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### **IMPACT OF THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC ON THE TRANSPORT AND TRANSIT ECONOMY OF THE REPUBLIC OF UZBEKISTAN: MEASURES TAKEN AND NEW OPPORTUNITIES**

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**Abstract:** The article examines the impact of the pandemic on the transport and transit economy of Uzbekistan, analyzes the problems that arose as a result of the pandemic and measures taken by the state during the crisis period. Positive developments in the transit economy were also noted, such as the activation of the transition to digitalization, the new transport corridor and the strengthening of integration of the Central Asian countries.

**Keywords:** coronavirus, transit economy, digitalization, integration, tariffs, export, transport corridor.

The world health organization (WHO) has declared the new coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak a global pandemic [1]. Worldwide, serious measures are being taken to combat the spread of coronavirus infection, primarily by imposing restrictions on the movement of people on transport and air routes, as well as suspending the activities of enterprises. In Uzbekistan, as in all countries, in order to prevent the spread of the virus, closed their borders and stopped passenger traffic in transport routes. Consequently, the transport industry has been seriously affected around the world.

For the study were analyzed the works of V.P. Sidenko, A.V. Kuznetsov, A.N. Prikazyuk "Problems of epidemiology and prevention of natural foci infections in the territory of international transport corridors", D.T. Ibragimov "Assessment of the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on the transport sector of Uzbekistan and measures to mitigate negative consequences", materials of JSC "Uzbekistan Temir Yullari", IPEM, SCO organization and Ministry of Transport of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

Included are materials from the address of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan from March 19, 2020 №UP5969 "On the priority measures on mitigating the negative impact of the coronavirus pandemic and global crisis phenomena on the economic sectors".

What was the result of the pandemic in the field of transport and transit economy of Uzbekistan?

First of all, in order to prevent the spread of the virus, since March 20, 2020, passenger traffic on buses, cars, railways and air transport on international routes has been suspended for 40 days [2].

As history shows, transport occupies a leading place among other industries in terms of its state significance, penetration into all regions of the country and beyond, and the possibility of spreading epidemic diseases. In epidemiological terms, passenger transport vehicles are considered as transporters of migration routes for the transmission and spread of potentially dangerous pathogens over long distances [2].

An unfavorable epidemiological situation in the countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America in terms of quarantine (plague, cholera, yellow fever), as well as other and new, including the most dangerous viral infections, the growth of international passenger and freight traffic created favorable conditions for the entry of exotic agents of dangerous diseases in other countries [3].

An example of the spread of malaria is the introduction of this fever from the outside by means of transport, including sailors, aviators, passengers, tourists on their return from hot countries. The danger of spreading and appearance of anthropurgical (urban) foci of this protozoic infection is caused by the presence of a specific vector in the areas of airports, ports, and railway stations – places of mass congestion of passengers [3].

But a large-scale shutdown of the entire transport system can lead to serious economic problems. The analysis of the dynamics of the main transport indicators for the 1st quarter of 2020 shows a decrease in traffic volumes due to restrictions imposed by some countries in road transport in import traffic by 33.7%, in air transport, on air in transit traffic - 52.5%. If in the 1st quarter of the current year indicators on air (export and import) and automobile (export and transit) modes of transport had a stable growth rate to the same period of the last year, then already for 20 days of April in the midst of the quarantine period, a sharp decline in all types of communication is observed [2].

In order to mitigate the crisis, the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan raised the issue of providing tax holidays and preferences on credit debts, allocating budget loans to the sectors most affected by the pandemic [4].

In particular, Mirziyoyev noted that there is a growing risk that enterprises in transport and logistics (loan - 650 billion UZS), foreign trade enterprises (loan - 3.6 trillion UZS) will not be able to repay the loans on time and for this reason, together with the Ministry of Investment and Foreign Trade of Uzbekistan held negotiations with foreign creditors of Uzbekistanairways JSC to review the terms of repayment of loans and payments on them in connection with the occurrence of force majeure events ("force majeure"). To compensate for a part of transport costs of business entities engaged in foreign trade activities and for other sectors of the economy, the Anti-Crisis Fund under the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Uzbekistan was established in the amount of 10 trillion UZS without establishing a legal entity. All tax audits have been suspended until the end of the year, as well as the imposition of penalties and fines for overdue debt on export and import transactions [5].

On the other hand, the Coronavirus pandemic has accelerated the process of implementation of digitalization, optimization of railway activities, as well as enhanced integration of Central Asian countries and countries members of international organizations. [6,7]

In order to ensure food security, also to support the economy of the state, the activity of the railway movement continued to work in a regular mode, with the condition of obligatory implementation of all security measures [7].

Special attention has been paid to the supply of the food sector. In particular, there is currently a growing demand for services for the transportation of fruits and vegetables by rail to CIS countries. Special conditions have been created for the transportation of agricultural goods, the downtime process has been extended from 1 to 4 x days. Domestic entrepreneurs make requests for shipment of this category of goods [6].

It is worth noting the social and economic role of rail transport (railway) in supporting food security of the Republic of Uzbekistan, where it was imported at an affordable price and high quality: 800 thousand tons of flour, 100 thousand tons of potatoes, 130 thousand tons of sugar, 100 thousand tons of oil and over 500 thousand tons of other products [2].

To ensure security, the export activity was reorganized, the system of document processing was structured and the documentation processes were switched to electronic digital format: if earlier suppliers from different regions of Uzbekistan received necessary bank documents only in Tashkent city, now it is possible in every region. Also at the head of "Uzbekistan Temir Yollari" JSC the introduction of online document processing for exporters has been activated, and for importers the conditions for registration of documents in a single window have been created, and from April 1, 2020 the obligation of preliminary information about the receipt of goods through the

electronic portal to the customs authorities has been established. These services make it possible to reduce delivery time, organize all procedures more efficiently, securely and accelerate the process of transition to digitalization [6].

In the area of transit economy, existing transit corridors are being improved and new transit corridors are being opened, international multimodal cargo transportation is being established, using flexible tariff policy. Uzbekistan's geographical position in Central Asia provides favorable advantages for the organization of cargo transportation along all routes.

Currently, there are 13 export-import corridors through which products can be delivered to more than 20 ports around the world [6].

Containers transportation between Uzbekistan and Turkey has also been established, on 06.04.2020, a flight from Uzbekistan went to another container railway caravan. In this direction, the export of products by container train is the fastest and highest quality, and a sharp increase in demand is expected, especially for textile products. Taking into account that the route runs along the transit Trans-Caucasian corridor Baku-Tbilisi-Kars, this route has the character of multimodal transport and is important as a new promising multimodal transport corridor [2].

Also, within the framework of mutually beneficial cooperation between the Republic of Uzbekistan and the neighboring Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, the freight traffic by rail is actively developing, 4 trains of export goods were dispatched in 218 wagons, due to the improvement of flexible schedule the speed of delivery was reduced from 5-6 days to 2 days [6].

Despite the pandemic, Uzbekistan's cargo turnover has positive indicators, the volume of exports transported by rail increased by 12% in 1 quarter compared to the same period last year and reached 2.3 million tons. It is also expected that the volume of imports in Q1 will grow by 5.6% compared to the same period last year and by the end of the year will reach 13 million tons [6].

The current situation with the pandemic has also strengthened integration in the Asian region. In particular, Uzbekistan sent humanitarian aid to Afghanistan by train on the Angren-Tashkent-Termez-Mazar-e-Sharif route, which included medical masks, protective overalls, thermal imaging cameras, pyrometers, flour, oil, rice, household soaps and clothing for children. [6]

Boeing 767-300PTC with the third cargo of humanitarian aid from Uzbekistan to Russia as part of the fight against COVID-19 arrived at Vnukovo International Airport on April 23.

Uzbekistan also provided humanitarian aid to Kyrgyzstan. According to Kyrgyz experts, this noble step shows that relations in Central Asia today have a completely different face.[8].

As SCO Secretary-General Vladimir Norov noted, "The coronavirus epidemic has become a test of the unity and strength of cooperation between SCO countries. First of all, it manifested itself in the willingness to share not only the epidemiological and organisational experience, but also to provide financial, economic and food aid to each other. It is well understood in our countries that no state will be able to ensure its own security by suppressing the coronavirus only on its territory as long as the disease continues to spread in the neighboring countries" [8].

Russia, China, Uzbekistan have also sent aid to Iran and Afghanistan, which are SCO observer states. Currently, China, where the virus has gone down, is providing necessary assistance to the SCO countries by sending humanitarian supplies [11]. Chinese and Russian specialists are working on the vaccine development [9].

According to IPEM, the COVID-19 pandemic has only accelerated, not provoked, global changes in the world economy due to "tectonic shifts" [10]. It can also be noted that the changes in the transport and transit economy of Uzbekistan due to the measures taken by the state accelerated the process of transition to digitalization and new modern conditions for representatives of the transport industry [12] and new international transport corridors have been activated. To support the economy, it is necessary to develop a plan of measures to stabilize the economy and protect it from COVID-2019, based on the results of scientific research and forecasts, as well as global experience, including in the field of transport.

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### **STANDARDIZATION OF TRAFFIC**

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**Abstract:** To study the effect of the condition of the road environment or the terrain on the aesthetic condition of the road in violation of the ecological regularity of the construction and operation (use) of highways.

**Keywords:** Road, environment, traffic technology, ergonomics

We need to understand and feel that the road is a special part of the human environment. As the basis of human evolution, highways are primarily a means to an end.

But during human activity, almost half of the earth has become uninhabitable. To illustrate this: How many natural landscapes have been destroyed for agricultural development in the Neolithic period, how many European forests have been burnt for land reclamation, how many irrigation systems have been destroyed in the south? One of the main representatives