



PROPHETIC TIMES

WEEKLY WORLD NEWS UPDATE

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IMF BOMBHELL: AGE OF AMERICA NEARS END

April 26, 2011 Yahoo.com reported: "The international monetary fund has just dropped a bombshell, and nobody noticed. For the first time, the international organization has set a date for the moment when the "Age of America" will end and the U.S. economy will be overtaken by that of China. And it's a lot closer than you may think.

According to the latest IMF official forecasts, China's economy will surpass that of America in real terms in 2016 — just five years from now. Put that in your calendar.

It provides a painful context for the budget wrangling taking place in Washington right now. It raises enormous questions about what the international security system is going to look like in just a handful of years. And it casts a deepening cloud over both the U.S. dollar and the giant Treasury market, which have been propped up for decades by their privileged status as the liabilities of the world's hegemonic power.

According to the IMF forecast, which was quietly posted on the Fund's website just two weeks ago, whoever is elected U.S. president next year — Obama? Mitt Romney? Donald Trump? — will be the last to preside over the world's largest economy.

Most people aren't prepared for this. They aren't even aware it's that close. Listen to experts of various stripes, and they will tell you this moment is decades away. The most bearish will put the figure in the mid-2020s. But they're miscounting. They're only comparing the gross domestic products of the two countries using current exchange rates.

That's a largely meaningless comparison in real terms. Exchange rates change quickly. And China's exchange rates are phony. China artificially undervalues its currency, the renminbi, through massive intervention in the markets.

In addition to comparing the two countries based on exchange rates, the IMF analysis also looked to the true, real-terms picture of the economies using "purchasing power parities." That compares what people earn and spend in real terms in their domestic economies.

Under PPP, the Chinese economy will expand from \$11.2 trillion this year to \$19 trillion in 2016. Meanwhile the size of the U.S. economy will rise from \$15.2 trillion to \$18.8 trillion. That would take America's share of the world output down to 17.7%, the lowest in modern times. China's would reach 18%, and rising. Just 10 years ago, the U.S. economy was three times the size of China's.

Naturally, all forecasts are fallible. Time and chance happen to them all. The actual date when China surpasses the U.S. might come even earlier than the IMF predicts, or somewhat later."..."

EURO STRIKES 16-MONTH HIGH AGAINST DOLLAR

April 26, 2011 Breitbart.com reported: "The euro struck a 16-month high against the dollar and the Swiss franc notched a record high versus the US unit Tuesday amid heightened investor nerves over this week's busy economic calendar.

The European single currency hit \$1.4653 in morning trade, the highest point since mid-December 2009, as many dealers returned from a long holiday weekend. It later stood at \$1.4619, compared with \$1.4572 late in New York on Monday. The dollar meanwhile tumbled to an all-time low point of 0.8745 Swiss francs.

Investors moved to adjust positions ahead of the US Federal Reserve's two-day policy meeting, which was to open later on Tuesday, dealers said. The central bank's Federal Open Market Committee is widely expected to maintain interest rates at between zero and 0.25 percent, where they have stood since December 2008.

Traders are also eagerly awaiting Thursday's publication of US gross domestic product (GDP) data for the first three months of 2011.

"The US dollar continues to remain under pressure ahead of this week's key FOMC rate meeting tomorrow and first quarter GDP figures, which are due on Thursday," said CMC Markets analyst Michael Hewson.

Markets are keenly awaiting Fed chairman Ben Bernanke's first news conference on Wednesday after the meeting. It will be the first by any Fed chief, in contrast with regular news conferences held by European Central Bank President Jean-Claude Trichet.

"As such markets will be closely scrutinising the post-FOMC meeting press conference for clues as to the committee's thinking ... especially in light of the recent downgrade by S&P of the outlook for the US economy," added Hewson.

Standard & Poor's shook the markets last week when it downgraded its ratings outlook on US debt for the first time ever, putting the spotlight on Washington's consistent failure to stabilise the US public finances."...

In London on Tuesday, the euro changed hands at \$1.4610 against \$1.4572 late in New York on Monday, at 119.38 yen (119.28), £0.8862 (0.8833) and 1.2815 Swiss francs (1.2840).

The dollar stood at 81.71 yen (81.82) and 0.8871 Swiss francs (0.8808). The pound was at \$1.6484 (1.6493). On the London Bullion Market, gold prices stood at \$1,504.65 an ounce compared with \$1,504 late Thursday, when the market shut for the long holiday weekend. However, gold hit a record \$1,518.32 in Asian trading hours on Monday."



POLL: MOST EGYPTIANS WANT QURAN AS SOURCE OF LAWS

April 26, 2011 The AP reported: "A majority of Egyptians believe laws in their country should observe the teachings of Islam's holy book, the Quran, according to the results of an opinion poll by a U.S.-based research center.

The results also show that Egyptians, who have shifted toward religious conservatism over the past 40 or so years, are open to the inclusion of religious parties in future governments. Only a minority, however, sympathize with fundamentalist religious parties, according to the results.

Overall, the results of the poll paint a picture of Egyptians as a people who prefer religious moderation over extremism and prize democratic values even if they come at the risk of some political instability. The poll results were released late Monday and come five months ahead of legislative elections, the first since the February ouster of longtime authoritarian leader Hosni Mubarak.

Islamic parties are expected to make a significant showing in the crucial vote, with 50 percent of people saying it was "very important" for religious parties to be part of a future government and as much 37 percent have a "very favorable" view of the Muslim Brotherhood, the country's largest and best organized Islamic group.

Another 62 percent of Egyptians believe laws in their country should strictly follow the teachings of the Quran, though 27 percent thought it was enough that the laws reflect Islam's general values and principles.

The poll, based on interviews with 1,000 Egyptians, was conducted by the Pew Research Center between March 24 and April 7. Its margin of error was plus or minus 4 percent."..."

GRAND AYATOLLAH HAENI ISSUES FATWA AGAINST EXTENDED US MISSION IN IRAQ

April 24, 2011 The Fars News Agency reports: "Senior Iraqi Shiite cleric Grand Ayatollah Kazzem al-Hosseini al-Haeri condemned Washington's attempts to prolong its military deployment in Iraq, and issued a Fatwa (religious decree) against the presence of the US forces in the country after the end of 2011.

'Americans occupied our country and started corruption in here and ruined whatever was left by Saddam, therefore after 7 years and based on the security agreement (between Iraq and US), all the US forces should leave Iraq at the end of 2011,' Ayatollah Haeri said in his Fatwa.

'The extended mission of the infidel occupiers in Iraq even for one single day after the mentioned date (as cited in the security agreement) is haram (religiously forbidden),' he added. The fatwa cautioned that although the number of the US forces in Iraq has seemingly decreased to 50,000 at present, Americans seem to be seeking to extend their mission in the country.

Iraqis have held a series of protests over the last two weeks in opposition to the suggestions that US troops might stay beyond their scheduled departure at the end of 2011, as well as demanding the release of prisoners jailed for long periods without being charged..."

IRAN BOOSTS COMBAT CAPABILITY OF STRATEGIC AIRCRAFT

April 25, 2011 The Fars News Agency reports: "A senior Iranian Air Force commander announced on Monday that the Iranian experts have successfully revived the capabilities of the country's strategic Sukhoi-24 aircraft, including its laser missile capabilities.

'Our experts have revived important capabilities of Sukhoi-24, including its laser missiles, radar-guided air-to-ground missiles and long-range missiles,' Lieutenant Commander of the Iranian Air Force for Operations General Seyed Mohammad Alavi told FNA.



'Recently, the aircraft's laser missiles in a successful test-fire hit the target with zero-zero error,' Alavi added. He further said that the Islamic Republic of Iran Air Force (IRIAF) plans to test-fire the aircraft's long-range, radar-guided high-precision missiles in the near future.

Last week, IRIAF displayed a wide range of its operational fleet, including its strategic fighter jets, in an air show to be held during the annual military parades. In August 2010, the Iranian Army equipped its fleet of Sukhoi SU-24s with newly developed night operations systems enabling the fighter jets to accomplish missions at nights..."

IRAN'S PRESIDENT AND SUPREME LEADER IN RIFT OVER MINISTER'S REINSTATEMENT

April 27, 2011 guardian.co.uk "A rift is emerging between Iran's president and its supreme leader, prompting several members of the parliament to call for the impeachment of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, who has not been seen in public for days.

Ahmadinejad has refused to appear at the presidential palace since Friday in what is being seen as a reaction to Ayatollah Khamenei's reinstating of a minister he initially "asked to resign". Under pressure from Ahmadinejad the intelligence minister, Heydar Moslehi, a close ally of the supreme leader, stepped down on 17 April but was reinstated when Khamenei asked him in a letter to stay.

The president has not publicly shown his support for that decision and on Wednesday he refused for the second time to chair a cabinet meeting in which Moslehi was present. Ahmadinejad also reportedly cancelled an official visit to the holy city of Qom prompting reactions among conservatives that "the president was sulking".

Under Iran's constitution, the president is in charge of appointing cabinet ministers who will hold the ministerial office after the approval of the parliament but an unwritten law requires all officials to abide by the supreme leader."..."

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