

## Headlines:

- **French Fuel Tax delayed**
- **Denmark Plans to Isolate Migrants on a Small Island**
- **Qatar to Leave OPEC**

## Details:

### French Fuel Tax delayed

Paris has been rocked by weeks of protests. Protests rocking France have been blamed on rising fuel taxes, but they also reveal how President Emmanuel Macron's broader tax strategy has backfired. The protesters say the fuel tax rise was the last straw from a president who took office with a promise to help the economically left-behind but who they say has instead favoured the rich. Even economists who support Mr Macron's labour market shake-up and other structural reforms are critical of the way he has implemented his fiscal policies, whose initial impact will be to hit the poorest households while making the very richest even richer. "People have this feeling that the Paris technocrats are doing complicated things to screw them," said Charles Wyplosz, an economics professor at the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies in Geneva.

But now Macron government has been forced to delay the tax rise and was forced to announce in a televised address by PM Edouard Philippe, who said anyone would have "to be deaf or blind" not to hear or see the anger. Across much of the developed world, the economic crisis in 2008 was dealt with by imposing austerity upon the masses, this is now backfiring.

### Denmark Plans to Isolate Migrants on a Small Island

Denmark plans to house the country's most unwelcome foreigners in Lindholm Island, a tiny, hard-to-reach island that now holds the laboratories, stables and crematory of a center for researching contagious animal diseases. "They are unwanted in Denmark, and they will feel that," the immigration minister, Inger Stojberg, wrote on Facebook. The government has vowed to push immigration law to the limits of international conventions on human rights. Legal experts said it was too early to tell whether the Lindholm Island project would cross those boundaries, constituting illegal confinement. They said it resembled an Italian government project that was struck down in 1980 by the European Court of Human Rights. The Lindholm Island plan furthers the government's policy of motivating failed asylum seekers to leave the country by making their lives intolerable. Rejected asylum seekers who cannot be deported are given accommodations, where they cannot prepare their own meals, food and an allowance of about \$1.20 per day, which is withheld if they fail to cooperate with the authorities.

### Qatar to Leave OPEC

Qatari Energy Minister Saad al-Kaabi announced Dec. 3 that his country would officially leave OPEC. According to the minister, Qatar will attend upcoming OPEC meetings in Vienna and abide by its commitments, but the country will ultimately leave the bloc to concentrate on its expanding liquefied natural gas (LNG) strategy. Al-Kaabi also appeared to issue a parting jab at Saudi Arabia, noting that the oil business was "controlled by an organization managed by a country." Qatar was always unique in OPEC, a bloc of oil producers because, as a large exporter of natural gas, Qatar produces just 600,000 barrels per day of crude oil. Moreover, OPEC has become increasingly dominated by Saudi Arabia.