

## Russian firm to build part of Rasht-Astara railway



● SPUTNIK

### International Desk

The Russian President's Special Aide Igor Levitin announced that a Russian company will soon sign a deal to construct part of the Rasht-Astara railway — which itself will be part of the International North-South Corridor (INSTC). Refraining from disclosing the name of the company, Levitin maintained that the INSTC will be an opportunity for Russia to export its surplus products, especially foods, through Iran.

## Fresh blood ...

By facilitating economic exchanges that minimize dollar dependency, the SCO can help shield Iran from the impact of sanctions and provide a platform for diversifying its trade partnerships.

Javad Mansouri, former Iranian ambassador to China, has said that Iran has proposed the creation of a unified currency within the SCO to break the monopoly of the US dollar in global trade and counter the repercussions of banking sanctions and SWIFT measures. Iran's permanent membership in the SCO also carries significant political implications, particularly in relation to Western nations, notably the United States. With the SCO being dubbed the "NATO of the East," the organization's collaborative nature and sensitivity to regional concerns are highlighted. Iran's inclusion further enhances the capabilities of the SCO and sends a strong political message to Western nations about the growing influence of the organization and its member states.

The affirmation of Iran's accession to the SCO signifies a political stride, showcasing the member nations' willingness to deepen interactions with Iran. By participating in the SCO, Iran elevates its international stature, placing itself on a global scale. Furthermore, Iran's presence in the SCO creates an environment conducive to open dialogue and engagement, reinforcing its commitment to pursuing a multilateral approach in its foreign policy. Iran's SCO membership can serve as a stepping stone for its potential involvement in other regional and international institutions such as BRICS.

### National Desk

Iran's first vice president announced that six major water transfer projects are currently either being reviewed or implemented in the country's Energy Ministry. Mohammad Mokhber said that after the launch of these projects, water shortages and the subsequent tensions in Iran's central and eastern provinces will be resolved. Speaking in the inauguration ceremony of the third module of the wastewater treatment plant in Urmia on Tuesday, which was also attended by the Iranian Energy Minister Ali Akbar Mehrabian, the vice president pointed out that the project will also provide water-intensive industries with their required share of water from the neighboring seas. Noting that the issue of water is one of the most serious issues in the country as well as the world, Mokhber said despite being under the looming threat of water shortage, Iran has several opportunities in that regard.

"Unfortunately, our country's average annual precipitation is not good, but Iran can utilize the opportunities that the Caspian Sea to its north and the Persian Gulf to its south can bring," he said, expressing dissatisfaction with how these opportunities were missed in recent years. "The establishment of wa-

# Iran VP: Six seawater transfer projects under review



ter-intensive industries in the country's deserts and central regions in the past was a grave oversight that eventually caused a shortage of drinking water. What is more, to transport raw materials to these industries and export their products, thousands of kilometers must be transited within

the country." Drawing on the efficient water use of Iran's neighboring countries through advanced technologies as an example, the official said that as a result of proper management and the use of technologies, a balance can be struck between development and population growth.

The first vice president lauded another major project of the Energy Ministry that transfers reclaimed wastewater to Urmia Lake, maintaining that the project will reduce water waste, pollution, and damage to the environment. The project in question, which involves 36 kilometers of

tunnels and 11 kilometers of canals, will transfer 51 million cubic meters of processed wastewater to the troubled lake annually. The designed capacity of the inaugurated third module of the Urmia wastewater treatment plant is 60,000 cubic meters per day, which will cover 300,000 people.



The photo shows the launch of the third module of the wastewater treatment plant in Urmia, Iran, on July 4, 2023.

● IRNA

## Envoy: Palestinians can only reach goals by using 'force'



Israeli police inspect the scene of the car-ramming attack in Tel Aviv on July 4, 2023.

● JACK GUEZ/AFP

### International Desk

Iran's mission to the United Nations asserted that Palestinians could achieve their goals against Israel only through the use of force, as the regime con-

tinues its unabated onslaught on the occupied West Bank city of Jenin. The mission added that Tehran is ready to help Palestinians win over the regime through the use of "force," according to Press TV. "Based on Iran's assessment, Palestinians cannot regain their seized rights from the Israeli regime through negotiation, as the Israeli regime only responds to force," the mission told Newsweek. "Therefore, Iran supports any request for assistance from the Palestinian resistance," it added. The occupation forces assaulted several neighborhoods in Jenin by air and

land on Monday as the Palestinian death toll from the latest wave of Israeli aggression has topped 10 since it began in the early hours of the day. Palestine's Shehab news agency reported that the occupation forces fired gas bombs at the hospital in Jenin, which was followed by Palestinians hurling handmade explosives at Israeli military vehicles in front of the medical facility. In response to the Israeli aggression, the Jenin Brigade, which includes members of the Palestinian resistance groups in the occupied West Bank city, said it had ambushed the occupation forces and

detonated a military vehicle with explosive devices. A Hamas resistance fighter drove his car into a crowded bus stop in Tel Aviv on Tuesday and began stabbing people, wounding eight in an attack praised by Palestinian resistance groups. Israel's military assault appeared to be the largest attack in the occupied West Bank in around two decades as the regime deployed armed drones and hundreds of troops against the innocent Palestinians. Iran on Tuesday strongly condemned the Zionist regime's brutal raids on the Jenin camp in the

West Bank, voicing concern about the humanitarian consequences of the military assaults and the butchering of tens of innocent Palestinians, Tasnim news agency reported. Foreign Ministry spokesman Nasser Kanaani called for immediate action by the United Nations, the UN Security Council, and the international community and organizations to stop the Zionists' lunatic crimes. He stressed that the Palestinian nation and resistance groups have the legitimate right to self-defense against the aggressive Zionist regime.



Mohammad Ali Rajabi  
Cartoonist



## Iran formally joins ...

Based on the past decades' experience, he said, militarism and the dominance of the dollar form the bases of the Western hegemonic system. "Therefore, any attempt to shape a fair international system requires the removal of this instrument of dominance in intra-regional relations," the Iranian president said.

### Protecting regional peace

Chinese President Xi Jinping called on the SCO leaders to work to "protect regional peace and ensure

security." He said the SCO member states should "follow the right direction and enhance their solidarity and mutual trust". China would "persist in the correct direction of economic globalization, oppose protectionism, unilateral sanctions and extension of the national security concept," Xi said. Russian President Vladimir Putin, who also attended the meeting, reiterated his country's opposition to Western sanctions and said Moscow would counter "all these external sanctions

and pressures" and continue to "develop as never before". Putin also backed trade accords between SCO nations in local currencies in an attempt to blunt sanctions. The China-headquartered SCO is a diplomatic organization now with nine members, namely Russia, India, Pakistan, Iran, China and the Central Asian countries of Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan. Set up in 2001, the organization's members work to tackle joint security issues, cooperate militarily and promote internal trade.