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Each week, significant economic activities and developments occur across various sectors in Afghanistan. The Afghanistan's Economic Development Newsletter covers these important and latest economic activities and advancements.

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PHASE ONE OF THE FOURTH SECTION OF THE HERAT-KHAWAF RAILWAY COMPLETED AND PUT INTO OPERATION



Construction work on Phase One of the Fourth Section of the Herat-Khawaf Railway has been completed, and the project has been put into operation. The completion of this section is considered an important development in expanding Afghanistan's trade and transport infrastructure, increasing the railway's capacity for transporting the country's imported and exported goods, and strengthening Afghanistan's trade connectivity with regional markets.

Officials of the Afghanistan Railway Authority say that the expansion of the Herat-Khawaf Railway will provide opportunities for the rapid, organized, and cost-effective transportation of goods. Transporting larger volumes of goods by rail, compared with

freight trucks, can reduce transportation costs, increase the capacity for moving commercial goods, and provide greater transportation facilities for traders.

According to information from the Afghanistan Railway Authority, the project was constructed in cooperation with a Kazakh company, and the Authority plans to begin construction of the Herat-Torghundi, Herat-Mazar-e-Sharif, and Herat-Spin Boldak railways in the near future. The development of these routes will connect Afghanistan by rail with Iran, Central Asia, and other countries.

Meanwhile, the Deputy Minister of Trade of Kazakhstan said that the development of railway and transport infrastructure in Afghanistan is important for

expanding trade relations with the countries of Central Asia. He added that Kazakhstan is making efforts to expand trade and economic relations, and that strengthening Afghanistan's transport infrastructure can create opportunities for increasing trade between the two countries.

The Deputy Consul of Iran in Herat says that following the activation of the Herat-Khawaf Railway, the volume of trade between Iran and Afghanistan has increased, and thousands of tons of goods are currently transported to Afghanistan through this route every month. The transportation of goods by rail is less costly than some other modes of transportation, and expanding this route can reduce the costs of imports and exports and accelerate the process of commercial activities.

Construction work is also underway on the second phase of the Fourth Section of the Herat-Khawaf Railway, which will extend for 47 kilometers. Completion of this phase will further increase the railway's transportation capacity and create greater capacity for the movement of commercial goods and regional transit through western Afghanistan.

TRADE AGREEMENTS WORTH \$20 MILLION SIGNED BETWEEN AFGHAN AND KAZAKH TRADERS

Trade agreements worth \$20 million were signed between Afghan and Kazakh traders during a trade meeting held in Herat Province. These agreements represent an important commercial step toward expanding trade relations between the two countries and improving access to Central Asian markets for Afghanistan's agricultural and manufactured products. According to local officials in Herat, the agreements were signed in the presence of Herat Governor Sheikh Mawlawi Islam Jar, Kazakhstan's Special Representative for Afghanistan Yerkin Tukomov, and a number of traders from both countries. During the trade meeting, Kazakhstan was described as one of Afghanistan's important

trading partners, and it was emphasized that, under the signed agreements, a number of agricultural and manufactured products from Herat Province will be exported to Central Asian countries. The implementation of these agreements can create new markets for Afghanistan's domestic products and increase the country's exports. Agricultural products from Herat, particularly dried and fresh fruits, saffron, and other locally produced goods, have significant potential for greater access to regional markets. At the same time, the expansion of trade relations can create broader opportunities for joint commercial activities, investment, and the exchange of goods between the private

sectors of Afghanistan and Kazakhstan.

The expansion of Afghanistan's trade relations with Kazakhstan is highly important for improving access to Central Asian markets for Afghan products. Trade meetings between business communities of the two countries and the signing of specific commercial agreements provide practical opportunities for strengthening private-sector relations and increasing exports.

The implementation of these agreements, valued at \$20 million, will contribute to creating market access, export, and income-generating opportunities for Afghanistan's productive and agricultural sectors, while further strengthening the country's trade connectivity with Central Asia.

