
NAKHCHIVAN'S KEY ROLE IN AZERBAIJAN-IRAN ECONOMIC TIES

-

27.12.2016

27 December 2016

By Farhad Daneshvar – Trend

Iranian and Azerbaijani media over the past several years have continuously reported on efforts made by officials from both countries aimed at expansion of trade ties.

However, the mainstream media reports seem to have missed a key factor in the recent discussions between the two countries which is highly capable of playing a crucial role in broadening of economic ties, i.e. Nakhchivan.

The Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic, a landlocked exclave of Azerbaijan with an estimated population of 430,000 people, appears to take priority in ties between Iran and Azerbaijan.

Mahmoud Vaezi, Iranian minister of ICT, is slated to pay a one-day visit to the Autonomous Republic of Nakhchivan on the last day of his ongoing three-day visit to Azerbaijan to explore ways for expansion of economic ties between the two countries.

Vaezi, who is the co-chairman of Azerbaijan-Iran state commission on economic, trade and humanitarian spheres, is scheduled to attend a ceremony in Azerbaijan's Nakhchivan for inauguration of the railroad connecting the autonomous republic to Iranian northeastern city of Mashhad, signaling a breakthrough in cooperation between the two countries.

But transportation is not the sole area of cooperation between the two countries concerning

Nakhchivan.

Iran's Consul General to Nakhchivan Mansour Airom told Trend the new railroad will contribute to cooperation in tourism sphere.

According to the envoy, the train, which is scheduled to run two times a week, will go through several Iranian cities such as Tabriz and capital city of Tehran, giving a chance for passengers to explore various parts of Iran during their journey.

Airom further added that Iranian pharmaceutical companies over the past one year have launched cooperation with Azerbaijani counterparts in Nakhchivan and companies such as Dana supply their products to the autonomous republic.

Saying that Iran currently exports over 150 types of various medications to Nakhchivan, he added the Islamic Republic is capable of supplying about 500 types of drugs.

According to the Iranian official, there are proper chances for cooperation with Nakhchivan in medical sphere.

Elaborating on plans for further expansion of ties with Nakhchivan, Airom said that the sides are expected to ink several documents on cooperation in various spheres during the Iranian ministers upcoming visit.

The Iranian envoy added that traders from both countries will join a session on Dec. 29 to discuss ways for investment and cooperation in a number of sectors, including food industry, during the ministers visit to Nakhchivan.

He stated that joint production takes high priority on agenda for expansion of trade ties.

Trade turnover between the two countries soared by 70 percent over the first seven months of the current year.

According to Azerbaijani officials, Iranian companies have already invested \$2.6 billion in Azerbaijan's economy. About \$145 million of the total amount has gone to the non-oil sector. This is while some 450 companies with Iranian share operate in Azerbaijan.

Trade turnover between Azerbaijan and Iran amounted to \$137.65 million in January-September 2016, \$34.91 million of which accounted for the export of Azerbaijani goods to Iran, according to the State Customs Committee of Azerbaijan.

Airom concluded by calling for an all-out effort aimed at expansion of trade ties with Nakhchivan, saying Iranian provinces located along border with Azerbaijan enjoy considerable trade capabilities which would help deepen the ties.A

Kaynak/Source: