



## Railway Transport in Uzbekistan

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**Annotation:** *At the present time, when the processes of integration among the countries of the world are increasingly developing and improving, an urgent task is to study the issues of internal and external communications, infrastructure. In determining the economic potential of countries, it is common to ignore the level of coverage of the population with the transport and infrastructure network as a separate index. At the same time, the transport system, including the railway network, has a significant impact not only on the economic situation of states, but also on the lifestyle of the population. The most convenient and resource-saving industry in passenger and freight traffic is, without a doubt, the railway system. The importance of railways in the economy and national economy of regions and countries remote from international transit trade routes is even higher. This article describes the state of railway transport in Uzbekistan during the years of Soviet power.*

**Keywords:** *Samsonovo - Termez, Fedchenko - Shakhrikhon, Fedchenko – Andijan - Kukonkishlok, Andijan I- Chinobod, Samarkand – Urgut - Panjikent, Andijan II - Kukonkishlok, Tashkent-Angrenkumir, Tashkent - Commodity station, Chirchik nitrogen plant, Kattakurgan reservoir, Grand Fergana Canal.*

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In the world, communication and transport structures of certain countries and regions have long become objects of study. In particular, it is important to study, as priority problems, the state during the Soviet period of socio-economic life, sectors of the national economy of Uzbekistan, which is the richest in terms of material and human resources in Central Asia, including the role of the transport system, railways in economic life. of the republic, the stages of their development, the position of the industry in industry, its impact on the standard of living of the population, the processes of improving the branches and networks of railways. Taking into account these aspects, in recent years, special attention has been paid to improving the railway system and improving the quality of railway services provided to the population and business entities.

**The degree of knowledge of the problem.** Research related to the topic can be divided into three groups: 1) literature published in the Soviet period; 2) studies conducted during the years of independence; 3) foreign publications.

The literature included in the first group, that is, most of the works created in the Soviet period, reflects only the successes of the railway system, indicators of growth in traffic, without paying enough attention directly to the railway system and its problems.

In the 1950s and 1960s, economists created a number of works on the structure of transport in Uzbekistan, including the railway network, but even they one-sidedly highlight the goals of the Soviet government in the field of the railway industry[1].

In the subsequent years of the Soviet period, a number of scientific works devoted to the transport system in Uzbekistan, the history of the development of railways, in particular, the studies of V. Suvorov and Zh. Kalymbetov, highlight the role of railway workers and political organizations in the industry of the Central Asian republics, including Uzbekistan[2], the articles by R. Aminova, B. Burikhonov[3] focus on such issues as the formation of the working class in the railway industry, the contribution of workers and employees of the industry to the development of the national economy of the Soviet state, the role of the Communist Party in the emergence layer of local workers.

Scientific works published in subsequent years are devoted to the state of the railway system during the Second World War, the contribution of workers and employees of the industry to winning victory in the war, the propaganda activities of party organizations and trade unions in the structure of railways during the war period[4].

In the 80-90s of the twentieth century, literature was created on the problems of increasing the productive potential of the economy, transport system and industrial enterprises of the republic. In particular, in the book published under the editorship of Academician I. Muminov, relating to the formation of the Uzbek working class[5], in the work written in collaboration with Sh. Ulmasboeva and S. Plum, the role of the railway system in the activities of the industrial sectors of the Uzbek SSR, including enterprises for coal mining, primary oil refining [6].

In multi-volume works edited by S. Kamalov[7], relating to the history of Karakalpakstan, one can find some information related to the workers and employees of the railways in the Uzbek SSR and their activities.

The second group - in studies of the period of independence, the history of railways was assessed from the point of view of national statehood, an attempt was made to reveal the negative impact of Soviet ideology on this industry. In the scientific work of N.U. Musaev, devoted to the history of the spread and development of industrial production in the Turkestan region, the facts related to the emergence of a railway network in Central Asia and Tashkent are noted, the problems of creating railways, as well as the life of the Turkestan region and mutual trade relations are considered. with the Russian Empire[8].

A.Z. Togaeva's research is devoted to highlighting the issues of the history of the construction of the Tashkent-Orenburg railway, its role in the economic life of the Turkestan region. This work reflected the military, political and economic interest of the Russian Empire in the construction of railways in the region, the socio-economic consequences of the construction of railways[9].

In the dissertation of F.B. Zhumaniyozov, devoted to the formation, development and problems of transport in Khorezm, on the example of the Khorezm region, the development of vehicles and networks, changes in the field of transport infrastructure in the period 1873-2018[10].

Kh.D.Khidirov's dissertation reveals the emergence of a transport system in the Surkhan oasis and the factors that influenced it. In particular, it is noted that the reason for the spread and development of the modern transport system in the oasis was the rivalry between Russia and England, the regional struggle between the Soviet state and Afghanistan. Along with this, such problems as the construction of internal and main roads for large cotton-growing regions, based on the interests of the center, were disclosed, while mountain and foothill roads were not given attention [11].

Some aspects of the topic during the years of independence were also covered in fundamental research devoted to the study of the history of Uzbekistan in the Soviet period [12]. Among the works of this period, the scientific research of K. Razhabov is of particular importance, in which the history of transport networks in the Surkhan oasis in 1920-1930 is covered in detail [13].

In most works of foreign researchers related to the topic, the issues of vehicles in the republic and their use are analyzed. At the same time, there are a number of scientific works that consider the processes of development of railway networks on the territory of Uzbekistan, they mainly cover issues related to technical aspects, economic efficiency[14].

The American researcher Pine Maze in his scientific study tried to highlight the history of the construction of the Turkestan-Siberia (Turksib) railway and its social consequences[15].

**The purpose of the study** is to highlight the history of railway transport in Uzbekistan in 1925–1945 and the changes that have taken place in the industry.

**The research objectives are as follows:**

to subject the railway networks on the territory of the Uzbek SSR and their activities to a comparative analysis with the years preceding the framework of the study and other republics of the Union, including fraternal republics;

to show the impact of the policy pursued by the Soviet government on rail transport;

to study the changes in the railway system of the republic, the factors that influenced them and their consequences;

reveal the problems associated with the processes of repair and restoration of railway networks;

to study the changes in the field of railways during the Second World War and their role in the economic life of the republic;

explore the role of railway networks in the economic life of the Uzbek SSR in 1925-1945;

classify passenger and freight traffic through railways, determine its size and reveal the dynamics of changes in traffic statistics;

show the organization and activities of training courses, specialized educational institutions that train railway specialists;

highlight the impact of the condition of the railways in the Uzbek SSR in 1925-1945 on the lifestyle of the population.

**The object of the research** is the history of railways in Uzbekistan in 1925–1945.

**The subject of the study** is the influence of the economic policy of the Soviet government on the railway industry and changes in the economic life of the republic.

**Research methods.** The dissertation uses the principles of historicism, consistency, objectivity, a civilizational approach to the problem, as well as methods of comparative and problem-chronological analysis.

**The scientific novelty of the research is as follows:**

disclosed an increase in the economic efficiency of railway lines, which mainly meet the interests of the Center in the field of improving the railway industry as a result of the repair of networks and branches of main, transit and local railways (Samsonovo-Termez, Fedchenko-Shakhrikhon, Fedchenko-Andijan-Kukonkishlok, Andijan I-Chinobod ) and the creation of new ones (Samarkand-Urgut-Panjikent, Andijan II - Kukonkishlok, Tashkent-Angrenkumir, Tashkent-Commodity Station) in 1925-1945;

inconsistencies were identified in terms of coverage of territories by railway networks and economic efficiency, despite the export of cheap raw materials (mainly cotton fiber, minerals, fruits and vegetables) from the territory of the republic through railways, as a result, the main attention was directed to the main networks passing through large cotton-growing regions of the Fergana

Valley, the territory of Kashkadarya, Surkhandarya rich in minerals, economic regions with low rates of growing serya were not given enough attention;

it is substantiated that the issue of transportation of goods and passengers along the railway networks was carried out not on the basis of the needs and requirements of the population of the republic, but on the basis of the plans of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks, and as a result of assessing the economic efficiency of the movement of the amount of exported products, the market mechanism in the industry was violated, due to with incorrect financial reporting, the amount of funds allocated for repairs in the industry decreased, and the untimely delivery of materials for repairs led to disruptions in the industry;

It has been proved that the obvious shortage of specialists on the railway network manifested itself during the Second World War, both due to the fact that a specific system of personnel training was not established locally, and due to insufficient attention to the issue of attracting local nationalities to the industry.

A five-year plan of the Soviet state for 1926-1933 was adopted. This plan provided for the restoration of the operation of the Samsonovo-Termez railway line, 203 versts long, which was at the disposal of the Eski Bukhoro railway network; branches Fedchenko-Shakhrikhon (Fergana network), 16 versts long; the Fedchenko-Andijan-Kokand-Kishlok branch (Tentaklisoy line), 18 versts long, the Andijan I-Chinabad branch, 35 versts long, as well as the continuation of the construction of the Yettisuv line (Verny line) of the Tashkent railway, which passed through Alma-Ata, starting from the station Pishpek[16].

By 1925, only one section of the Bukhara railway network, Samsonovo-Termez, had not been restored [17]. Meanwhile, this railway network was of great importance for improving trade relations with Afghanistan and importing British and Indian goods from the markets of Afghanistan into the territory of the republic. In 1924-1925, through the Samsonovo-Termez railway line, various manufactured products, sugar and tobacco in the amount of 850 pounds, 250 thousand tons of cotton, wool and leather products were imported from Afghanistan [18].

Since 1925, 25 percent of the funds allocated for the repair of the Samsonovo-Termez railway were collected from the local budget of the Uzbek SSR, and military organizations were entrusted with the task of providing construction with a workforce[19]. 3,740,000 rubles were spent on the restoration of the Samsonovo-Termez railway line[20].

The Fedchenko-Shakhrikhan road, which belonged to the Fergana line of the Central Asian Railways Administration, was important in supplying the Union with cotton, 30 percent of agricultural products accounted for cotton[21]. By 1926, the number of farms that carried out their activities on their own had decreased, it amounted to 40 percent. This had a significant impact on the amount of cotton and grain grown. The restoration of the activity of the branch of the railway was supposed to ensure high economic efficiency in this area; funds in the amount of 400,000 rubles were allocated for the restoration of this line[22].

The repair and restoration work of the Fedchenko-Shakhrikhon road should have been completed by the end of 1927-1928, these works, in addition to railway organizations, were also carried out by such organizations as the Revolutionary Committee of the Uzbek SSR, the Cotton Committee, the Grain Committee.

During the years of struggle against the Soviet power, the activities of the branch Andijan II - Kokandkishlok (the direction of Tentaklis) were put out of action. Cotton, grain, kerosene, and manufactory products were mainly transported along this railway line.

It was envisaged that the branch Andijan II - Kokandkishlok could serve 13,000 families, consisting of 60,000 people [23], it was possible to increase the cotton harvest to 7 thousand centners, to bring

the volume of grain cultivation to 16402 pounds, therefore, an intensive restoration of this direction was planned and implemented. Along with this, the resort areas and sanatoriums organized in Bozorkurgon and its environs caused an increase in passenger traffic. To establish the activities of this branch, funds were allocated in the amount of 48,645 rubles [24].

The first state five-year plan included the restoration of the Andijan I-Chinobod railway line. It had 5 stations, such as Andijan I, Andijan II, Hindimozor, Oltisaroy, Chinobod. From this territory, mainly raw cotton, pressed cotton, cotton seeds were exported, and kerosene, iron products, and manufactory goods were imported to this economic region from the center. The Andijan I-Chinobod railway line connecting the districts of Balykchy, Oltynkul was entrusted with the task of putting in order the operation of the Ulugnorsoy and Balykchisoy canals, because it was planned to get a larger cotton harvest in this territory. The term for commissioning the Andijan I-Chinobod railway line was set for December 1928 [25].

At a meeting of the Presidium of the Economic Bureau at the Representation of the Council of Labor and Defense of the USSR, dedicated to the Central Asian republics, held on October 7-8, 1925, the issue of restoring the Andijan-Kokandkishlok railway branch was considered. The meeting considered a request to transfer the task of providing construction with funds and materials from the central authorities to the Central Asian Railways Administration [26]. From this archival information, it can be understood that the formation of railway networks, the repair of obsolete roads in the Uzbek SSR was controlled from the center. However, in practice, funds were allocated untimely and insufficiently. As a result, the government of the republic turned to the center with a request to transfer the construction work to the Union of Central Asian Railways, the management building and the main organizations of which were located in the city of Tashkent.

On September 1, 1927, the goal was set to complete the restoration of the Namangan-Andijan branch of the Central Asian railway networks and connect the eastern part of the Ferghana Valley with other parts of the Soviet Union through railways. The population of this region was mainly engaged in irrigated agriculture, growing cotton, grain, rice, corn, mung beans, and beans. It was planned to bring the volume of agricultural production to 1,500,000 poods by the end of the first five-year plan [27].

It was also planned to improve the transportation of meat with the help of the restoration of the Namangan-Andijan railway branch. Because the continuation of this branch to the city of Pishpek made it possible to organize the export of meat products from there in refrigerated railway cars to the Kokand railway station, and from here distribute the meat to other cities of the valley [28]. At the same time, the restoration of the Namangan-Andijan railway branch could contribute to the commissioning of another railway branch that has ceased to operate and is unprofitable in the direction of Kokand-Namangan.

According to information relating to 1925, there were 10,437 freight cars on the balance sheet of the railways, of which 4,868 or 46.5 percent needed repairs. In the first half of 1925-1926, 1434 cars were checked, of which 490 were overhauled. During this period, the total number of steam locomotives was 423, of which 181 were considered fully operational. 88 locomotives were repaired and accounted for 32.2 of the total number of locomotives [29].

As of April 1, 1926, there were 466 steam locomotives on the balance sheet of the railways, of which 313 were placed in the repair fleet. There were 222 steam locomotives ready for operation, 89 requiring repair. From the above information, it can be seen that most of the train and steam locomotive cars that were at the disposal of the railways were worn out or required major repairs. This testified to the poor state of the material and technical base of the railways of the Uzbek SSR.



The depot and station of the Tashkent railway performed an intermediary role in the transportation of goods from the center to the republics of Central Asia and the export of products not only from the Uzbek SSR, but also from neighboring fraternal republics. According to statistical data, in the period from 1928 to 1932 throughout the Union, the volume of passenger transportation by rail increased 3.33 times, in the Uzbek SSR this figure increased only almost 1.5 times. In continuation of the first five-year plan, the volume of passenger traffic grew. In 1928, the volume of passenger traffic per 1 km of railways was 3.6 thousand people, and in 1932 this figure was 5.2 thousand people.

In the period from 1933 to 1940, socialist restructuring of all branches of the national economy, the collectivization of agriculture, and the development of industrialization began in Uzbekistan.

The implementation of the industrialization process placed great responsibilities on the railways. Because a large flow of workers from the surrounding territories poured into large cities to work in newly built plants and factories. They were transported mainly on intercity passenger trains [30]. The construction of new industrial and agricultural facilities has caused the movement of workers from one area to another, to go to work. In particular, the population of a number of republics also took part in the construction of such facilities as the Chirchik nitrogen plant, the Kattakurgan reservoir, and the Big Fergana Canal. During the development of new lands, railways were also the main means of transportation.

The increase in traffic volumes caused a number of problems. In particular, according to statistics, in 1940, due to a shortage of 22 four-seat, 69 two-seat passenger cars, several passenger flights were canceled, sometimes, while waiting for permission from Moscow, the travel time shifted by 3-5 days.

On August 16, 1941, a state plan was adopted for transferring economic sectors to martial law. In this plan, there were such points as providing a solid material and technical base for the Soviet state at war with the enemy, along with the transfer to a military regime of economic sectors in the rear, and the implementation of the reorganization of railway transport in accordance with martial law. At the same time, they approved the transfer of train traffic to a military schedule, ensuring the use of a high level of railway conductivity, strengthening the centralization of railway transport, transferring the structure of movement to a military mobilized system, reducing the schedule of passenger movements, increasing the speed of trains operating in normal mode, evacuating industrial enterprises and representatives population from territories under military pressure to other republics of the Union[31].

Based on this plan, in February 1942, the Transport Protection Committee under the State Defense Committee approved instructions on work plans, material and technical base and functional tasks for all types of transport, in particular, the railway system in military conditions, and announced the complete transition of the system to military mode[32].

According to sources, despite the provision of the necessary equipment to the railway networks, it was not enough, which caused difficulties in the activities of the railways. In the 1932-1933 budget year, 25 steam locomotives were delivered to the Central Asian Railway Administration, and 31 steam locomotives the following year. However, in the first half of the fiscal year 1932-1933, the Central Asian railway system encountered technical and financial difficulties. For example, on the railway branch Tashkent-Ursatevsk (Khavast)-Kokand, technical support and the repair process were in a difficult situation. Despite the fact that the Central Asian Railways Administration has been repeatedly informed about the status of freight plans and checkpoints, which cause inconvenience, starting from the Tashkent station, no practical actions have been taken in this regard. The reports repeatedly mentioned the need to put into operation additional sidings, that if

traffic volumes increase in December-January, this will lead to disruptions or congestion in the networks[33].

The analysis of the given official information shows that every year from November to January on the railway branch Tashkent-Ursatevsk (Khavast)-Kokand there was an excessive overload, there were spontaneous traffic jams. This was due to the export of the grown cotton crop from the territory of the republic. The untimely implementation of traffic plans in the midst of the harvest became the reason for the prosecution of those responsible for the railway industry. Because the indifference of the central organizations to reports from lower-level organizations led to disruptions in freight and passenger traffic. As stated in these archival documents, information about the poor condition of the checkpoints at 1740, 1756, 1799 kilometers of the Golodnaya Steppe-Syrdarya railway line, they will not withstand excessive overloads, was submitted to the Central Asian Railways Administration, one practical action was not taken and there were no results .

From 1935 - 1936, the implementation of major organizational, technical and economic measures began in the activities of railway transport. At these events, special attention was paid to the regulation of train traffic, the prevention of accidents and collisions. In order to improve the material support of the system, a lot of work has also been done. For example, in 1933, funds in the amount of 7.5 million rubles were allocated for the transport system throughout the Union, in 1937 this figure amounted to 9.3 million rubles. To regulate the movement of trains in 1935, a single schedule was developed for the entire Union. Since the summer of 1936, a provision was put into practice that included new rules for technical operation [34]. The first executors of the new provision were the machinists of the Tashkent depot V.Ya.Emtsov, S.S.Pustobaev, Bogdasarov. They traveled long distances with fuel savings, for which they were awarded certificates of honor. The machinist of the Tashkent freight station B. Abdarov fulfilled the daily norm by 150 percent, his name took a place on the board of advanced workers[35]. In the period of 1936-1940, the foundation for water facilities was laid at the stations of Termez, Karshi, Andijan, Khavast, Jizzakh. There were also changes in the composition of locomotives that were on the balance sheet of railway stations, which was updated with new series of steam locomotives, such as FD, SOK, SUM [36].

### **Conclusions:**

In 1925-1945, due to the economic policy of the Soviet government and other factors, the development of the railway network in Uzbekistan was contradictory. In particular, in the early years of Soviet power, the railway system of Uzbekistan was in crisis. First of all, this was due to a decrease in attention to the industry in connection with the First World War and the process of armed actions against the Soviet regime. As a result of these processes, the railway network was abandoned. In addition, local residents began to plunder the railway lines passing through their settlements, in most cases, natural disasters had a negative impact on the railway network and branches, they were covered with soil or weathered. Despite the continuation of traffic on major main railway lines, in 1925-1926 it did not even reach the pre-war level.

As a result of the Nazi attack on the Soviet Union, a crisis was observed in the railway system, as well as in other sectors of the national economy. There were systemic problems associated with the transfer of transportation schedules to a military regime.

During the Second World War, measures were taken to provide the industry with qualified personnel. As a result of attracting workers and employees to the front, a movement began to fill the vacated jobs with representatives of local nationalities, short-term courses were organized, with the help of people who retired from this system, temporary labor training teams were organized. A number of workers in the sphere were filled mainly by women and teenagers.

As a result of the economic difficulties of the war years, there were disruptions in the provision of resources and funds to the railways, which operated on the basis of a centralized system. Therefore, the task of transition to resource-saving working conditions throughout the industry was defined. Saving fuel materials, organizing days off on a voluntary basis, fulfilling the daily norm by 150-200 percent due to the selfless labor of the Uzbek people contributed to overcoming the crisis.

A great help to the front during the war years was the allocation of land for subsidiary plots, the cultivation of agricultural products, in which there was a high need in order to improve the material support of workers and technical employees who carried out activities on the railway networks.

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