

Electrical tape on speed limit signs tricks Tesla vehicles into violations



McAfee security researchers were able to trick Tesla vehicles into breaking the law by placing electrical tape on speed limit signs, in a demonstration of another vulnerability for self-driving cars.

In findings disclosed by McAfee through its official blog, the security company revealed that it fooled 2016 models of Tesla's Model X and Model S, which used camera systems by Intel's Mobileye, into breaking speed limits with the strategic placement of electrical tape.

Researchers applied a single piece of black electrical tape to extend the middle line in the "3" of a 35-miles-per-hour speed limit sign. This tricked the Mobileye camera into reading the sign as 85 miles per hour, forcing the Tesla vehicle's cruise control system to accelerate the car beyond the true speed limit.

Intel disputes that the trick was an adversarial attack, as the tape may also have fooled some human drivers into thinking that the tampered sign said 85 miles per hour.

Tesla, however, stopped using Mobileye's camera systems in 2016, which means that the newer Tesla vehicles are not affected by the electric tape trick. In addition, other vehicles using newer versions of Mobileye technology also appear to be resistant to the manipulation.

Energy markets need winter, and climate change is taking it away



Even before the deadly virus struck, another menace confronted

the global energy industry: the warmest winter anyone can remember. Russia's winter was so balmy that snow was trucked into downtown Moscow for New Year, and bears came out of hibernation. In Japan, ski competitions were cancelled and the Sapporo Snow Festival had to borrow snow. On the shores of Lake Michigan, Chicago residents watched playgrounds and beaches disappear under the waves as warm weather swelled the water level. Norwegians basked in T-shirts in January. London's spring daffodils have already flowered.

For global energy markets it's a disaster – and as the world continues to get hotter it's something producers, traders and government treasuries will have to live with long after the acute dislocation of the coronavirus has passed. The industry relies on cold weather across the northern hemisphere to drive demand for oil and gas to heat homes and workplaces in the world's most advanced economies. Climate activists might find a certain poetic justice in energy markets suffering from the global warming caused by fossil fuels. Burning oil and other fuels to heat homes and businesses accounts for as much as 12% of the greenhouse-gas emissions blamed for raising the world's temperatures. The loss in global oil demand due to mild temperatures is probably about 800,000 barrels a day in January, according to Gary Ross, chief investment officer of Black Gold Investors LLC and founder of oil consultant PIRA Energy. That's the equivalent of knocking out Turkey's entire consumption. The natural gas market has taken a similar hit. "The oversupply keeps coming and winter so far hasn't really showed up," said Ron Ozer, chief investment officer of Statar Capital LLC, an energy-focused hedge fund in New York. Last month was the hottest January ever in Europe, the Copernicus Climate Change Service reported. Surface temperatures were 3.1 degrees Celsius (5.6 degrees Fahrenheit) warmer than average. Northern Europe was particularly hot, with some areas from Norway to Russia more than 6 degrees above the 1981- 2010 January average. Temperatures in Tokyo took until February 6 to hit freezing point, the latest date on record. Globally,

the last five years have been the hottest for centuries, as greenhouse gases change the Earth's ecosystem. Natural gas prices have collapsed globally as the weather crimped the need for heating. US futures are trading at the lowest levels for this time of the year since the 1990s. Asian spot prices for liquefied natural gas have crashed to a record low as demand slumps in the world's three biggest importers— Japan, South Korea and China. Based on weather-driven demand data, the US and Asia are having their warmest winters on record and Europe is having its second warmest, according to Joe Woznicki, a meteorologist for Commodity Weather Group LLC. A key measure of heating demand, known as heating degree days, is 12% below the 10-year average in the US, 14% lower in Asia and 13% in Europe. And it's not just markets that are reeling. It's also an issue for government treasuries. Russia, for example, relies on its oil and gas companies for around 40% of budget revenues. Oil exports have been holding steady, but gas exports are dropping. Sergei Kapitonov, gas analyst at Moscow-based Skolkovo Energy Center, estimates Gazprom's exports to Europe and Turkey fell in January by about a quarter from a year earlier. Gazprom stock is down 11% this year. The collapse in oil prices – spurred by the coronavirus but pushed along by the warm weather – prompted a push to urge Opec+ allies for a production curb last week. Three days of wrangling in Vienna didn't produce a clear result. From Algeria to Venezuela, similar dynamics are in play. This year's especially warm winter was triggered by events in the Arctic. An intense weather pattern there kept the cold locked in the Arctic region, leaving North America and Eurasia relatively mild. "When the winds are stronger they act as a barrier to keep Arctic air focused over the pole and keeps them from spilling southward," said Bradley Harvey, a meteorologist with Maxar in Gaithersburg, Maryland. "That is likely to continue for the balance of the month and even into March." Rain patterns have also been unusual— and that's added to volatility too. In Norway, the biggest source of electricity comes from running water through turbines. The

wettest January since records began turned a deficit of water in reservoirs in December to a huge surplus in January—and sent prices crashing in the Nordic power market. The abnormal winter could hardly have come at a worse time for the US gas market, which is already suffering a glut. US shale drillers have delivered two years of unprecedented production growth and in the Permian Basin of West Texas and New Mexico there's so much gas – the byproduct of drilling for oil – that producers are even paying to get rid of it. Europe and Asia were set to become important export outlets for American gas. Then the weather changed. "It's unfortunate that we're making all this LNG that's not worth very much around the world," Corey Grindal, senior vice president of supply at Cheniere Energy Inc, said.

BP pulls out of Iraq's Kirkuk field as expansion plans stall



LONDON – BP has pulled out of Iraq’s giant Kirkuk oilfield after its \$100 million exploration contract expired with no agreement on the field’s expansion, dealing a fresh blow to Iraq’s hopes to increase its oil output, three sources told Reuters.

The move came as Western energy companies are reassessing operations in Iraq amid political turmoil following months of anti-government protests and a flare-up in tensions between the United States and Iran in the country.

BP informed Iraqi authorities in December that it was removing its staff from the oilfield in the north of the country after its 2013 service contract expired at the end of 2019, the sources familiar with the matter said.

A senior source at Iraq’s North Oil Company (NOC), which oversees the Kirkuk operations, confirmed BP’s withdrawal.

“The results of its field study for Kirkuk oilfield development have been handed over to the North Oil Company and unfortunately it was below expectations... at least for us,” the

official said.

“It’s very obvious study results were not encouraging for BP to extend its operations,” he added.

The Iraqi government did not reply to a request for comment.

BP confirmed it had completed field work and studies and said it gave its recommendations for the development of the field to the NOC. The London-based company did not comment on staff movements.

“In 2013, BP signed a letter of intent with the North Oil Company of the Iraqi Ministry of Oil to support field activity studies in Kirkuk. As planned, in December 2019 BP completed field work, studies and recommendations,” it said.

Another senior NOC engineer said BP staff members left their laptops with the NOC after completing the survey and technical study of the field.

Iraq was hoping BP would help it triple output from the field to 1 million barrels per day (bpd) – more than one-fifth of Iraq’s current production and 1% of global output.

BP’s contract was put on hold in 2014 when the Iraqi Army collapsed in the face of Islamic State’s sweeping advance in northern and western Iraq, allowing the Kurdish regional government (KRG) to take control of the Kirkuk region.

Baghdad regained full control of the deposit from the regional government in 2017 after a failed Kurdish independence referendum, at which point BP resumed its studies on the field.

Kirkuk, where oil was discovered in 1927, is the birthplace of Iraq’s oil industry. BP and Iraq’s Oil Ministry signed in 2013 a letter of intent to study the development of the field with a planned spending of \$100 million.

BP's work included a 3D seismic study of the field's reservoir to expand on the existing 2D data.

Kirkuk is estimated to contain about 9 billion barrels of recoverable oil, BP said.

Most of Iraq's crude is produced from areas managed by the central government of Baghdad, in the south, and exported from southern ports on the Gulf. The KRG exports about 300,000 bpd of crude from northern Iraq through a pipeline across Turkey.

Turkey, Greece brace for standoff over Cyprus gas drilling plans



China energy leaders set for shake-up amid sector revamp



(MENAFN – Gulf Times) Top executives at China's leading energy companies are set for a power shake-up as the nation takes steps to reorganise and revamp its leadership and energy infrastructure.

The executive changes at the state-owned giants come as the sector is under pressure to increase competition and boost domestic output in the face of growing dependence on energy imports.

The government this week opened its upstream sector to foreign drillers and last month rolled out plans to spin off the nation's pipelines into a new firm to allow more companies access to energy infrastructure.

Dai Houliang, chairman of refining giant Sinopec Group, is set to be named the new chairman and party secretary of the country's biggest oil firm, China National Petroleum Corp, according to people familiar with the matter.

Wang Yilin, the current CNPC chairman, is set to step down and retire, they added.

The top job in Sinopec Group, formally known as China Petrochemical Corp, will be taken by Zhang Yuzhuo, former chairman of coal colossus China Shenhua Energy Co, said the people who asked not to be identified as the information is private.

Li Fanrong, deputy director of China's National Energy Administration and former CEO of CNOOC Ltd, will be named as general manager of CNPC, said the people.

Zhang Wei, current general manager at CNPC, will be appointed chairman of the newly-established national oil and gas pipeline company.

The decision by China's central government is set to be announced as early as this week. Nobody responded to emails or calls sent to CNPC and Sinopec's press offices.

State Grid Corp, China's largest operator of electric networks, also named a new top executive, putting Mao Weiming in place as chairman and party chief.

CNPC is the nation's largest driller and natural gas importer, and is the parent of PetroChina Co, while Sinopec Group is the world's largest oil refiner by capacity and parent of China Petroleum & Chemical Corp.

The appointment of the new CNPC executives will be especially positive for PetroChina, according to analysts at Sanford C Bernstein & Co including Neil Beveridge in a note to clients.

Dai could help shape up the company's struggling refining and petrochemical division, while Li's stint at Cnooc proved him 'one of the highest calibre CEOs within China's oil and gas industry over the past decade.

'We view his appointment as a strong sign that significant reform could take place within the PetroChina which is undergoing major change with pipeline reform, Beveridge said. Even as PetroChina and Sinopec have raised spending to boost output heeding calls from President Xi Jinping to bolster the nation's energy security the country has become more dependent on foreign supplies.

China's dependence on overseas oil has grown from less than 50% in 2005 to nearly 75% by the end of last year as more than two decades of super-charged growth have made it the world's biggest importer.

China also became the world's biggest natural gas importer in 2018, overtaking Japan after a government push for cleaner energy caused demand to surge.

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Coal's Familiar Foes Set to Pull Down Prices in Europe This Year



European coal faces another depressing year as natural gas

floods the region and clean-energy policies reduce demand for the dirtiest fossil fuel.

Coal use across seven European economies fell to historic lows last year, pushing benchmark rates down by almost a third to \$62 a ton. The prospects for 2020 are looking equally bleak, with analysts from S&P Global Platts and Capital Economics predicting prices plunging to the \$50 mark, the lowest in four years.

It's the latest indication that the economics for burning coal have collapsed in little more than a year since the commodity hit \$100 a ton. Europe's goal of zeroing out carbon emissions by the middle of the century along with ever-cheaper wind and solar power and falling gas prices all point to drastic reductions for generators that burn coal.

"Although we saw coal generation pushed to minimum levels in the second half of 2019, it should fall again year-on-year in the first half of 2020 due to low gas and stable carbon pricing," said Joe Aldina, S&P Global Platts' head of coal analytics.

For most of last decade it was more profitable to burn coal than gas in Germany, Europe's biggest economy. That relationship was turned on its head last year as imports of liquefied natural gas and mild weather pushed down prices for the cleaner fuel, encouraging utilities to switch away from coal.

Dark spreads indicating the theoretical profit for burning coal to make power in Germany have been falling further behind spark spreads for using gas. The trend, according to Bloomberg analytics, becomes especially acute later this year.

Gas Glut

Part of the reason is the abundance of natural gas. Ample flows from pipelines along with near-record levels of LNG

shipments arriving in Europe have left storage sites brimming.

The gas glut may worsen after last month's deal between Russia and Ukraine to keep gas flowing to Europe. Construction of another direct route to Europe, the Nord Stream 2 pipeline to Germany, is expected to finish this year even though the U.S. imposed sanctions on the project.

"The gas transit agreement between Russia and Ukraine and soon-to-be completed Nord Stream 2 pipeline, allied with the prospect of higher U.S. LNG exports means that the European market will be awash with gas supplies in 2020," said Franziska Palmas, assistant economist at Capital Economics.

While European year-ahead coal prices have slumped, the penalty for using the fuel has increased as the cost of carbon emission permits surged five-fold since 2017. At the same time, benchmark month-ahead gas contracts have slumped to 42% below the 10-year seasonal average.

"I don't expect coal to fall below \$50," said Elchin Mammadov, an analyst at Bloomberg Intelligence in London. "Which is why I don't think there will be gas-to-coal switching. If anything, it'll be the other way round given that gas will likely stay cheap throughout the year."

The pessimistic outlook for coal view is not unanimous. Perret Associates expects a global surplus of the commodity to swing into deficit by the end of this year as India and countries in the Pacific Rim region make up for a drop in demand in Europe.

Parsley boss says shale drillers will finally deliver returns in 2020



Enter text here This is the year when shale drillers are finally going to deliver solid returns to investors that have grown weary of the industry's decade-long cash burn, the head of explorer Parsley Energy Inc said. Why? Because for the first time the producers behind the US shale boom are collectively showing restraint in capital spending at a time when crude prices are rising and struggling oil-service providers are lowering their rates, Parsley chief executive officer Matt Gallagher said in an interview. In the past, explorers would instead have taken advantage of that to drill at full throttle again. "It's the proof-in-the-pudding year," Gallagher said. "We've been telling generalists in the

financial community that you're going to get a payday for investing in this great renaissance." Whether investors will be easily convinced is yet to be seen. After Wall Street poured more than \$200bn in a growth-focused, debt-driven shale patch in past years, most drillers have yet to produce free cash flow that would ensure healthy returns.

The S&P index of exploration and production companies fell 11% last year, even as oil jumped 34% in New York. But Parsley might have more reasons to be optimistic than others. The Austin, Texas-based company on Thursday won shareholder approval to acquire rival Jagged Peak Energy Inc for \$1.8bn. Its shares fell 1% to \$18.27 at 10.34am in New York as an easing of fears of disruption to Middle Eastern supplies pushed West Texas Intermediate, the US benchmark, toward its biggest weekly loss since July. It's a deal that Gallagher had to hit the road and man the phones for in order to convince investors of its potential. After an initial negative reaction that sent the stock plunging 11% the day the deal was announced, the shares have rebounded 20% since. That's about double the gain for S&P's E&P index over the same span, at a time when the market has mostly punished buyers.

Even as he works to integrate Jagged Peak into Parsley, Gallagher reiterated that the newly merged company is a good takeover target. "It'd be very attractive to a lot of companies," Gallagher said, declining to name possible suitors. "I don't think that anything done in this deal would negate that." Gallagher, who took over as CEO from Parsley founder and chairman Bryan Sheffield last year, expects a continued throttling back of US oil growth, to an expansion of about 500,000 barrels a day in 2020, with even slower growth through 2025. That's roughly half the annual growth expected by the US Energy Information Administration. American output ended 2019 at a record level of nearly 13mn barrels a day, more than any other nation and up from less than 12mn at the start of last year, according to weekly EIA data. This will

finally be the year that investor skepticism is eased, Gallagher predicts.

World on course to burn more coal, threatening climate goals



Coal consumption is set to rise in the coming years as growing demand for electricity in developing countries outpaces a shift to cleaner sources of electricity in industrialised nations. While use of the most polluting fossil fuel had a historic dip in 2019, the International Energy Agency anticipates steady increases in the next five years. That means the world will face a significant challenge in meeting pledges to reduce greenhouse gas emissions that cause global warming. “There are few signs of change,” the agency wrote in its annual coal report released in Paris yesterday. “Despite

all the policy changes and announcements, our forecast is very similar to those we have made over the past few years.” While this year is on track for biggest decline ever for coal power, that’s mostly due to high growth in hydroelectricity and relatively low electricity demand in India and China, said Carlos Fernandez Alvarez, senior energy analyst at the Paris-based IEA. Despite the drop, global coal consumption is likely to rise over the coming years, driven by demand in India, China and Southeast Asia. Power generation from coal rose almost 2% in 2018 to reach an all-time high, remaining the world’s largest source of electricity. The steady outlook for coal comes in spite of waning demand in industrialised nations. Europe has set a goal of zeroing out carbon pollution by the middle of the century, which would mean drastic reductions for coal. In the US, competition from natural gas has cut into demand for coal, despite President Donald Trump’s vows to revive the industry. The story is different in Asia, which will more than make up for reductions elsewhere. India, with a population of more than 1.3bn, will see coal generation increase by 4.6% a year through 2024 to help power its growing economy. In Southeast Asia, coal demand will grow more than 5% annually. China, which accounts for almost half the world’s consumption, will also have modest growth with usage peaking in 2022. “How we address this issue in Asia is critical for the long-term success of any global efforts to reduce emissions,” Fatih Birol, the IEA’s executive director, wrote in a foreword to the report. Any new coal plants added to meet the growing power demand in these countries will likely be in use for decades. Even as China’s coal consumption slows and then declines after 2022, emissions from the fuel would need to rapidly decline in order to meet climate targets. Under current policies, the world is set to warm almost 3 degrees Celsius (5.4 degrees Fahrenheit) by the end of the century. That’s double the rate scientists say is needed to constrain the worst impacts of climate change. To prevent those increases, it would be necessary to use technology that captures and stores carbon as it’s emitted from power plants,

the IEA said. While the technology is expensive and untested at scale. But with coal here to stay, it may be the only option to reduce emissions.

هيل إلى بيروت... القديم على ! قدّمه؟



منذ ولاية جورج دبليو بوش، إقترنت السياسة الأميركية بالنفط. تهتمّ أميركا أوّلاً بأسعار النفط الذي تستخدمه لبسط سيطرتها على الأسواق حاميةً بذلك اقتصادها الوطني، وفي الوقت عينه، تضغط من خلاله على قوى منافسة تعتمد بشكل أساسي عليه وعلى رأسها الصين. يتّكئ الاقتصاد الأميركي إذاً على "التموين النفطي" الذي يؤمّن بدوره استقراراً في السوق، كما يؤمّن نوعاً من "التسيّد" يزخر به الدولار على حساب العملات الأخرى.

من هنا، يتخذ موضوع الغاز اللبناني - بكل ما يحمله من تفاصيل تقنية - منحى استراتيجياً بامتياز، علماً أن أبعاده السياسية في شقّيها الداخلي والخارجي مرتبطة بشكل عضوي. فخارجياً يتّخذ النفط اللبناني أهمية مضاعفة نظراً "للكميات الهائلة" التي بات من شبه المؤكد أنه يخترنها براً وبحراً. وإن كانت هذه الكميات نظرياً لا تغيّر الميزان الاستراتيجي المتعلق بانتاج الطاقة في الشرق الأوسط والمطلوبة بغالبيتها للانتاج الصناعي، إلا أن الحقول اللبنانية

متّصلة جغرافياً بالحقول المصرية والاسرائيلية والسوريّة والأهم القبرصية. ذلك يعني انه وعدا عن الدور المباشر الذي يحظى به "غاز لبنان" فهو قد يبرز أيضاً لدى طرح إشكالية أساسية هي المتعلقة بـأماكن انشاء محطات تسيل وتكرير الغاز بالإضافة الى المنشآت والبنى التحتية الضرورية لتسييله مع آليات نقله وتسويقه. وعليه، لا يمكن التنبؤ بهويّة الدولة التي ستتحوّل بما قد يستجدّ من تحالفات إقليمية ودولية؛ هذا الامر سيحتم حداً أدنى من التعاون بين الدول المعنية، وهنا يكمن بيت القصيد، بما أن هذه البلدان في حالة عداوة أو في حالة تصادم ما بين المحاور السائدة في الاقليم والمرشّح للتفاقم بسبب التنافس الشرّس على الثروة الجديدة . في شرق المتوسط .

اما البعد الثالث الذي يكتسبه غاز لبنان فـ"ماليّ" بحت والمقصود هنا ليس مالية الدولة بل الميل الى الالتفاف حول القانون لاستفادة الفريق السياسي المهيمن، وذلك من خلال السمسرات وعقود الخدمة للشركات والانشاءات المرتبطة بهذا القطاع فضلاً عن القدرة على توظيف "الازلام" تماماً كما جرى ولا يزال في شركتي الاتصالات وكازينو لبنان والكسارات والسدود وغيرها من المجالس التي قد تكون اكثر إغراء، خصوصاً اذا استغلت المراسيم كمنفذ مقونن للهيمنة على ما تبقى من موارد في البلاد، لا سيّما وأن التعويل على العائدات النفطية "اليوم"، أي في ظلّ عدم وجود قانون واضح ينظّم وجهة استخدام هذه الاموال من خلال الصندوق السيادي، يعني حُكماً أننا تخلينا عن ثروتنا هذه لخدمة الدين وتحويلها من أموال استثمارية الى أموال "منهوبة".

من هذا المنطلق، لا يجوز الإفراط في التعويل على الثروة النفطية لانتشال لبنان من مأزقه النقدي، فالجدوى الاقتصادية، بحسب الخبراء، للنفط والغاز في المنطقة ككلّ لم تُثبّت بعد لا سيما وأن كلفة استخراج هذه المواد من قعر البحر تفوق بكثير الكلفة التي تتكبدها روسيا لاستخراج غازها. وبرأي الخبراء، فإنّ امكان تصدير هذا الغاز الى أوروبا على سبيل المثال قد يكون صعباً بما أن الاسعار ستكون عاجزة عن منافسة الغاز الروسي من جهة، ومن جهة ثانية بسبب العوامل الجيو - سياسية في منطقة شرقي المتوسط. أما كلّ ما أثير عن احتمال إنشاء أنابيب لربط هذه الآبار بأوروبا مروراً باليونان فقد سقط عملياً بعد دخول اسرائيل الى طاولة المباحثات اضافة الى صعوبة تأمين الاموال الاستثمارية اللازمة له.

لا تعني كلّ هذه الفرضيات أن دولة من دول العالم الثالث كـلبنان

“عاجزة عن الاستفادة من ثرواتها النفطية بل يمكن استغلالها، وإن لم يكن للتصدير، فذلك في إصلاح الكهرباء وتحويل الانتاج ليرتكز على الغاز، وهكذا يتم تخفيض العجز وتالياً تقليص الخضوع لهيمنة صندوق النقد الدولي كلما وجدنا أنفسنا مضطرين الى الاقتراض بنسب وشروط تعجيزية”، بحسب الخبراء.

الطروحات الاميركية

من جهة ثانية، تُضاف معضلة ترسيم الحدود التي لا تزال تتخذ حيّزاً من المفاوضات والتي يوليها الجانب الاميركي أهمية كبيرة خصوصاً في ظلّ التواجد الصيني والروسي في المنطقة. ولا شكّ أن مساعد وزير الخارجية الأميركي للشؤون السياسية ديفيد هيل سيتطرق الى هذا الملف خلال زيارته إلى بيروت في الايام القليلة المقبلة.

طروحات ثلاثة، هي ما قدّمه الطرف الاميركي في ما خصّ مسألة ترسيم الحدود مع الكيان الإسرائيلي في المنطقة المتنازع عليها: الاول هو تقسيم رضائي بنسبة ثلث للكيان وثلثين للبنان. الثاني هو تصنيفها كمنطقة عدم أنشطة وبالتالي اعتبارها محظورة للطرفين؛ أما الطرح الثالث فيتمثّل باعتبارها منطقة أنشطة مشتركة، وهو ما يرفضه الجانب اللبناني حتى الساعة متسلّحاً بالقوانين التي ترعى حقوقه في المياه الاقليمية إضافة الى الطلب الذي كان تقدّم به الى الامم المتحدة لحلّ النزاع في هذه القضية” يقول الخبير في قوانين وسياسات الطاقة المحامي علي برّو.

ويضيف برّو في اتصال مع “نداء الوطن” أن “قبرص تتحمّل مسؤولية مخالفة أحكام الاتفاقية مع لبنان سنداً لاتفاقية 2007 حيث لم يكن ينبغي عليها ترسيم الحدود مع الكيان الاسرائيلي من دون موافقة الدولة اللبنانية. من جهتها، أودعت الدولة اللبنانية الامم المتحدة ادعاءات منطقتها الاقتصادية الخالصة، إلا أنها قصرت في مطالبتها قبرص لخرقها احكام الاتفاقية معه. من الناحية القانونية، لبنان جاهز لعملية إعادة الترسيم وفقاً للوسائل العلمية التابعة لقانون البحار. ومن خلال لجوئنا الى القانون الدولي، سنتمكن من “استعادة حقوقنا السيادية في المياه البحرية

في الاطار عينه، يوضح الخبير النفطي رودي بارودي أنه “من المتوقع أن يأتي ديفيد هيل وفي جعبته ملف ترسيم الحدود البحرية. هذا الموضوع بحاجة الى حلّ جذريّ لا سيّما مع بدء لبنان بحفر أول بئر استكشافي مطلع العام المقبل. وبحسب قانون الامم المتحدة للبحار

لا شكّ أن لبنان سيحظى بالحصة الأكبر من المنطقة (UNCLOS) الاقتصادية الخالصة المُتنازع عليها، فصحیح أن الكيان الاسرائيلي ليس طرفاً في المعاهدة مع الامم المتحدة، الا أنه طبق قواعدها من خلال تقيّده ببنود الاتفاقية بينه وبين قبرص. بالتالي أصبح من الممكن اللجوء الى إتفاقية تنمية مشتركة تماماً كما هي الحال بين الكويت والسعودية في ما يُعرف بالمنطقة المحايدة. بهذه الطريقة، تقوم شركة محايدة بعمليات الاستخراج وتوزّع لكلّ دولة حصّتها وفق "المعايير الدولية".

كثيرة تصبح التأويلات عندما يتعلّق الأمر بغاز لبنان وليس هناك من حقيقة مطلقة عندما تكون المسألة جيو - سياسية. وحدها الايام المقبلة ستُظهر نوايا الولايات المتحدة تجاه لبنان إلا أن معيار ترسيم الحدود البحرية يجب أن يبقى القانون الدولي منفرداً. ولعلّه من الافضل لهذه الثروة أن تبقى نائمة في قعر البحر لحين ايجاد حلول آنية تُعيد خلق اقتصاد منتج بدلاً من اقتصاد ريعيّ وترك هذا الملف يأخذ مساره الطبيعي لئلا تصبح عوائده... "أموالاً منهوبة".

Sweden's energy deal collapses amid clash over nuclear power



- * Capacity tax to be phased out over 2 years from 2017

- * New reactors to be built to replace old ones (Adds Energy Minister comment, background)

STOCKHOLM, June 10 (Reuters) – Sweden said on Friday it would phase out some taxes on nuclear power and build new reactors to replace aging plants and secure energy supplies for decades to come.

Nuclear power providers in Sweden have said they would be forced to shut the country's loss-making nuclear reactors unless a tax on nuclear capacity is abolished, risking a spike in electricity prices and energy shortages for industry.

"The aim is ... to make sure we can always guarantee electricity at competitive prices, in a stable and sustainable way, both in the short and long term," Energy Minister Ibrahim Baylan told reporters.

The tax, which brought in about 4 billion Swedish crowns (\$488 million) in 2015, will be phased out over two years starting from 2017, but households will see their energy bills rise as Baylan said the government would increase taxes on energy users to make up for the nuclear tax. Heavy industry, however,

would be excluded from the tax rise.

In a broad deal agreed with the main opposition parties, the government also said it would allow up to 10 new reactors to be built as the country closes its old plants, built in the 1970s and 80s.

The tax on capacity – which was increased last year – has hurt profitability at plants already under pressure from low market prices and the need for expensive upgrades to meet tougher safety standards since Japan's Fukushima nuclear disaster.

Swedish state-owned utility Vattenfall and Germany's E.ON have said they will shut four of Sweden's 10 nuclear reactors earlier than previously planned. One of them was shut last year.

In April, Vattenfall said all the remaining six reactors would have to close by 2020 if the capacity tax was not abolished.

Nuclear plants produced around 34 percent of Sweden's electricity in 2015.

The deal to end the tax is a blow for the Green Party, which wants nuclear power phased out as soon as possible and instigated the increase in the tax last year. (\$1 = 8.1964 Swedish crowns) (Reporting by Johan Sennero; Editing by Simon Johnson and Susan Fenton)