中国传媒大學
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Institute for a Community with Shared Future
人类命运共同体研究院

PAKISTAN RESEARCH CENTER FOR A COMMUNITY WITH SHARED FUTURE
人类命运共同体巴基斯坦研究中心

Uzbekistan's New Infrastructure Push: Building the Foundations of a Regional Economic Power

By Mr. Khalid Taimur Akram, Executive Director, Pakistan Research Center for a Community with Shared Future (PRCCSF), Islamabad

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Uzbekistan is entering an important stage of its economic development. The country is making significant investments in roads, railways, electricity networks, renewable energy, water systems and urban infrastructure. The importance of these projects extends far beyond building physical infrastructure. The country is actually laying down the foundations for stronger trade, investment, industry and regional connectivity.

The scale of this effort is reflected in the country's investment figures. According to Uzbekistan's National Statistics Committee, investment in fixed assets reached 591.1 trillion soums in 2025, an increase of 10.5 percent compared with 2024. Foreign investment and loans accounted for $33.5 billion of this total.

This investment is taking place alongside strong economic growth. The World Bank reports that Uzbekistan's real GDP grew by 7.7 percent in 2025, compared with 6.7 percent in 2024, while investment increased by 10.5 percent. This combination of economic expansion and infrastructure investment is important because modern infrastructure can help businesses move goods, access reliable energy and reach domestic and international markets more efficiently.

Transport: Connecting Uzbekistan to Bigger Markets

Transport infrastructure is one of the clearest areas of Uzbekistan's new development push. As a landlocked country at the center of Central Asia, efficient roads and railways are especially important for Uzbekistan's trade and regional economic role.

The government has announced a five-year programme for domestic railway development, including the construction of an additional 500 kilometers of railway beginning in 2026. Plans also include new high-speed rail connections and improvements to major railway stations. At the same time, thousands of kilometers of major roads are planned for upgrading.

International partners are also supporting this transformation. In March 2026, the World Bank approved a $200 million project to modernize transport infrastructure in Surkhandarya. The project includes reconstruction of a 91-kilometre section of the M41 regional road corridor and the expansion of the existing two-lane road into a four-lane highway. The project is expected to improve connections with Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and Afghanistan while benefiting hundreds of thousands of people in surrounding communities.

The Asian Development Bank is supporting another major road project, with a $233.1 million loan for the modernization of approximately 87 kilometers of the Guzar–Bukhara–Nukus–Beyneu highway.

These projects show that Uzbekistan is not looking at transport only as a domestic necessity. Better roads, railways and logistics can also strengthen the country's role in regional trade.

Energy: Building for the Next Stage of Growth

Infrastructure development also means ensuring that Uzbekistan has enough reliable electricity for homes, businesses and industry. The country is rapidly expanding renewable energy while modernizing its existing electricity system. Official investment information reports that solar and wind power plants generated more than 5 billion kilowatt-hours of electricity in 2025, while 42 new energy facilities were commissioned during the year.

The World Bank has also approved $100 million in financing to modernize Uzbekistan's electricity distribution networks. The programme includes 6,000 kilometers of low-voltage distribution lines, 1,200 transformers and 150,000 smart meters. It is designed to improve reliability while making it easier to integrate renewable energy into the electricity system.

This is particularly significant because Uzbekistan aims to expand renewable generation substantially by 2030. Modernizing the grid is therefore just as important as building new power plants.

Better Cities and Stronger Local Infrastructure

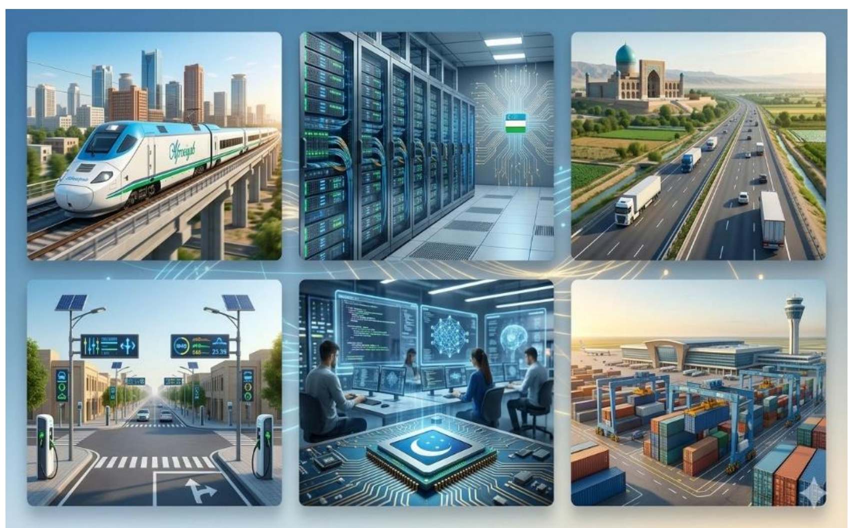
Uzbekistan's infrastructure push is also reaching beyond major national projects. More than half of the country's population already lives in cities, and the World Bank expects the urban share to exceed 60 percent by 2050. This makes municipal infrastructure increasingly important.

In December 2025, the World Bank approved a $250 million financing package for the Livable and Productive Cities Program. It will support infrastructure and services in 16 districts and cities, including roads, water supply, public spaces, schools, hospitals and other facilities. The programme aims to directly benefit around one million people by 2030.

Such investments matter because economic development is ultimately experienced locally. Better roads, utilities, public spaces and services can make cities more attractive places to live, work and invest.

Infrastructure as a Platform for Regional Growth

Perhaps the most important feature of Uzbekistan's infrastructure strategy is its connection with wider economic reform. The Asian Development Bank says its future engagement in Uzbekistan will focus on transport, energy, digital infrastructure, water and urban development, while also increasing private-sector participation and public-private partnerships.



The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development is similarly supporting Uzbekistan in areas including renewable energy, infrastructure and private-sector development. Its current portfolio includes substantial investment in sustainable infrastructure, while its strategy emphasizes competitiveness, green energy and greater regional and international integration.

The direction is clear: Uzbekistan is building infrastructure not as an end in itself, but as a platform for the next phase of economic growth.

The country still has infrastructure needs and implementation challenges, as international institutions have noted. But the scale of investment, the growing involvement of international financial institutions and the focus on modern transport, reliable energy and better urban services point to an important transformation.

Uzbekistan's geographic position gives it a natural role in connecting Central Asia with wider markets. By improving the infrastructure that supports that position, the country is laying stronger foundations for trade, investment and industrial development.

The result could be an Uzbekistan that is not only better connected internally, but increasingly connected to the wider region and global economy. Its infrastructure push is therefore more than a construction programme. It is an investment in the country's long-term economic capacity and an important foundation for Uzbekistan's growing role in Central Asia.