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## Japan pledges investment to increase Afghanistan's access to Chabahar port

January 9, 2017

Japan has pledged investment to support Afghanistan have proper access to Chabahar port in a bid to help the Afghan traders export their commodities using the port.

The commitment was made by Japan's State Minister for Foreign Affairs Kentaro Sonora during a meeting with Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah.

He also pledged a fresh aid of Yen 19 million to Afghanistan to support the government in its fight against corruption and help the refugees returning to Afghanistan.

The leaders of Afghanistan, India and Iran signed the Chabahr port agreement in Tehran, the capital city of Iran late in the month of May last year.

Afghanistan is expected to have sea-land access through the strategic Chabahar port in Iran by the end of this year as the work on the port already begun by a joint venture of Kandla Port Trust (KPT) and Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust (JNPT) last year.

Access to Afghanistan's Garland Highway can be made from Chabahar port using the existing Iranian road network and the Zaranj-Delaram road, constructed by India in 2009.

The port will be also used to ship crude oil and urea, saving India transportation costs. It will also cut transport costs and freight time for India to Central Asia and the Gulf by about a third.