

**ISLAMABAD** ♦ The planned Islamabad-Tehran-Istanbul trade corridor will help Pakistan export its trade goods to Turkey without any hindrance. ♦

The trade corridor, which is also known as ECO trade corridor, will later be expanded to the European countries. The decision to establish the trade corridor was taken in the Fifth Meeting of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) Transit Transport Coordination Council (TTCC), held in Islamabad last year, said a source in the Ministry of Communications Tuesday. ♦ He said the ECO provided a unique opportunity of trade development as its member states ♦ borders were stretched from Europe to South Asia and from the shores of Arabian Sea to the Russian frontiers. ♦

Pakistan, he said, had extended transit trade facilities to landlocked member states of ECO states through its warm water seaports but the benefits of that facility could not be optimized without an efficient road and rail network. ♦ The source said for that reason Pakistan had conceived the National Trade Corridor (NTC) and responsibility of its early construction had been given to the Ministry of Communications. ♦

He said the NTC would undoubtedly provide an efficient and economical road network for inter-regional connectivity, particularly an effective access to Pakistan ♦s seaports to ECO member states. ♦

The establishment of road corridor will help implement the Transit Transport Framework Agreement (FA) signed by the ECO a decade ago to facilitate trade and transport among its 10 members, he added. ♦

Courtesy: The Nation