**India, Iran sign Chabahar port operation pact**

Eight years after concluding the general framework of cooperation on the Chabahar port, India and Iran on Monday signed a 10-year contract for its operation.

The long-term agreement was signed between Indian Ports Global Ltd. (IPGL) and Port and Maritime Organisation (PMO) of Iran, enabling operation of the Shahid-Behesti terminal. Subsequently, IPGL will invest approximately $120 million in equipping the port. India has also offered a credit window equivalent to $250 million for mutually identified projects aimed at improving Chabahar-related infrastructure, officials said.

The agreement was signed in the presence of Ports, Shipping, and Waterways Minister Sarbananda Sonowal and Mehrdad Bazrpash, Minister of Roads and Urban Development of Iran.

A memorandum of understanding for the development of the Chabahar port by India was signed in May 2015. The contract was executed on May 23, 2016 during the visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Iran.

Terming it a historic day for the maritime sector, Mr. Sonowal said the agreement heralded a new age of trade, marine cooperation, and transshipment while boosting trilateral trade between India, Iran, and Afghanistan.

“As India continues to invest in Chabahar port, its efficiency and capacity will be further enhanced, solidifying India’s commitment to the region’s economic development. India will use the port for humanitarian aid shipments, reaffirming its commitment to support regional development beyond commercial interests,” Mr. Sonowal said.

He underscored Chabahar’s significance, stating that it served as a vital trade artery connecting India with Afghanistan and Central Asian Countries.

Chabahar is a deep water port located in the Sistan-Baluchistan province of Iran.