# Iran Completes Rail-Laying on Chabahar-Zahedan Line, Advancing Strategic Trade Corridor

TEHRAN - **CEO of the Construction and Development of Transportation Infrastructures Company, Houshang Bazvand said that Iran has completed the rail-laying phase of the strategic Chabahar-Zahedan railway, bringing the mega-infrastructure project to 96 percent physical completion and positioning it for operation ahead of schedule.**



Bazvand said the 480-kilometer rail-laying operation was concluded approximately 40 days ago, marking a significant milestone for the government's infrastructure agenda.

"The rail-laying operation for the 480-kilometer route, which began from Khash in late 2024, was completed about 40 days ago. In my view, this represents a unique, or at least rare, record in the country's rail-laying history," Bazvand said on the sidelines of the 11th weekly monitoring session for the project.

He added that the project has now reached 96 percent physical progress. Based on the schedule mandated by the Minister of Roads and Urban Development, the railway is slated for completion by the end of the Persian month of Dey (late December/early January).

However, Bazvand noted that given the current pace of work, the line could be ready for operation even earlier.

The Chabahar-Zahedan railway is a critical missing link in Iran's national transportation network.

Spanning approximately 630 kilometers in total, the line connects the deep-water, oceanic port of Chabahar on the Gulf of Oman to the national rail grid at Zahedan.

The project is a cornerstone of the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC), a multi-modal route designed to connect India, Iran, Azerbaijan, Russia, and Central Asia.

By providing a direct overland route, the corridor significantly reduces transit time and costs for cargo moving between South Asia and Eurasia, offering a viable alternative to traditional maritime routes.

Historically, the Chabahar-Zahedan railway faced delays due to funding constraints and the impact of international sanctions on infrastructure development.

However, in recent years, the Iranian government has prioritized the project as a matter of national economic security.

## *Turkey, Iran Agree to Expand Truck Traffic, Boost Trade*

TEHRAN – **Iran's Deputy Interior Minister announced new agreements with Turkey to increase truck traffic and facilitate bilateral trade, as Tehran seeks to strengthen land-based trade routes with neighboring countries and maintain the flow of goods amid U.S. efforts to restrict its commercial access.**

Ali Akbar Pourjamshidian said on Friday that Iran and Turkey had agreed on joint measures to increase cross-border truck movements, speed up the exchange of goods and expand trade and border cooperation.

The agreements come as the United States continues its economic and maritime pressure campaign against Iran, seeking to restrict the country's trade routes.

U.S. President Donald Trump had previously claimed that a naval blockade and a plan dubbed "Iron Gate" had blocked the entry and exit of goods to and from Iran. The measures are part of Washington's broader economic pressure campaign against Tehran.

Iran, meanwhile, has emphasized expanding economic cooperation with neighboring countries and using land routes and border crossings to maintain trade flows.

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi had also stressed Tehran's efforts to secure the country's needs through neighboring states, saying that a blockade of Iran was not feasible and that the country had multiple ways to keep trade moving.

The latest agreement with Turkey is part of these efforts, aimed at strengthening regional trade and transit cooperation and maintaining land-based supply routes for Iran.



## Top Bnaker Says Iran Has Sufficient Foreign Currency, Ready to Intervene in Market



*Iran's Central Bank Governor Abdolnaser Hemmati*

TEHARN – **Iran's Central Bank Governor Abdolnaser Hemmati has announced that the country has sufficient foreign currency cash reserves and is prepared to intervene effectively in the exchange market, adding that more than $32 billion has so far been allocated for official imports.**

In a statement addressed to the Iranian public on Friday, Hemmati acknowledged the economic pressures, rising prices and market instability, stressing that neither economic explanations nor political considerations diminish the responsibility of officials to protect people's livelihoods and purchasing power.

He said the United States and the Zionist regime are seeking to turn economic pressure into social instability and public disillusionment. According to Hemmati, fueling volatility in the foreign exchange market and increasing inflationary expectations are among the measures aimed at creating the impression that Iran's economy can no longer withstand external pressure or manage its affairs.

Acknowledging the country's actual foreign currency constraints, Hemmati stressed that these limitations do not mean Iran has reached a dead end in securing the resources it needs.

He said the Central Bank had anticipated the challenges and established various channels for securing and transferring foreign currency, enabling it to provide more than $32 billion for official imports so far. The process, he added, would continue.

Hemmati also confirmed that the country has sufficient foreign currency cash reserves and that the Central Bank is ready to intervene effectively in the market.

He noted that the timing, scale and methods of any intervention would be determined based on the country's economic interests. The Central Bank, he said, would not remain passive in the face of market disruptions, while also avoiding the indiscriminate use of foreign currency reserves.

In another part of his statement, Hemmati said sustainable inflation control requires fiscal discipline, controlling liquidity growth, addressing imbalances in the energy and banking sectors, and coordinating monetary, fiscal and trade policies.

He acknowledged that sanctions, restricted access to financial resources, higher trade costs and pressure on government revenues affect the foreign exchange market and overall price levels. However, he stressed that attributing all economic problems to sanctions cannot replace the need to reform domestic policies.

## Minister: Over 180,000 Tonnes of Fishery Products Exported Despite Sanctions

TEHRAN – **Iran's Agriculture Minister Gholamreza Nouri said on Friday that the country has exported 180,000 tonnes of fishery products over the past six months, while attracting more than 40 trillion tomans in investment in the sector.**



The figures were recorded despite international sanctions and regional security and trade restrictions.

The minister added that the sector had attracted more than 40 trillion tomans in investment during the same period, with the bulk of the funding coming from the private sector.

Nouri said areas with strong potential for fisheries development had been identified along Iran's northern and southern coastlines.

He added that the government was working to provide the necessary infrastructure and banking facilities to encourage investment and expand fisheries and aquaculture activities in these regions.

The minister also highlighted progress in domestic production of rainbow trout eggs, saying Iran had made significant advances in this area and was moving toward full self-sufficiency.

He said support for knowledge-based companies, universities and research institutions would continue to promote technological development in the fisheries industry.

Nouri also identified securing energy supplies for the agricultural and fishing sectors as a priority for the Ministry of Agriculture, stressing that their direct link to national food security makes reliable energy supplies essential, even amid efforts to manage consumption.

He added that the ministry was following up on problems related to fishermen's fuel quotas and working to resolve the issue as soon as possible.

## Iran's $60bn Stake in BRICS' $1.2 Trillion Trade Signals Defeat of U.S. Economic Terrorism

TEHRAN (PressTV) - **Russia's Deputy Foreign Minister Sergey Ryabkov announced on November 20 that trade between BRICS member countries had reached $1.2 trillion, highlighting the growing economic weight of a grouping increasingly challenging Western dominance over international economic and financial arrangements.**

Speaking at the International BRICS Young Women's Forum in St Petersburg, Ryabkov said members will continue working towards conducting their trade without measuring transactions in US dollars.

The announcement carries particular significance for Iran, which is facing US-Israeli military and economic terrorism while expanding commercial relationships, transportation infrastructure and financial connections with major non-Western economies.

For Tehran, the expansion of BRICS trade comes as Washington continues weaponizing the dollar and international banking infrastructure, while Iran's economic relationships with China, Russia, India and neighboring countries continue developing.

Russian President Vladimir Putin had already announced the $1.2 trillion intra-BRICS trade figure during the September 2026 BRICS summit in New Delhi, indicating the scale of commercial exchanges within the grouping.

A March 2026 UN Trade and Development report documented $1.17 trillion in intra-BRICS merchandise exports during 2024, representing more than thirteenfold growth since 2003.

For Iran, the significance lies in the growing commercial network connecting major energy producers, industrial economies, agricultural exporters and manufacturing centers outside the Western economic sphere.

Washington's weaponization of the dollar has encouraged countries facing American sanctions to expand national-currency settlements, develop alternative payment arrangements and reduce their reliance on Western-controlled financial channels.

In September 2026, India proposed linking BRICS central bank digital currencies to facilitate cross-border transactions. The September New Delhi Declaration advanced BRICS cooperation on cross-border payments and local-currency settlements.

India's proposal to connect BRICS central bank digital currencies opened another avenue for reducing dependence on dollar-centered financial transactions.

Additional payment arrangements could facilitate trade with participating economies without requiring every transaction to pass through conventional dollar-based correspondent banking.

Iranian deputy head of the Trade Promotion Organization Muhammad Sadegh Gannadzadeh reported on September 17 that annual trade between Iran and BRICS members had reached approximately $60 billion.

Iran exported $23 billion in goods and imported $37 billion, according to the official, establishing the scale and composition of its existing commercial relationship with the grouping.

The figures show that Iran already maintains substantial economic exchanges with BRICS members despite U.S.-Israeli economic terrorism and Washington's campaign to restrict Iranian access to international markets.

Gannadzadeh specifically identified trade, freight transportation, investment, customs cooperation and local-currency payments as areas in which Iran could expand its existing relationships with member countries.

The figures demonstrate Iran's importance as a commercial partner within BRICS, particularly for countries seeking energy supplies, petrochemicals, agricultural products and access to regional transportation markets.

Iran's railway infrastructure is increasingly carrying international freight connecting Chinese suppliers, Central Asian markets and Russian commercial interests with destinations across West Asia.

A June 25, 2026 report by Kazakhstan's Kursiv documented that Chinese cargo transported through Kazakhstan towards Iran increased from 5,200 tonnes in 2024 to 2.1 million tonnes in 2025.

The report identified Iran as the destination for approximately 11 percent of Chinese transit cargo crossing Kazakhstan, making the southern route an increasingly important component of regional freight transportation.

More recent reporting published by Deutsche Welle in October 2026 indicated that Chinese freight trains travelling from Xi'an to Tehran had increased from approximately weekly departures to one every three or four days.

The same report placed Iran's railway network at approximately 15,000 kilometers, with 44 million tonnes of freight transported during the Iranian financial year ending March 2026.

Iranian railway authorities are targeting 54 million tonnes of freight during the current financial year, reflecting the increased importance of railway transportation in the country's commercial activity.

The expansion gives Iran additional capacity to receive Chinese industrial goods and distribute cargo towards neighboring countries, while providing Central Asian economies with connections to southern transportation routes.

The International North-South Transport Corridor connects Russia with Iranian ports on the Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean, providing a direct transportation framework between Eurasian markets and southern maritime routes.

Iran's railway connections through Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan provide Russia with another route towards the Persian Gulf, while Iranian businesses gain access to additional suppliers and regional markets.

Iran is gearing up for the imminent completion of the 730-kilometre Chabahar-Zahedan railway, connecting its only deep-sea ocean port with the national railway network and northern transportation routes.

The connection extends the possibilities of transporting cargo from Chabahar towards Mashhad and subsequently through Turkmenistan into Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, linking southern Iran with Central Asian markets.

Iran's Khaf-Herat railway connection with Afghanistan also carried more than 640,000 tonnes of freight during the 2025–26 financial year, according to a November 2026 regional infrastructure assessment.

Afghanistan's plans to extend its railway network towards Mazar-i-Sharif will provide another connection through which Iranian companies can access Central Asian markets and onward Eurasian transportation networks.

India's relationship with Chabahar remains important because the port provides access to Afghanistan and Central Asia.

The Chabahar-Zahedan railway completion in November now provides the port with a direct connection to Iran's national railway network, strengthening its integration with northern transportation corridors.

For India, these connections offer an additional route into Eurasia; for Iran, they bring together port infrastructure, railway transportation, transit services and commercial relationships with another major BRICS economy.

The $60 billion trade relationship, expanding Chinese freight movements, growing railway capacity and completion of the Chabahar-Zahedan connection show how Iran's commercial geography is changing.

BRICS' expanding trade relationships and developing settlement arrangements are changing the commercial options available to participating economies.

Iran's position within this changing economic geography is increasingly visible through actual freight movements, port investments, cross-border railway connections and established trade relationships.