

President Saddam Hussein receiving Soviet Deputy Prime Minister Mr Iakov P. Priapov

Iraq, Soviet Union to expand cooperation

By Tahir M. Al-Hadithi

Mr. Iakov Petrovich Riapov, the Soviet Union's Deputy Prime Minister, paid a two-day official visit to Iraq on 3 October 1984, during which he attended the inauguration of the first stage of Haditha dam project carried out by a Soviet firm.

On the evening of the same day, President Saddam Hussein received Mr Riapov. At the meeting, bilateral relations and the current situation in the Arab region were discussed.

When he met Mr. Taha Yassin Ramadhan, the First Deputy Prime Minister and Member of the Revolutionary Command Council (RCC)

the Soviet Union's Deputy Prime Minister, paid a two-day official visit to Iraq on 3 October 1984, during which he attended the inauguration of the first stage of Haditha dam project carried out by a Soviet firm.

Mr. Riapov expressed his profound satisfaction over the talks with President Saddam Hussein, describing them as fruitful, important and cordial. He also said that he was pleased to meet the President as that would contribute to developing greater cooperation prospects in the interest of the two friendly countries, Iraq and the

Soviet Union.

In their talks, Mr Ramadhan and Mr. Riapov, thoroughly reviewed aspects of relations between the two countries and means of expanding mutual cooperation were discussed.

The Soviet Deputy Prime Minister stressed that the Soviet Leadership was determined to continue cooperation with Iraq in a manner compatible with the existing strong relations between the two countries.

While stressing the im-

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portance of the Iraqi-Soviet relations, Mr. Riapov referred to Haditha dam in which a Soviet firm played a major executing part.

"The dam," he said, "is a clear evidence of the ever-growing economic cooperation between the two countries. It is a project of multi-aspect significance as it would greatly contribute to Iraq's economy in the fields of irrigation, power, industry and tourism."

Mr. Riapov pointed out that the construction of Haditha dam, despite the difficulties entailed by the war, testified to the determination of the people of Iraq and leadership to achieve progress regardless of circumstances.

In the meantime, the Soviet Deputy Prime Minister renewed the Soviet leadership's strong desire to continue contribution to the execution of development projects in Iraq. This is particularly so, he said, as Iraq has been undergoing a large-scale development, the fact that earns the Soviet Union's confidence in the prospects for Iraq's economy.

Mr. Ramadhan, in return, expressed satisfaction over growing relations between Iraq and the Soviet Union, such good relations were further augmented following Mr. Ramadhan's visit to the Soviet Union last April.

Speaking on prospects for the Iraqi economy, Mr. Ramadhan explained to the Soviet Deputy Prime Minister that Iraq's economy was strong and sound. Its prospects would be remarkable. This would particularly be so as recently Iraq signed a

contract with foreign firms to execute the first stage of an oil pipeline, with a pumping capacity of 500,000 barrels to carry Iraqi oil across Saudi Arabia to the Red Sea. The project is to be achieved within eleven months. The first stage ends by September 1985.

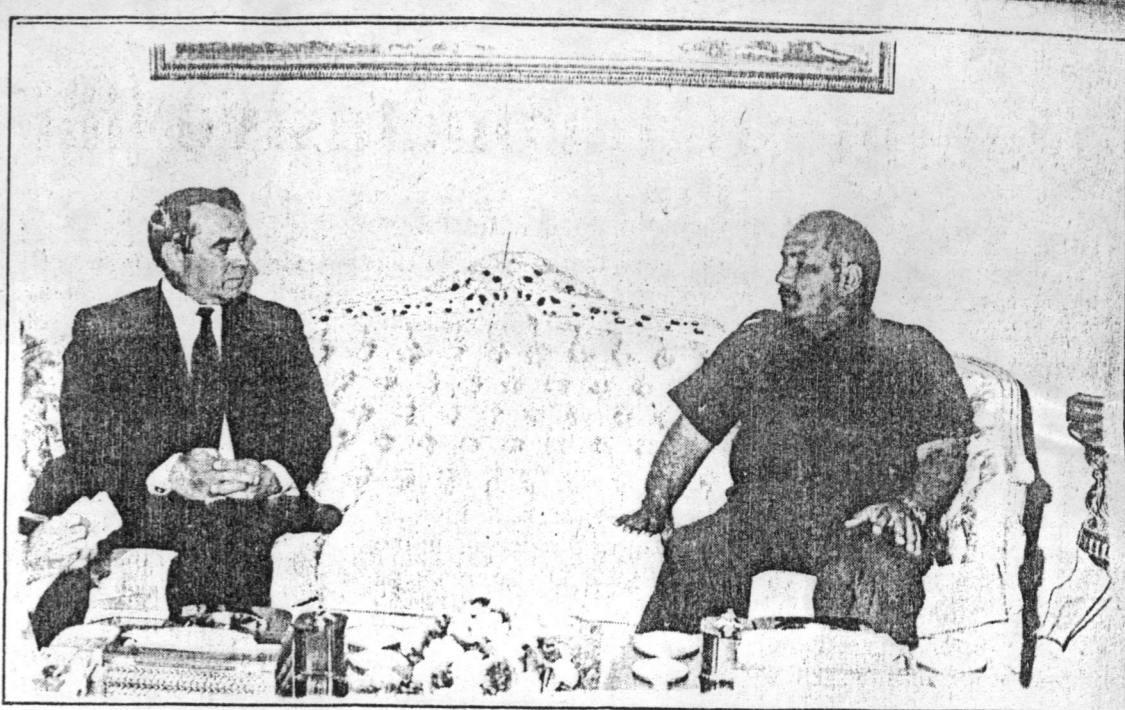
The second stage of the pipeline via Saudi Arabia will soon be given to the companies which won the project for its execution. So the case of the second pipeline is parallel to the present one across Turkey, with a capacity of 500,000 barrels daily.

When the two stages of the pipeline across Saudi Arabia are completed, it will have a pumping capacity of some 1.6 million barrels daily.

An agreement, Mr. Ramadhan continued, was concluded with Turkey to lay one new pipeline to carry Iraqi crude oil through Turkey. According to the agreement, Iraq's new pipeline across Turkey is to be executed within 18 months, as scheduled, with a pumping capacity of 600,000 barrels daily while the capacity of the present pipeline is to be increased so as to raise the total expert capacity via Turkey to 1.5 barrels daily.

Judging from these figures, it would be clear that Iraq's oil exports would exceed by far its pre-war figure.

This increase in its oil exports, Mr. Ramadhan added, will enable Iraq to go ahead with its development plans and finance projects it has planned for despite the war.



Mr. Taha Yassin Ramadhan and Mr. Iakov P. Riapov review bilateral relations

Speaking about the military situation, Mr. Ramadhan expressed satisfaction over Iraq's ever-growing military power. He said the situation at the battlefield is very good as Iraqi troops enjoy high morale and remain vigilant and ever-ready to destroy any Iranian offensive.

Iraqi people are determined not only to meet the enemy with utmost resistance but also to destroy its troops, military machine and Iranian economic installations, no matter how great the sacrifice may be and how long the war may last.

Iraq's First Deputy Prime Minister pointed out that Iraq hopes that the Iranian would favourably respond to peace initiatives and opt for peace. "We hope that the Iranians would abide by the peace resolutions of the UN Security Council or of inter-

national organisations," he said.

"We", he continued, "are a peace-loving nation which abhors war. This has been amply demonstrated by Iraq's adherence to all peace initiatives and mediation. Iraq's acceptance to peace endeavours is a solid evidence that Iraq is keen to settle the conflict peacefully and end the bloodshed, and that Iraq has no ambitions in Iran's territories. We work for peace and construction," Mr. Ramadhan emphasized.

In the meantime, Mr. Ramadhan and Mr. Riapov discussed means leading to the expansion of Iraqi-Soviet cooperations in industry, irrigation, agriculture, services and trade exchange. They also attached importance to giving the Soviet companies a greater share in so far as contribution to execution of Iraqi development

projects. A matter which is to be thoroughly discussed through the meetings of the Iraqi-Soviet Joint Committee for Economic, Scientific and Technical cooperation due to meet in Moscow.

The meetings of the committee would conclude an agreement on implementation of development projects in Iraq and means of further increasing technical and economic cooperation between Iraq and the Soviet Union.

The recent visit of the Soviet Deputy Prime Minister to Iraq is the third during the current year. These visits indicate the growing relations between the two friendly countries. They also imply that the leadership of the two countries is serious in forging greater friendly relations despite the circumstances of the mutual interest of their peoples.