

World:

USA, China and Russia Started International Routes Beyond Borders for Exploiting Labour Forces and are Competing for Markets

For the world sovereignty US (G7), Russia and China nations are competing with one another and initiated multi trillion world projects; US is leading PGII, China has started BRI and Russia has proposed the NSTC. With these projects they will plunder the labour force without borders. May be country economy will increase but the life of common man will not be changed with this proposal. Only capitalists will fill up their pockets with profits from the working force. By their proposed projects one can assess their sincerity on their imperialist dominance.

G7 - Partnership of global Infrastructure and Investment (PGII):

The PGII was collaborative effort of Group of Seven (G7) to fund infrastructure project in developing nations worldwide. PGII is the repackaged version of "Blue Dot Network" initiative which President Biden announced at the 47th G7 summit in the United Kingdom. The partnership plan was announced first time in June 2022 during the 48th G7 Summit in Germany. It is considered to be the bloc's counter to China's Belt and Road Initiative. To date, the United States has mobilized \$30 billion through grants, federal financing, and leveraging private sector investments towards PGII.

Blue Dot Network :

The United States, Japan, Australia, the United Kingdom and Spain launched the Blue Dot Network as a multilateral effort to promote principles of sustainable infrastructure development around the world. The United States, Australia, Japan and the United Kingdom are working with the OECD to develop a methodology and metrics for certification of infrastructure projects based on these principles. Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) and the Japanese Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) joined the United States in launching the Blue Dot Network concept. The United Kingdom joined the Blue Dot Network Steering Committee in April 2023, and Spain joined in May, 2023. The Blue Dot Network is to counter China's BRI to address the \$40 trillion worth of infrastructure needed by developing countries by 2035.

Initial Investments Included by PGII:

PGII invested in Rail, Solar, Digital, Small modular reactor, Cyber Security, Telecom, Ports and Clean Energy Supply Chains etc., with \$1902.5 million. These funds are invested in the countries of Angola, DRC, Ghana, Indonesia, Romania, Costa Rica, Ecuador, India and Brazil.

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China: Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)

The Belt and Road Initiative was first announced by Chinese President Xi Jinping as Chinese state policy at an infrastructure investment conference in Kazakhstan in September 2013. The B&R Initiative currently involves 147 countries with China funded infrastructure projects being undertaken globally except for the European Union and United States, which have their own development schemes known as B3W “Build Back Better World” and “Globally Connected Europe” although they seem to be targeted at their own infrastructure needs and not by investing internationally. It is estimated that China has funded about 2,970 Belt and Road projects globally with an estimated expenditure of about \$4 trillion.



The BRI contains the six international economic corridors such as China-Mongolia-Russia Economic Corridor, New Eurasian Land Bridge, China-Central Asia-West Asia Economic Corridor, China-Indochina Peninsula Economic Corridor, China-Pakistan Economic Corridor and Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar Economic Corridor. India has expressed its strong opposition to China’s Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and its flagship project, the so-called China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

Growth/Decline of BRI engagement in different sectors 2013-2023

Sector	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Agriculture	121 %	-5.6%	5%	23.0%	31%	-8.3%
Chemicals	51%	124%	-72%	192%	-11%	17%
Entertainment	-25%	-3%	-11%	9%	-34%	-4%
Finance	710%	173%	-71%	100%	-88%	-100%

Health	-13%	345%	-47%	-45%	-50%	362%
Logistics	114%	193%	-89%	-80%	630%	35%
Real Estate	-17%	51%	-15%	5%	-60%	28%
Technology	-58%	15%	25%	41%	-63%	-88%
Transport	-43%	7%	103%	-30%	-43%	-1%
Tourism	451%	13%	-89%	26%	-100%	-
Utilities	41%	-44%	-31%	150%	-61%	169%
Other	-21%	156%	9%	-59%	-55%	36%
Mining and Metals	-5%	1%	185%	-47%	-48%	89%

Russia : International North and South Transport Corridor (INSTC)

It was first mooted in 2000. The idea was to build a transport corridor linking Russia's Baltic Sea coast to India's western ports in the Arabian Sea via Iran. Russia, India and Iran signed preliminary agreements to develop the 7,200-km-long International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC) in 2002. Three years later, Azerbaijan signed up for the project. This agreement was eventually ratified by 13 countries – India, Russia, Iran, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bulgaria, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Oman, Tajikistan, Turkey and Ukraine.



But despite its perceived potential and the keenness shown by key powers, there was little progress on the project's implementation for years. One of the reasons for the slow movement was the western sanctions on Iran over its nuclear programme. Other countries and their private corporations were reluctant to make large investments in the Islamic Republic, fearing third party sanctions from the U.S. But Russia's February 2022 invasion of

Ukraine, after which it was sanctioned by the West, seems to have brought Moscow and Tehran closer, giving a fresh impetus to the INSTC.

In February this year, President Vladimir Putin said in his State of the Nation address that Russia was developing the INSTC, which would open up new routes for trade with India, Iran, Pakistan as well as Gulf countries. "We will develop the ports of the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov, we will particularly focus on the North-South International Corridor," Mr. Putin said. Last week, Mr. Putin and his Iranian counterpart Ebrahim Raisi virtually participated in a ceremony where both countries signed an agreement to develop the 162-km Rasht-Astara railway, a critical link in the eastern network of the INSTC.

According to the original plan, the corridor has several branches. On the western side of the Caspian Sea, it would link Russia to Iran through Azerbaijan. The eastern branch runs along the eastern coast of the Caspian Sea and links the main corridor to different road and rail networks of Central Asian countries such as Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan.

According to a report by the Federation of Freight Forwarders' Associations in India, the corridor is 30% cheaper and 40% shorter than the current traditional route. The traditional route to move goods from Russia or Europe to India is through the Suez Canal – the Baltic Sea-North Sea-Mediterranean-Arabian Sea route. Mr. Putin calls the INSTC an alternative to the Suez Canal.

The Rasht-Astara Link :

In the western branch, which is the faster route, the Rasht-Astara railway would link up Iranian railways with Azerbaijan's railways, opening a direct corridor from St. Petersburg to Bandar Abbas on the Gulf, Iran's busiest port. Hit by western sanctions, Russia and Iran are now motivated to speed up the works. According to the agreement signed last week, Russia will invest \$1.73 billion on the construction of the railway, while Iran will spend roughly \$5 billion and is looking for foreign investors. Iran and Russia claim that the Rasht-Astara link would be completed in 48 months.

For India, a country that is dependent on imports for about 80% of its energy requirements, this corridor would open fresh avenues for energy security. India has substantially increased its energy ties with Russia over the past year.

The corridor can also boost trade between India and Central Asia. India is now asking for the Chabahar, the Iranian port it is developing, to be connected to the corridor.

While it has great potential on paper, the project still faces a lot of challenges. Construction of the Rasht-Astara railway, along the Caspian Sea, has been lagging for years because of both financial and practical reasons. The link will have 22 tunnels and 15 special bridges and there is no guarantee that it will be finished as per schedule in 48 months.

The Russian rail gauge, which is used in former Soviet republics as well, is different from that of Iran. Moreover, there are geopolitical problems. Both Russia and Iran would find it difficult

to raise enough funds to finance the project as they are grappling with sanctions, while third parties remain reluctant to make investments in Iran.

And Iran's relationship with Azerbaijan remains tense. Baku has repeatedly accused Iran of interference in its internal matters, and the war between Azerbaijan and Armenia has complicated the geopolitics of the Caucasus.

However, despite the challenges, the Russians and the Iranians seem determined to go ahead as they see the corridor as a potential game changer in their plans for Eurasian economic integration.