

Etihad Rail completes tracklaying works for the UAE main line

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Etihad Rail, the developer and operator of the UAE National Rail Network has completed the tracklaying works of the main line in Sharjah and Ras Al Khaimah, as part of the last package of Stage Two of the project.

The main line of the network extends from Ghuwefat on the border of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and passes through the emirates of Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah and Ras Al Khaimah.

The line in Sharjah extends over 45 kilometres and is part of the last package of the project, which totals 145 kilometres in length. Connecting the Emirate to the main line recorded more than 11.7 million work hours in 25 months, with around 2,900 workers and engineers taking part in the project. The line in Ras Al Khaimah, which extends over 5.7 kilometres and connects the Emirate to the main line, recorded more than 1.3 million hours in 25 months, by around 350 workers and engineers.

The project has had its challenges – the line passes through 6.9 kilometres of the Al Hajar Mountains, meaning engineers had to develop nine tunnels, 54 bridges and 20 animal crossings. A 1.8 kilometre heavy cargo tunnel also added to the complexity.

These challenges were given a royal seal of approval though, with a visit in May by His Highness Sheikh Theyab bin Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Chairman of the Abu Dhabi Crown Prince's Court and Chairman of Etihad Rail, who attended the site to inspect the latest developments.

Tracklaying continues in the emirate of Fujairah within the upcoming weeks, bringing it closer towards the completion of the UAE National Rail Network as per the set schedule. These works seek to connect the Emirates via rail, and help deliver the biggest sustainable transport system in the UAE

This comes in line with the goals of the National Railways Programme, the biggest integrated sustainable transport system in the UAE, which seeks to connect the Emirates via rail and accelerate the country's sustainable economic development.

Engineer Khuloud Al Mazrouei, deputy project manager at Etihad Rail, said: "Today, we have made remarkable strides by completing the main works for the UAE National Rail Network and connecting it to the main lines in Sharjah and Ras Al Khaimah, bringing us closer than ever to completing the network on schedule and achieving our objective of providing an efficient and sustainable transport network that links the country's emirates, and connects the UAE with the region. This plays a key role in opening up new prospects in the logistics and transport industry, driving social development, and providing promising economic opportunities in the UAE and the region across a range of sectors."

"We would like to extend our sincere appreciation to the local government entities in the Emirates of Sharjah and Ras Al Khaimah for their momentous support in making this project a reality. We are also proud to witness this step further drive the success of Etihad Rail in developing the strategic national project, particularly after the consecutive achievements that we have made, most recently connecting the railway freight station in the Industrial City of Abu Dhabi (ICAD) with the main line of Etihad Rail. We are moving on track towards perpetuating our success story, with the support of our exceptional national and global talents who are contributing to enhancing the UAE's infrastructure sector."

Image credit: Etihad Rail