

# The History Of The Development Of Transport Networks In Surkhandaryo Region During The Years Of Independence

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**Abstract:** This article analyzes the formation and development of transport networks in Surkhandaryo region following the independence of the Republic of Uzbekistan. The study highlights the modernization of the region's transport infrastructure, as well as reforms and major projects in road, railway, and air transport sectors. Furthermore, the article scientifically demonstrates the role of the transport system in economic and social development, the opening of new routes, and the expansion of international connections. The research is based on archival sources, government decrees, and local statistical data.

**Keywords:** Surkhandaryo region, transport networks, years of independence, infrastructure, roads, railways, air transport, modernization, economic development.

**Introduction:** The transport sector is one of the key sectors of Uzbekistan. In today's era of global integration, the infrastructure of this sector has become the foundation not only for our country's domestic connections but also for its international relations.

Transport refers to a set of means and systems designed for moving people, goods, or services from one place to another. It plays a significant role in economic development, social life, and everyday activities.

The main types of transport are as follows:

Road transport – the most widespread type globally, moving vehicles along roads (passenger cars, trucks, buses).

Rail transport – transports large volumes of goods and passengers over long distances using trains.

Air transport – allows fast movement using airplanes, especially over long distances.

River and sea transport – used for transporting heavy cargo via waterways.

Metro (subway) – functions as public transport in large cities.

Bicycle and pedestrian transport – environmentally friendly modes of transport for short distances.

During the years of independence, special attention has been given to developing all types of transport in the country. The transport sector has played a crucial role in connecting regions and developing internal infrastructure. Modern stations serving passengers and freight were built and put into operation in regional centers and major cities.

Like all other regions, in the administrative center of Surkhandaryo region, the city of Termiz, a modern station equipped with all conveniences was built and inaugurated in 2002 on the eve of the city's 2,500th anniversary. Over the years, it has been renovated, and the railways have been modernized according to international standards.

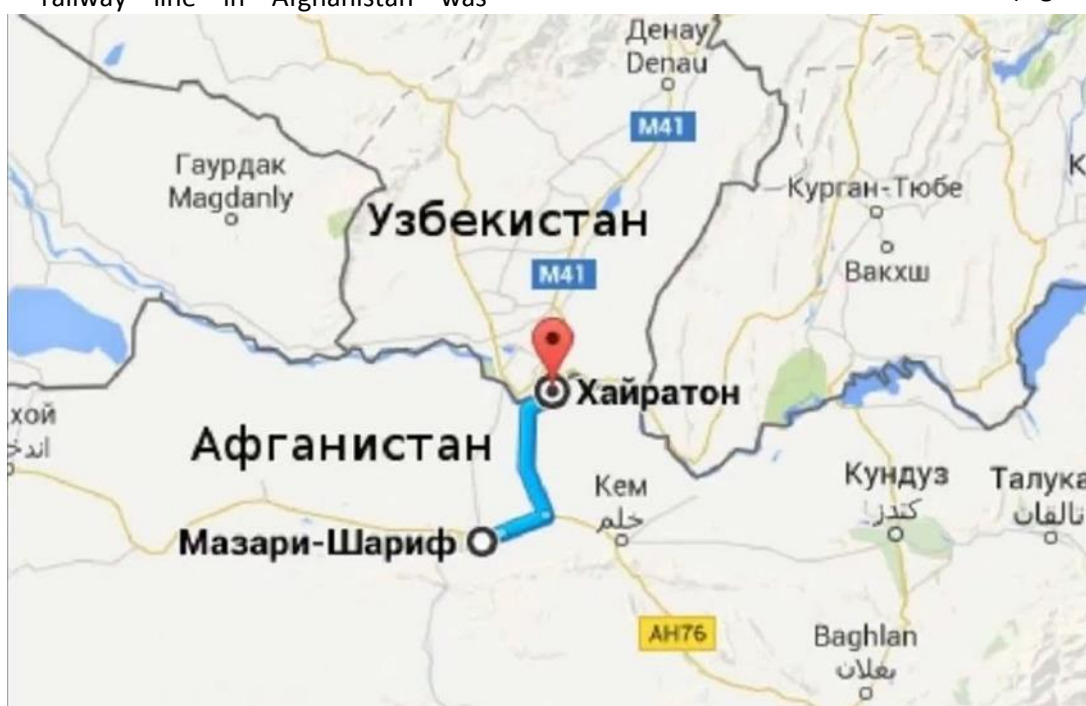


**Figure 1. Termiz Railway Station.**

(Source: [https://w512.ru/help\\_zd\\_uz/termez-vokzal\\_spravka.html](https://w512.ru/help_zd_uz/termez-vokzal_spravka.html) ).

In particular, with the aim of gaining access to affordable and convenient maritime routes, construction of a railway with the neighboring country of Afghanistan was carried out. As a result, in November 2010, the construction of the “Hairaton-Mazar-i-Sharif” railway line in Afghanistan was

completed. Within the framework of this project, a new railway line was built, including the Hairaton railway station, passing loops at the Naibabad station, and a new railway freight yard, all of which were put into operation. The total length of the railway is 106 km, of which 75 km constitutes the main tracks (Figure 2).



**Figure 2. Khairaton–Mazar-i-Sharif Railway Main Line**

(Source: <https://boshtrans.uz/uz/nashi-proektyi/osnovnyie-obektyi-insituta/proektirovanie,-stroitelstvo,-ustanovka-i-vvod-v-ekspluatatsiyu-novoj-zheleznodorozhnoj-linii-xajraton-mazari-sharif> ).

During the years of independence, the modernization of railway lines located in various regions of Uzbekistan continued on a modern basis. Since 1998, the Republic

of Uzbekistan has been cooperating with the Asian Development Bank through “Uzbekistan Railways.” As a result of this cooperation, the project “Electrification of the Pop-Namangan-Andijan railway section” has

been implemented. Additionally, since 2010, Uzbekistan has been cooperating with the Export-Import Bank of China within the framework of the “Procurement of Electric Locomotives” project. Currently, in collaboration with the Export-Import Bank of China, projects such as “Construction of the above-ground circular metro line in Tashkent city” and “Modernization of Shargun Coal Joint Stock Company” are being carried out.

Moreover, to rapidly develop the country’s railway transport, projects are being implemented in cooperation with the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (World Bank). Within this cooperation, the project “Construction of the electrified Angren-Pop railway and electrification of the Pop-Kokand-Andijan railway section” is being carried out.

The modernization of railways in Uzbekistan has continued, and from 2015 to 2021, large-scale work was carried out to develop the sector. Many railway lines connecting cities were electrified, and passenger train services were organized. Specifically: in 2015, the electrification of the Samarkand-Qarshi line; in 2016, the Samarkand-Bukhara line was electrified, and high-speed passenger train services were launched.

In 2017, the 325 km Qarshi-Termiz line was electrified and put into operation.

In 2018, new railway lines of 357.3 km (Bukhara-Miskin) and 33.8 km (Urgench-Khiva) were constructed and commissioned. Additionally, the 124 km railway section on the Qarshi-Kitob route was electrified. Branch railway lines were also constructed for the Qandim Gas Processing Plant (GPP) and Sherobod Cement Plant.

During 2019–2020, construction work was carried out on the first stage of the overground circular metro line in Tashkent and the Yunusabad underground metro line, as well as a branch line to the Tashkent Metallurgical Plant. During the same period, the electrification of the Pop-Namangan-Andijan railway section and the modernization of the Andijan-Savay-Khanabad railway section were completed. In 2020, construction of the Sirgali overground circular metro line in Tashkent began and was completed in 2021.

Currently, the main lines under the system of “Uzbekistan Railways” Joint Stock Company are equipped with modern communication systems. The 2,293 km of main lines in the network are equipped with optical fiber communication lines (OTAL). Sections include Keles-Bukhara (668 km), Khavos-Bekabad (35 km), Maroqand-Qarshi (147 km), Toshguzor-Boysun-Qumqurgon (232 km), Qumqurgon-Termiz (101 km), Termiz-Surxonobod (82 km), Termiz-G’alaba-

Dosmotrovaya-Amuzang (58 km), Sariosiyo-Quduqli (8 km), To’qimachi-Angren (117 km), Angren-Pop-Kokand (180 km), Kokand-Andijan (144 km), Karshi-Kitob (131 km), Bukhara-Miskin-Urgench-Khiva (390 km).

Transmission systems based on SDH technology have been installed on the Keles-Bukhara, Maroqand-Qarshi, Qarshi-Qumqurgon-Termiz, and Angren-Pop sections. The high-level equipment is based on Nortel OME6100 (STM-16) and the low-level equipment on Keymile UMUX-1500 (STM-4). On the Angren-Pop-Kokand-Andijan, Bukhara-Miskin, and Urgench-Khiva sections, data transmission systems are installed using MO-type optical multiplexers and SGM variable multiplexer systems. On the Qizilquduq-Qoraozak and Urgench-Miskin sections, IP Fone MSL and RISSA digital data transmission systems are operating [1].

In recent years, based on the reforms being implemented in the Republic of Uzbekistan, special attention has been paid to liberalizing the economy and achieving deep structural changes in various sectors, including railway transport. Focus has also been placed on forming and developing international railway corridors within the country, attracting international transport flows to national transport communications, and creating favorable conditions to improve domestic transport operations.

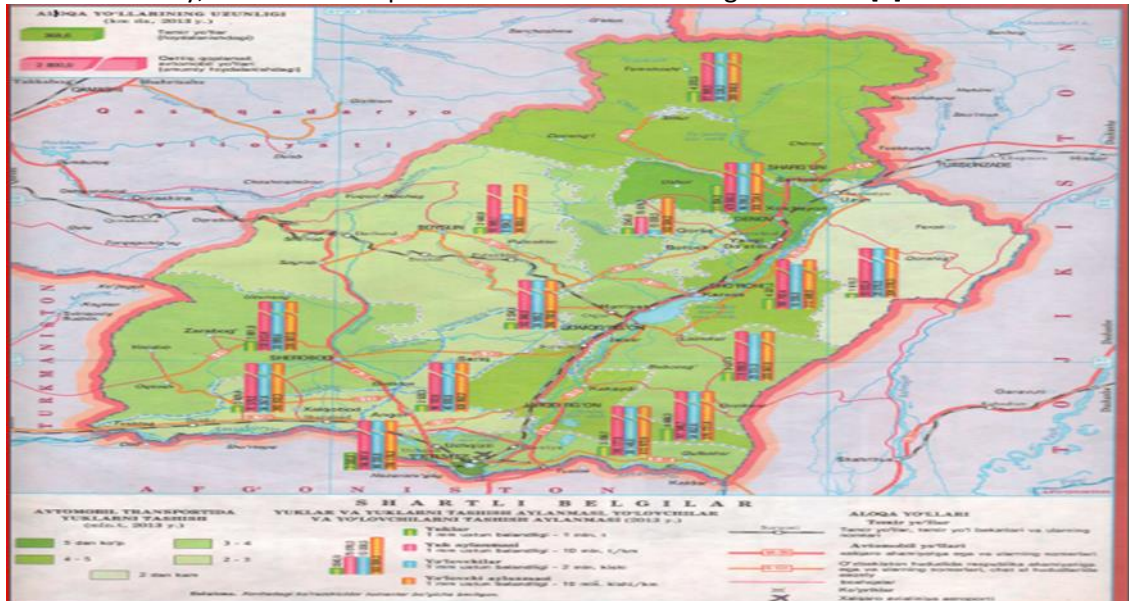
In this regard, Uzbekistan is developing cooperation with neighboring Afghanistan to access the seaports of Pakistan, thereby enhancing trade and economic relations with South Asian countries. Agreements have been reached between the governments of Uzbekistan and Pakistan to advance priority projects in transport and transit, increase trade exchange, strengthen production cooperation, and create favorable conditions. These include preferential trade agreements, adoption of a “roadmap” for cooperation in key economic sectors, and the organization of joint business forums. The new trans-Afghan railway, providing access to the Pakistani seaports of Karachi, Qasim, and Gwadar, connects the South Asian railway system with the Central Asian and Eurasian railways. This project significantly enhances Central Asia’s transit potential, attracts large freight flows, and restores the region’s historical role as a bridge linking Europe and Asia by the shortest land route. Once fully implemented, transporting goods from Pakistan to Uzbekistan will take only 3–5 days instead of the previous 30–35 days. This reduction in distance will lower transportation costs. Preliminary estimates suggest that the cost of transporting a 20-foot container along this route will be reduced nearly threefold [1].

Road Transport. Road transport (from Greek autos – self, and Latin mobilis – movable, capable of movement) plays an important role in transporting goods and passengers. Road transport includes moving vehicles, highways, fuel supply enterprises, repair facilities, bus stations, and related infrastructure.

Currently, various types of vehicles are used across different sectors of material and non-material production as well as everyday life. In material production, heavy-duty trucks and road trains are used, while buses and passenger cars are used for passenger transportation. Additionally, there are specialized

vehicles for medical, food, military, scientific, and other purposes.

Roads are the main structural component of road transport. They can be either paved or unpaved. Roads suitable for two-way traffic with a wide carriageway are called highways. On certain sections, entry and exit ramps are connected via viaducts or tunnels, without intersecting the main highway. Very long highways are referred to as “tracts.” Paved roads are called “shosse,” which technically refers to stone-paved roads. Unpaved roads, suitable for vehicles and horse-drawn carts, are referred to as “gravel roads[2].



**Figure 3. Regional Transport Map.**

Source: Surkhandaryo Regional Local Studies Atlas, “State Committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan on Land Resources, Geodesy, Cartography and State Cadastre,” Tashkent, 2016.

The advantages of road (automobile) transport are as follows:

Connects industrial and agricultural enterprises with main transport routes and vehicles;

Carries the majority of goods within cities and their surrounding areas;

Convenient for transporting goods over short (up to 100 km) and long distances;

Can deliver goods directly to the consumer without unloading and reloading along the way.

Although the cargo capacity of road transport is not very large, this type of transport allows for “door-to-door” delivery.

Roads are classified according to various criteria. Based on administrative subordination, economic, and cultural significance, roads are divided as follows:

Main highways – “A” and “M”; Republican roads – “R”; local roads – “N” and “K”; additionally, international highways of the European network are marked with the letter “E”;

Internal administrative (departmental);

Urban;

Intra-economic (regional);

Inter-farm;

Private.

According to their use, roads are classified as public and restricted. Public roads, in turn, can be toll or toll-free. Based on the type of surface, roads are divided into paved and unpaved (dirt) types [3].

The construction of roads is also a priority direction of our country’s economic policy. Therefore, the

reconstruction and repair of main highways, the development of roadside infrastructure, and the promotion of roadside economic activities are of great importance [4].

#### **METHOD**

The development of road transport in Surkhandaryo Region was closely linked to the construction of the Great Uzbek Tract in the 1930s–1940s. This highway stretches 708 km from the capital city, Tashkent, to Termiz. The Great Uzbek Tract was completed between 1939 and 1940. The highway passes through major regional centers, including Guliston, Jizzakh, Samarkand, and Qarshi. It forms part of the Almaty–Bishkek–Tashkent–Termiz main corridor.

After gaining independence, the Government of Uzbekistan, guided by the President's concept for modern development of domestic and international transport communications—including highways—focused on establishing the shortest and most reliable routes connecting neighboring countries and access to the world's oceans, adapting existing roads to international standards, maintaining and repairing highways, and constructing new roads connecting industrial centers to international corridors.

On July 3, 1992, the Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan “On Highways” was adopted. In February 1993, the State Joint-Stock Concern for the Construction and Operation of Highways (“Uzavtoyol”) began operations (from 1969–1993 it functioned as a Ministry). The Concern included regional highway administrations of the Republic of Karakalpakstan and the provinces, 154 district highway departments, 512 road maintenance and operation divisions, the “UzYolLoyiha” institute for road and facility construction, reconstruction and repair projects, reinforced concrete bridge factories, and other enterprises.

Following market economy reforms, in August 2003, the Concern was reorganized into the State Joint-Stock Company “Uzavtoyol.”

According to the Decree PQ-2776 of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated February 14, 2017, “On the Organization of the Activities of the State Committee for Highways of the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Republican Road Fund under the Cabinet of Ministers,” the State Committee for Highways established, by Order No. 03 dated March 22, 2017, the State Unitary Enterprise “Directorate for Construction and Reconstruction of Public Roads.” The Directorate, funded by the Republican Road Fund, serves as the client for the design, construction, reconstruction, and complete repair of public roads.

During the years of independence, reconstruction

works were carried out on public roads in Surkhandaryo Region. In 2021, a new road connecting the internationally significant M-39 and M-41 highways, which reduces delivery time to Tashkent, was completed. The project, financed by the Asian Development Bank, included reconstruction of the 65 km section of the 4P105 “Darband–Boysun–Elbayon” highway (kilometers 5–70) and the 46 km section of the 4P100 “Manguzar–Jarqorgon–Bandixon–Oltinsoy–Denov” highway (kilometers 128–174). As a result, the road from the region to the capital was shortened by 146 km.

In 2022, a 1.5 km section of the “Termiz International Airport–Khayraton Bridge” road was repaired to modern standards.

During the independence years, Uzbekistan's automotive industry developed significantly, with regional motor vehicle fleets being upgraded with new modern vehicles.

#### **Air Transport**

Air transport, which developed later than water and land transport, stands out due to its advantages. It allows the rapid delivery of perishable goods over long distances and can reach locations that are otherwise difficult to access.

The formation and development of air transport in Uzbekistan dates back to the 1920s. On May 12, 1924, the first passenger flight was launched on the Tashkent–Pishpek–Alma-Ata route using the “Junkers R-13” aircraft, marking the beginning of civil aviation in Uzbekistan.

In 1927, the first Tashkent–Kabul international air route was opened.

By 1930, the first flight on the Moscow–Tashkent route was carried out using the K-4 aircraft, designed by Kharkov engineers. In 1932, the Central Asian Civil Aviation Directorate was established, which became one of the leading civil aviation administrations within the former USSR “Aeroflot” system. That same year, construction of Tashkent Airport began.

In the 1970s–1980s, the Civil Aviation Directorate of Uzbekistan was equipped with new types of aircraft. On September 20, 1972, the supersonic Tu-144 aircraft made its first flight on the Moscow–Tashkent–Moscow route, reaching a speed of 2,500 km/h and covering the distance from Moscow to Tashkent in 1 hour 50 minutes.

In 1974, the Il-62 aircraft began operating in Uzbekistan.

In 1977, the first Tu-154 aircraft in Uzbekistan flew from Kuybyshev to Tashkent. The National Airline of Uzbekistan, “Uzbekistan Airways,” operated its last Tu-

154 flight on December 31, 2010, on the Tashkent–Nukus–Tashkent route.

On December 26, 1982, Tashkent Airport received for the first time the wide-body Il-86 liner, capable of carrying 350 passengers.

Uzbekistan's independence on August 31, 1991, paved the way for the establishment of a national airline.

On January 28, 1992, the National Airline "Uzbekistan Airways" was officially established.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

During the years of independence, airports under the national airline system were modernized in accordance with contemporary standards. The national fleet was upgraded with modern aircraft. Airports in the capital, Tashkent, and across the regions were reconstructed and brought up to modern requirements. On June 16, 1993, the national airline expanded its fleet with its first Western-manufactured A310 aircraft, acquired through financial leasing.

In 1995, "Uzbekistan Airways" conducted its first flight across the Atlantic Ocean. In 1996, the first Boeing 767 for the Uzbekistan National Airline was assembled at the Seattle factory. In 1999, the airline received its first Boeing 757. In 2002, the Tashkent Aircraft Repair Plant was transformed into the aviation enterprise "Uzbekistan Airways Technics." In 2003, the airline began operating the locally produced modified Il-114-100 aircraft. Contracts were signed with Boeing Aerospace Corporation and the Airbus consortium for the delivery of two Boeing 787 Dreamliners, four Boeing 767s, and ten A320-200 aircraft. On July 15, 2010, the national airline received its first Airbus A320 medium-range aircraft.

On August 31, 2016, the first Boeing 787 Dreamliner arrived in Tashkent. The first flight on the Tashkent–Bukhara–Urganch–Tashkent route took place on September 5, 2016.

Air transport in Termiz, the southern air gateway of Uzbekistan, was established on May 25, 1941. Until 1970, the fleet primarily consisted of An-24 and Yak-12 aircraft. These aircraft were used for passenger transport as well as agricultural tasks, such as applying chemical fertilizers to fields. In recent decades, air transport has been extensively used to support agriculture and healthcare. It has also been crucial for delivering food and medical services to the mountainous regions of the province that are otherwise difficult to access.

During the 1970s–1980s, aviation in Uzbekistan developed rapidly, new routes were established, passenger traffic increased, and new aircraft including Yak-40, An-24, Il-14, and agricultural An-2 planes were introduced. In October 1979, a new airport terminal equipped with modern navigation and communication systems was opened. New routes were launched to cities including Samarkand, Fergana, Andijan, Namangan, Alma-Ata, Bishkek, Mineralnye Vody, Baku, and Ashgabat.

In 2022, Termiz Airport was renovated on a modern basis and attained the status of an international airport. As a result of the renovation, a new 3,000-meter-long concrete runway, taxiways, and an apron for three parking lots were constructed. The airport was equipped with a modern CAT-I ICAO lighting system, meteorological facilities, and a radio navigation landing system [6] (Figure 4).



**Figure 4. Runway of Termiz International Airport**

Source: <https://www.gazeta.uz/ru/2022/12/26/termez-airport/> .

The formation and development of river transport in Surkhandaryo Region were closely linked to the waterways of the Amu Darya River. Historical sources

indicate that the location of Termiz on the right bank of the Amu Darya historically provided opportunities for trade with neighboring regions.

“In particular, the development of Termiz port began in ancient times and has been in use up to the present day. Today, Termiz River Port is located in the upper reaches of the Amu Darya in Termiz city, on the right bank at the confluence of the Surkhandaryo River with the Amu Darya (formerly Pattakesar)” [7].

The Pattakesar estuary, where Termiz port was located, was an important trade route for the Bukhara Emirate in conducting commercial relations with neighboring Asian countries. Through the Pattakesar estuary, the Bukhara Emirate maintained trade and economic ties with countries such as Afghanistan and India at that time.

On January 15, 1893, after Termiz was placed under the control of the Russian Emperor by the Bukhara Emir, military units began to be stationed there, and the Russian authorities undertook all measures to establish a strong presence. In addition, merchants settled there alongside the military, built houses, and opened their shops [8]. From 1897, the Amu Darya flotilla ships also began operating routes up to Termiz [9].

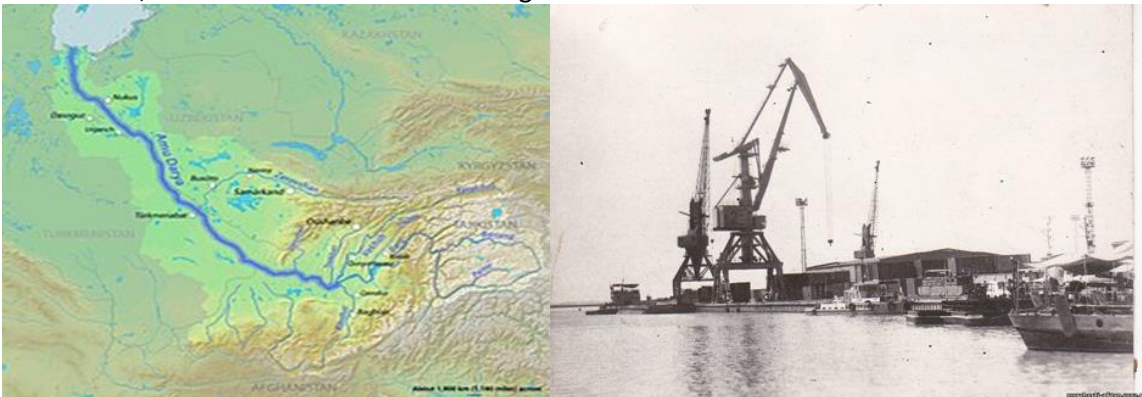
In the 1930s–1940s, the volume of economic cargo

transported through Termiz River Port increased significantly. Goods such as grain, coal, timber, salt, cement, metal, cotton fiber, and mineral fertilizers were transported via the Amu Darya. During World War II, essential supplies for the front were delivered through this port.

The port occupies an area of 20.5 hectares and has closed warehouses with a capacity of 10,000 tons for foreign trade cargo, as well as open storage for 100,000 tons [10].

In the 1960s–1970s, Termiz River Port was materially and technically re-equipped, and the capacity for receiving and dispatching economic cargo significantly increased. At that time, the stable development period in neighboring Afghanistan created opportunities for the USSR to expand and strengthen economic relations with Asian countries.

Between 1960 and 1970, the first fully mechanized port for processing export and import cargo was established in Termiz. International cargo transport operations began to be carried out through Termiz River Port.



**Figure 5. General view of the Amu Darya basin and Termiz river port**

Source: <https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki> ; <https://armyreporter-ru.livejournal.com/280669.html> .

## CONCLUSION

In recent years, major projects have been implemented to provide the population of Surkhandarya region with clean drinking water. In 2021, on the initiative of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Shavkat Mirziyoyev, a project was launched to supply the population with clean drinking water by transporting water from the Topolang reservoir through pipelines. It is known that the Topolang reservoir is located in the northern mountainous area of the region and is fed by meltwater from ice and snow. The water of the reservoir is rich in beneficial minerals and has a hardness of 4 percent.

Under the project, 380 kilometers of metal pipelines will be laid from the reservoir to the city of Termez. Of this, 159 kilometers will run along highways, and 221 kilometers will connect urban and district networks. To date, 147 kilometers of pipelines have been installed. Water treatment, softening facilities, and five water collection facilities have been constructed. During the first phase of the project, clean drinking water was supplied to the residents of the Sariosiyo, Denov, Sho'rchi, and Qumqo'rg'on districts of Surkhandarya region. As a result, the level of centralized drinking water supply in the region reached 70 percent.

In the second phase, nearly 2 million residents of the Sariosiyo, Denov, Sho'rchi, Qumqo'rg'on, Jarqo'rg'on,

Bandixon, Qiziriq, Sherobod, Angor, Muzrabot districts, and the city of Termez will receive clean drinking water, increasing the supply coverage to 90 percent. This phase of the project is scheduled to be completed in 2024.

The future development of pipeline transport in the region will be supported by the exploitation and commissioning of the “25th Anniversary of Independence” gas field discovered in Boysun district.

In conclusion, during the current period of economic reforms, the construction of modern transport networks in Uzbekistan and their integration into a unified local and international transport system is of great importance. It enables the establishment of the most convenient and shortest routes to the World Ocean and facilitates equitable trade relations in the global market.

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