harper's renewed attack on the Canadian Wheat Board](#)

With the Board gutted and the Grain Commission hobbled, foreign grain markets would no longer be able to count on Canadian quality and reliability. Much of our harvest would be mixed with American grain, and customers in Europe, Asia, and here at home would lose a strong bulwark against the risks of genetically modified (GM) wheat.

Transnational corporations would get a global lock on grain supplies at a time when skyrocketing prices and shortages are already causing a massive global food crisis. As Roger Petry duly notes, to forgo the CWB monopoly in a time of restricted supply would be akin to OPEC dismantling itself during the onset of peak oil.

['Agroecology' no silver bullet](#)

The farming method enhances soil productivity and protects the crops against pests by relying on the natural environment such as beneficial trees, plants, animals and insects.

But Mr Bradley is not impressed by the report's suggestion that pre-industrial agriculture was a more sustainable food production method.

He said the report implied that the only hope for the world's industrialised farmers was to revert to peasant farming systems and give up current practices involving the use of fertilisers, chemicals, machinery, fungicides, Genetically Modified crops and other proven production tools.

[Indonesia Outlines Plan to Curb Forest Clearing](#)

JAKARTA — Indonesia on Friday released the details of an eagerly awaited \$1 billion deal to curb forest destruction and cut greenhouse gas emissions, but it faced criticism from environmentalists, who said the plan gave industry too much leeway for further clearing in key ecosystems.

[California: Judge Blocks Cap-and-Trade Plan](#)

A California judge ruled on Friday that state air regulators must stop carrying out a cap-

and-trade plan until they examine alternatives to emissions trading to meet the state's aggressive greenhouse gas-reduction targets. The judge, Ernest Goldsmith of the Superior Court of California in San Francisco, said that the California Air Resources Board should "take no action" to put its cap-and-trade plans into effect until it completes the analysis of the alternatives.



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