



EuroNews: November 17, 2006

Posted by [Chris Vernon](#) on November 17, 2006 - 4:45pm in [The Oil Drum: Europe](#)

Topic: [Miscellaneous](#)

Tags: [biofuel](#), [euronews](#), [gazprom](#), [nuclear](#), [russia](#), [solar power](#) [[list all tags](#)]

[British Energy Ousts Head of Nuclear Operations; Output Reduced](#)

British Energy Group Plc, the country's largest power producer, ousted the head of nuclear operations and said production will miss forecasts by at least 8.2 percent a year because of faulty reactors.

Annual production will be no less than 5 terawatt hours lower until at least March 2008.

Six of British Energy's 16 reactors are shut, with four down because of cracked boiler tubes. Production at two of its plants, which generate enough electricity to supply some 2.4 million homes, will be restricted for at least the next 16 months. This may undermine government efforts to promote building new reactors to replace aging units.

British Energy has 38 percent of its nuclear capacity out of service, or 3,620 megawatts from a total of 9,568 megawatts.

This is really bad news for the winter. If the gas situation is anything like last year electricity shortages are likely.

[Shell puts its French refineries up for sale](#)

EUROPE'S oil refining industry is poised for a big upheaval as Royal Dutch Shell puts its French refineries up for sale. The Dutch multinational is pulling out of the refining market in France, seeking buyers for its three plants at Petit Couronne, Reichstett and Berre l'Etang.

Shell's move to reduce its European refining capacity follows BP's decision in June to put its Coryton refinery in Essex up for sale. Shell has already taken steps to reduce capacity with the closure of Shell Haven.

[Oil helps cut eurozone inflation](#)

A drop in oil prices helped to slow the pace of inflation in the 12-nation eurozone in October, official figures have shown.

Prices rose 0.1% during October, taking the annual inflation rate to 1.6%, just below September's figure of 1.7%. However, the underlying rate excluding energy and unprocessed food costs, increased from 1.5% in September to 1.6% in October.

[Europe's biggest commercial solar energy site opens in Seville](#)

The link includes a video from EuroNews. The new thermal solar tower installation is 11MW, saves 18,000 tonnes of CO2 per year, covers 60 hectares it using 600 mirrors to focus the sun to a central point generating temperatures of 400-500°C to raise steam and run a regular turbine. The company is planning 7 more plants taking capacity from 11MW to 302MW by 2010, enough to power 180,000 homes or a town the size of Seville, impressive.

[UK Biofuel market 'grew fivefold in a year'](#)

The bio-fuel market is expanding rapidly, with a fivefold rise in sales between 2004-2005, the Government said as it reviewed its non-food crops strategy.

Trade and industry secretary Alistair Darling said: "Bio renewables have great potential for the economy and the environment. The growth we are seeing - a 75% increase in land being used for non-food crops in the last two years alone - is very encouraging. Increasingly the farming industry is seizing on its potential.

[Russia ups oil output 2.3% in 9M06](#)

Russia's oil production in January-September rose 2.3% to 357.7 million metric tons (2.63 billion bbl) year-on-year, the national statistics service reported Friday.

[Italy's Eni reaches gas supply pact with Gazprom](#)

Eni, the Italian energy company, and Russia's Gazprom on Tuesday finally signed a wide-ranging strategy pact to replace a gas distribution deal that collapsed last year.

Under the terms of the deal signed on Tuesday, Gazprom will gain direct access to the Italian gas market. It will be able to sell up to 3bn cu m of gas in Italy a year from 2010, equivalent to about 3 per cent of the market and worth about €600m-€750m (\$770m-\$963m) a year.

However, EU officials have warned that bilateral deals with Gazprom undermine Brussels' efforts to work out a common policy towards Russia and its gas supplies. The EU has been pushing Russia to ratify an energy charter treaty that would provide access to Russia's reserves and remove Gazprom's monopoly of the export pipeline to Europe.

[Economic Brief: The Uneasy Russia-E.U. Energy Relationship](#)

Europe's reliance on Russia for 50 percent of natural gas imports -- half of which comes

from Gazprom -- and 25 percent of its oil imports have sparked disunity among E.U. states. Vladimir Chizhov, Russia's ambassador to the European Union, said this of the matter: "We warned our partners in the European Union of the possible difficulties they might face after expansion, two years ago. We wish our partners the best of luck in resolving their internal problems."



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 United States License](http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/).