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Oman launches new shipping routes to Iran

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Economy



TEHRAN – The Omani minister of commerce and industry, Ali bin Masud Al Sunaidy, and the governor general of Iran's Hormozgan province, Jasem Jaderi, on Sunday officially inaugurated new direct shipping routes from two Omani ports to the Iranian port of Shahid Bahonar.

Al Sunaidy said that the launching of the marine route (Khasab-Bandar Abbas) aims to transport goods between the two countries in two hours. He added that goods may be then transported to Shinas, Diba and then to Muscat, Times of Oman reported on Sunday.

'Access to regional markets'

On the sidelines of the inaugural ceremony, Mojtaba Khosrotaj, the head of Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO), told reporters and journalists that Iran sees Oman a gateway to access to other regional countries and also Oman considers Iran, specially Hormozgan province, an entrance to Pakistan, Afghanistan and the Central Asian countries.

So, a major part of such cooperation between the two countries is to lay the ground for the development of the North-South Transit Corridor, the official noted, adding that there is no doubt that both countries want to take advantage of this strategic status.

Elsewhere in his remarks, the head of TPO said that launching of this line brings local and regional advantages for the people, in a way that when people go to the other country and see the advantages of that country, it can positively affect the promotion of bilateral ties.

'Promotion of exports to Oman'

In a meeting with some trade officials of Hormozgan province, which was held in the governorate building of the province on Sunday morning, Khosrotaj said that Iran's exports to Oman is low and it should be promoted considering the country's potentials.

For example, Oman has imported \$141 million of wheat and \$29 million of barley in 2015, while Iran's exports of the cereals to the Sultanate have been just \$4.5 million and \$6.3 million, respectively, he mentioned.

It comes also true about the other Iranian exported goods, as Oman imported \$77 million of tiles and ceramics in the last year, while Iran's share of the Omni market has been below \$1 million, the official added.

'Economic ties beyond trade, transit'

Economic ties between Iran and Oman is not just limited to the trade and transit cooperation, Mohammad Mohseni, the head of Shahid Bahonar Port Department, told the journalists on the sidelines of the inaugural ceremony.

For the time being, Iranian companies are participating in the tenders for implementation of different construction and development projects in Oman, the official added.

Among the other Persian Gulf states, Oman has always tried to preserve its friendly approach toward Iran and today Iran has a closer and more sincere cooperation with the Sultanate among the other Arab countries, he stressed.

Iran-Oman trade has witnessed noticeable growth over the past three years, according to Mohsen Zarrabi, the chairman of Iran-Oman Joint chamber of Commerce.

Zarrabi made the remarks on the sidelines of Oman's exclusive exhibition of businesses which opened at the Tehran Permanent International Fairgrounds on Monday and will run until Friday with the participation of 64 Omani companies active in the fields of handicrafts, petrochemicals, plastic, medical equipment, electricity and electronics, agriculture, furniture and cosmetics.

For the time being, the Omani companies are serious in developing industrial, trade and investment ties with the Iranian companies.

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