

For first time, renewable energy surpasses coal in US power mix

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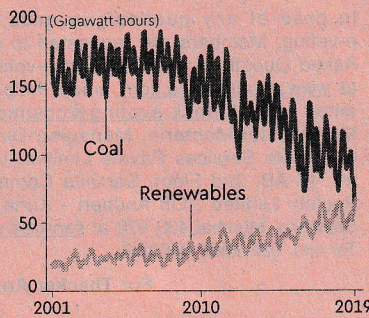
FOR THE CLEAREST sign yet that renewable energy has gone mainstream, consider this: Clean-energy resources supplied more of America's electricity than coal for the first time ever in April.

Hydroelectric dams, solar panels and wind turbines generated almost 68.5 million megawatt-hours of power in April, eclipsing the 60 million that coal produced that month, Energy Information Administration data released late on Tuesday show. That's the most clean power the US has ever made — and the least coal it has burned for power in years.

The shift comes as power plants fuelled by cheap natural gas are crushing the economics of coal. But it's also a tes-

US renewables eclipse coal

Solar, wind, hydroelectric plants surpassed American coal in April



Source: Bloomberg; Energy Information Administration

tament to the rapid development of solar and wind farms across the country. The two forms of power have become so cheap to build that BloombergNEF is projecting that half the world's power may come from renewable energy by 2050.

The onslaught of clean power is coming largely at the expense of coal, which only a decade ago supplied more electricity in the US than anything else. The mining industry is collapsing even as President Donald Trump works to restore coal to its former glory by gutting environmental rules.

The clean-energy industry should enjoy this moment while it lasts. One of the main reasons coal-fired power plants produced so little in April was because some were down for routine, spring maintenance. —BLOOMBERG