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Iran, Azerbaijan moving towards strategic ties: Rouhani

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Iranian President Hassan Rouhani says Iran and Azerbaijan are taking steps to bolster strategic relations in all fields.

“The Islamic Republic of Iran welcomes the expansion and reinforcement of cooperation with the Azerbaijan Republic in all sectors,” Rouhani said in a telephone conversation with Azeri President Ilham Aliyev on Saturday.

He added that the immediate implementation of the agreements reached between the two countries during the recent visit of the Azeri president to Tehran can help deepen bilateral and regional cooperation.

Rouhani expressed hope that the agreements would also prepare the ground for joint cooperation of Iran, Azerbaijan and Russia, particularly in the fields of transit, energy and trade.

On February 23, Iran and Azerbaijan signed 11 agreements and memoranda of understanding to improve and speed up cooperation in different fields.

The deals were signed by senior officials of Iran and Azerbaijan in the presence of the Iranian and Azeri presidents in Tehran.

Under the agreements, Tehran and Baku will strengthen cooperation in various sectors, including customs, animal husbandry, railway transportation, electricity, health and medical sciences, as well as oil and gas.

New chapter in Tehran-Baku relations: Aliyev

Aliyev said the implementation of the agreements between the two neighbors would open a new chapter in Tehran-Baku relations.

He added that the construction of a railway connecting Iran, Russia and Azerbaijan in line with the development of the key North-South transport corridor should be finalized as soon as possible.

Iran and Azerbaijan have been working on North-South transport corridor, which is expected to connect Northern Europe to Southeast Asia through their territories.

According to preliminary estimates, the overall capacity of the rail link will be 1.4 million passengers and 5-7 million metric tons of cargo a year