

TEHRAN – The Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) has been assigned to generate 10,000 megawatts of nuclear electricity, Iran’s nuclear chief said Monday.

In remarks after unveiling two high-tech products of the nuclear industry, AEOI Director Muhammad Eslami said that according to the national budget law, the AEOI is tasked with increasing the nuclear electricity production capacity to 10,000 megawatts. This objective needs to be achieved through foreign investment, domestic investment and financing, he said.

TASHKENT (AFP) -- Uzbek President Shavkat Mirziyoyev on Monday called an early presidential election for July, his office said, after a referendum allowing him to remain in power for two more terms.

In late April, the Central Asian country approved constitutional changes allowing Mirziyoyev, 65, to extend his hold on power in a tightly controlled referendum slammed by international observers as flawed. Mirziyoyev set the early election for July 9, according to a decree released by the presidential administration.

**Gen. Baqeri: Balance of Power Shifting to East**



**Blinken Faces Contempt of Congress Over Cable**



**Fatemeh Keshavarz Bags 2 Bronze Medals at Asian Weightlifting Championships**



**EU Cancels Tel Aviv Event in Protest at Radical Minister Participation**



## Global Flight From the U.S. Dollar

By: Ted Snider\*

On March 20, Chinese President Xi Jinping met with Russian President Vladimir Putin in Moscow. In his article in the Russian media preceding the meeting, Xi enthused that “China-Russia trade exceeded 190 billion U.S. dollars last year, up by 116 percent from ten years ago.” Though it has reached 190 billion U.S. dollars, it is no longer all being traded in U.S. dollars. In his article in the Chinese media, Putin said that “the share of settlements in national currencies” of all that trade “is growing.” 65% of that massive China-Russia trade is now being conducted in their Russian and Chinese currencies.

Though the U.S. sees Russia and China as the largest threats to its position in the world, it is not just America’s enemies that are fleeing the dollar. Its closest friends have hinted at it too. Following his meetings with Xi in China, French President Emmanuel Macron likely stunned and angered the U.S. by calling for Europe to reduce its dependency on the “extraterritoriality of the U.S. dollar.”

These calls for a flight from the U.S. dollar are not merely economic, they are geopolitical. They are calls to reshape the world order by challenging U.S. hegemony and advocating multipolarity. The monopoly of the dollar has not just assured U.S. wealth: it has assured U.S. power. Most international trade is conducted in dollars, and most foreign exchange reserves are held in dollars. That dollar dominance has often allowed the U.S. to dictate ideological alignment or to impose economic and political structural adjustments on other countries. It has also allowed the U.S. to become the only country in the world that can effectively sanction its opponents. Emancipation from the hegemony of the dollar is emancipation from U.S. hegemony. The flight from the U.S. dollar is a mechanism for replacing the U.S.-led unipolar world with a multipolar world.

As the U.S. has recently demonstrated in Cuba, Venezuela, Afghanistan, Iran and Russia, the monopoly of the dollar allows it to be very powerfully and quickly weaponized. Countries’ funds can be held hostage, and countries can be coerced and starved into falling in line by sanctions. Recent demonstrations of that power have awoken many countries to their own vulnerability.

U.S. Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen recently said that “There is a risk when we use financial sanctions that are linked to the role of the dollar that over time it could undermine the hegemony of the dollar.” She explained that “Of course, it does create a desire on the part of China, of Russia, of Iran to find an alternative.”

And that’s just what it’s done. But Yellen is still missing the larger effect of U.S. dollar warfare. It is not just China, Russia and Iran that are now seeking to escape the pressure. America’s enemies, but also its friends and everything in between, are considering taking flight from the dollar.

China and Russia are doing it. NATO ally France is calling for it for Europe. Nonaligned countries are also either talking about it or already doing it.

India is a growing economic power. And, like China, India has massively increased its trade with Russia. India and Russia have now begun discussions on a free trade agreement between India and the Russian-led Eurasian Economic Commission. The two countries are now engaged in “advanced negotiations” for a new bilateral investment treaty. Russia has expressed interest in using “national currencies and currencies of friendly countries” for trade. India, too, “has been keen on” moving toward leaving the dollar behind by “increasing the use of its rupee currency for trade with Russia.” And India has recently begun purchasing some Russian oil in Russian rubles.

U.S. dollar hegemony has also been threatened right in America’s backyard. Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva has proposed escaping dollar control by “creat[ing] a Latin American currency.” While in China for meetings with Xi, Lula asked, “Who decided the dollar would be the [world’s] currency?” He then answered his own question. In March, Brazil and China escaped the U.S. dollar by each assigning one of its banks to conduct their bilateral trade in the Brazilian real and the Chinese yuan.

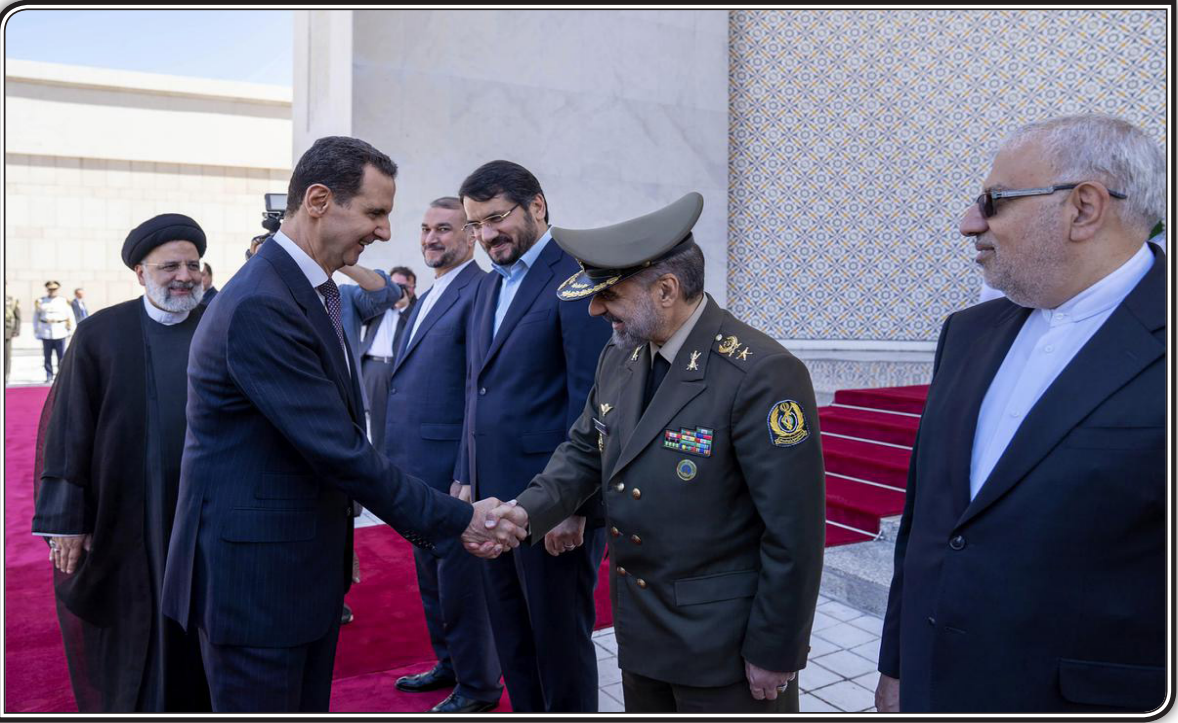
Pakistan is now also trading with China in its own currency. Iran and Russia have taken flight from the dollar and are now settling trade in rials and rubles. They recently announced that they have circumvented the U.S. financial system by linking their banking systems as an alternative to SWIFT for trading with each other. Saudi Arabia has said that it sees “no issues” in trading oil in currencies other than the U.S. dollar. Robert Rabil, professor of political science at Florida Atlantic University, says that the United Arab Emirates, Egypt and Israel have all made some movement away from the U.S. dollar.

The Eurasian Economic Union has agreed on “a phased transition” from settling trade in “foreign currency” to “settlements in rubles.”

Perhaps more surprisingly for the U.S. was the decision at the March 30-31 meeting of the finance ministers and central bank governors of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) to reduce reliance on the U.S. dollar. ASEAN is made up of Indonesia, Thailand, the Philippines,

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## Iran Offers Defense Production Lines in Syria



In this photo, Syrian President Bashar Assad shakes hands with Iran’s Defense Minister Gen. Ashtiani as President Ebrahim Raisi, left, looks on in Damascus on May 3, 2023.

TEHRAN -- Defense Minister Brigadier General Muhammad Reza Ashtiani expressed Iran’s readiness to equip the Syrian army with the most advanced defensive military weapons and equipment, he said on Monday.

Ashtiani said he made the remarks in a meeting with his Syrian counterpart, Lieutenant General Ali Mahmoud Abbas, pointing to the long-standing support of Iran’s defense ministry and armed forces for the Syrian military in the full-scale war against the Daesh

terrorist group and other terror outfits operating across the Arab country.

“This ministry, along with other economic and civil sectors, is sufficiently ready to launch, manufacture and equip the Syrian armed forces with the most advanced defensive weapons,” Iran’s defense minister said.

“The Islamic Republic of Iran is ready to cooperate with the Syrian Arab Republic in building factories and launching production lines for strategic defense products to increase

the security of the Syrian people, and in order to create multilateral defense infrastructures and boost the country’s weapons power,” he added.

Ashtiani said reliance on “indigenous and endogenous power” is one of the most important components of the country’s authority.

“Iran’s Defense Ministry with the same approach in the fields of land, sea, air, aerospace, electronics, etc. has achieved productive power and, apart from dependence and effect of sanc-

tions on the defense industry, it has managed to bring its operational role to the fore in the field of fighting terrorism and supporting oppressed nations.”

The Syrian defense minister, for his part, underlined that the security and stability of Syria has been established with the support of Iran and its true friends.

“Strengthening Syria’s defense power will make the country more prepared to fight terrorism as one of the members of the Axis of Resistance,” he said.

Appreciating the support of the Iranian defense ministry in the field of defense diplomacy, Abbas said, “The enemies will not spare any efforts to harm the brotherly and friendly relations between Syria and Iran. However, the relations between the two countries of Iran and Syria continue to be broader and deeper every day than before in order to strengthen security and stability in the region.”

Ashtiani, along with a group of Iranian defense ministry in the field of defense diplomacy, Abbas said, “The enemies will not spare any efforts to harm the brotherly and friendly relations between Syria and Iran. However, the relations between the two countries of Iran and Syria continue to be broader and deeper every day than before in order to strengthen security and stability in the region.”

Ashtiani, along with a group of Iranian ministers and high-ranking officials, accompanied Iran’s President Ebrahim Raisi in his historic visit to Syria last week, the first by an Iranian president since the foreign-sponsored militancy gripped the Arab country twelve years ago.

Iran was the first country to rush to Syria’s aid following the 2011 outbreak of the foreign-backed violence. In 2017, military advisory assistance provided by the Islamic Republic helped the Arab nation score a monumental victory over the Daesh terrorist group.

## U.S. Mass Killings on Record Pace

BROWNSVILLE, Texas — At least eight people were killed after the driver of a vehicle plowed into a crowd of migrants on Sunday outside a center that serves homeless people in this city near the border with Mexico, the authorities said.

Seven of the people who were struck “were dead on the spot” when police arrived, Martin Sandoval, an investigator with the Brownsville Police Department, said. At least 10 people were injured, one of whom was airlifted to an area hospital. One person died later, the department confirmed on Sunday night.

Judge Eddie Treviño Jr. of Cameron County said the group was outside the Ozanam Center, near a bus stop, when a Range Rover barreled into them around 8:30 a.m. local time. The driver was injured and taken to a hospital, Judge Treviño said.

The driver, who was not publicly identified and was believed to be in his 30s or 40s, was charged with reckless driving and was detained, but more charges could be added, Sandoval said.

Police were looking into reports

that he had uttered anti-immigration remarks.

All of the victims were believed to be migrants from Venezuela, many of whom had been coming to the border in anticipation of the lifting of Title 42, a Trump-era pandemic rule that allowed for the easy expulsion of migrants.

Victor Maldonado, executive director of the Ozanam Center, said the driver ran a red light before crashing into the crowd of about 20 people. “All bodies just started going everywhere, all directions,” he said.

A group of people detained the driver, who tried to flee, said Eyder Hernandez, one of those who stopped him. On the journey from Venezuela to Texas, the group of migrants became like a family, he said.

Michael Eduardo de Aponte Fonseca, who is from Caracas, Venezuela, said the driver had yelled anti-immigration insults to the group while he fled. One of the people hit by the car fell on Fonseca, he said.

The incident comes as the U.S. is

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## Indians Fleeing Ethnic Clashes Escorted Back Home

NEW DELHI8 (Reuters) -- Thousands of people who fled deadly rioting and ethnic clashes in northeast India last week are returning home, escorted by security personnel, officials said on Monday.

Fierce fighting broke out in the state of Manipur bordering Myanmar when members of about 30 tribal groups clashed with a non-tribal group, the ethnic majority Meitei, over the economic benefits and reservation status extended to some tribes.

“We are trying to ensure villagers return to their homes as leaders from opposing sides have started holding peace talks today,” Lorho S. Pfoze, a member of parliament from the state, said.

“The situation is extremely tense and victims are scared to return to their villages as they fear clashes could erupt again.”

Civilians were taken home after the completion of combing operations near the border areas, a Indian Army officer said on condition of anonymity. A dawn-to-dusk curfew will continue this week, he added.

Police in Manipur’s capital of Imphal said 62 people were killed in the fighting that had raged in the hills and some parts of the valley, but there was no violence over the weekend.

Three politicians of the state’s ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) said the death toll was around 70.

Manipur Chief Minister N. Biren Singh told a press briefing late on Monday around 230 people were injured, 35,000 displaced, and about 1,700 houses burnt by protesters.

“The situation is slowly limping back to normal ... We shall order a high level probe to enquire into the violent clashes,” he said.

Rights groups in Imphal said tension started building last month after the Manipur High Court asked the government to consider the Meitei community’s request to be given the constitutionally defined status of a scheduled tribe.

The existing recognized tribes opposed the request.

“The tribal and non-tribal groups

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