

### SHUMANAY IS A LAND WITH AN ANCIENT PAST AND A BRIGHT FUTURE

Ernazarov Tuygun Rajabovich

Samarqand branch of the Kimyo university in Tashkent

Jarimbetova Zumagul Perdebaevna

Independent Researcher

I always say that I respect the Karakalpak people from the bottom of my heart for their tolerance, dignity, and bravery in overcoming difficulties. I say with love and pride that I am a child not only of Uzbekistan, but also of Karakalpakstan [1].

**Sh. Mirziyoyev**

#### **Annotation:**

This article explores the significant socio-economic developments in the Republic of Karakalpakstan, particularly focusing on Shumanay district. Over recent years, the district has undergone transformative changes, shifting from a traditional agrarian economy into a dynamic hub with modern production facilities and infrastructure. These developments are part of a broader national program aimed at enhancing the region's socio-economic conditions. Key initiatives include the establishment of industrial zones, support for export-oriented enterprises, and large-scale agricultural and environmental projects. The article highlights successful projects such as textile and fabric production, licorice root processing, and the creation of new jobs, particularly benefiting women and youth. The district is undergoing substantial modernization, improving living standards and diversifying the local economy.

**Keywords:** Karakalpakstan, Shumanay district, socio-economic development, industrialization, textile industry, agricultural modernization, Shumanay Eko Teks, licorice root processing, environmental projects, export-oriented enterprises, entrepreneurship, regional reforms.

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### I. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the Republic of Karakalpakstan, along with the other regions of Uzbekistan, has experienced significant socio-economic transformations. Spearheaded by the leadership of the country, a comprehensive development program has been implemented to advance the region, shifting it from a predominantly agrarian economy to a dynamic and modern industrial hub. This program has been particularly focused on modernizing infrastructure, developing skilled labor, and establishing robust production systems across Karakalpakstan, with each district benefiting from the ongoing reforms.

One of the most notable examples of this transformation is Shumanay district, an area rich in historical significance and natural beauty. Shumanay, once predominantly reliant on cotton farming, is now undergoing a profound economic shift. The district, home to approximately 58,000 people, has seen the launch of numerous projects aimed at diversifying its economy. These include the establishment of industrial zones, the promotion of textile production, and the implementation of agricultural initiatives to cultivate oilseeds and expand livestock farming. This article explores the ongoing changes in Shumanay, highlighting the key initiatives and projects that are reshaping the district's economy, improving living standards, and creating new opportunities for its people.

### II. LITERATURE REVIEW

In recent years, significant attention has been given to the development of Karakalpakstan, alongside all other regions of the Republic of Uzbekistan. Under the direct initiative of the nation's leader, a comprehensive program for the socio-economic advancement of the Republic of Karakalpakstan has been created and is being steadily carried out. As a result of this program, Karakalpakstan is transitioning from a traditional agrarian region into a dynamic and prosperous area with modern production capabilities, advanced socio-economic infrastructure, robust transport and communication networks, and a skilled workforce. These large-scale reforms are being systematically executed across all districts of the region.

One such district is the historically significant and modern Shumanay district. Among the ancient historical landmarks in the area are Jampiqqal'a (historically known as Aybuyir, dating back to the 5th–4th centuries BCE)

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and Janaqal'a (early 19th century, locally referred to as Ulkan Tom or Qo'hna Shumanay). Another notable site is Katta Oybug'irqal'a (Aybuyirqal'a), located 41 km northwest of Shumanay. The site was first discovered by members of the Khorezm Archaeological-Ethnographic Expedition in 1946, when its general appearance was photographed and a plan was drawn, although no archaeological excavations were conducted. In 1956, the site was re-examined, and based on the archaeological findings, it was dated to the 4th century BCE–1st century CE. It was concluded that the upper cultural layer of the site dates back to the 10th–13th centuries. Between 1964 and 1966, the Ustyurt group of the Khorezm branch of the Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Uzbekistan conducted research on the site. The structure of the site is nearly rectangular and stretches from east to west. The total area of the fortress was concluded to be 10 hectares. The site was historically surrounded by a defensive wall, with remnants of the wall preserved on three sides of the fortress.

Shumanay district was established on October 6, 1950. On February 5, 1960, the district was merged with the districts of Qo'ng'iro't and Xo'jayli. It was reorganized again on January 9, 1976. The district is bordered by Xo'jayli and Qanliko'l to the east, Qo'ng'iro't to the north and west, and Turkmenistan to the south. The district covers an area of 0.78 thousand hectares and has a population of 58,000 as of January 1, 2024. The district includes one urban-type settlement and 13 rural citizen assemblies, including Birleshiq, Dehqonobod, Ketenlar, Mamiy, Oqjap, Sarmonboykol, and others. The district center is the city of Shumanay.

The population of the district consists of Qarakalpaks and Uzbeks, as well as representatives of other ethnic groups, including Kazakhs, Turkmens, Russians, Tatars, and others. The average population density is 64.7 people per square kilometer.

By the decision of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. 155 in 2022, the program "Additional Measures for the Comprehensive Socio-Economic Development of the Regions of Karakalpakstan and Further Improvement of the Living Standards of the Population for 2022-2026" was approved.

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### III. METHODOLOGY & EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS

The program outlines socio-economic tasks for 2022, including the establishment of a free industrial zone in the Shumanay district, which borders Turkmenistan, supporting 20 promising production enterprises for export, constructing "New Uzbekistan" residential complexes, planting trees on 100,000 hectares of land in the area of the dried Aral Sea, and implementing many other initiatives.

Additionally, the program defines the specialization of cities and districts, "growth points" and driver sectors. In particular, for the Shumanay district, it envisions the development of the textile industry, the cultivation of oilseeds, and the expansion of livestock farming.

Shumanay, historically known as "Mamiyning keng dalasi" (Mami's wide steppe) in the local language, has long been renowned for its beautiful nature and hardworking people. However, today, Shumanay is no longer a district solely specialized in cotton farming, where people only cultivated cotton. A quarter of a century ago, this area had no other prospects for economic development.

Due to the ongoing reforms in our country, modern preschool educational institutions, school buildings are being constructed, and projects aimed at developing promising business sectors, opening new lands in agriculture, improving local infrastructure, and enhancing healthcare services are being implemented in the district. In short, the district, home to 58,000 people, has undergone significant changes over the past 5-6 years. Following the directive given during the President's visit to Karakalpakstan in 2017, the "Prom Servis Shomanay" company launched a project with an investment of 1 billion sums, which aims to produce 2.4 million polyethylene bags annually. Modern equipment was imported from abroad, and as a result, the factory was opened in March 2019. This not only provided employment for 30 people but also introduced industry to the region.

After the President's visit, a project with a value of 135.633 billion soums and an annual capacity of 7,400 tons for yarn and thread production was initiated in the district. The "SHOMANAY EKO TEKS" company took responsibility for implementing the project. For this, 9.6 hectares of land were allocated by the local administration. The company imported equipment worth a total of 14 million dollars from Switzerland, Japan, and

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Turkey. The company started producing its initial products in March 2020, and by 2023, 20,000 tons of cotton fiber had been processed, with 10.8 million dollars' worth of yarn exported. Major buyers include India, Pakistan, China, Russia, Iran, and Turkey. Currently, more than 450 employees work in three shifts, with 95% of them being women and youth. Furthermore, to expand its operations, the company plans to launch the second phase of the project, which involves producing fabrics made from synthetic fiber blends and dyeing them, from 2024 to 2026.

## IV. RESULTS

In fact, many projects once thought impossible are now being realized in the district. A large factory that produces canvas and gabardine fabrics, previously imported only from Russia and China, has also been established here, making it the only one of its kind in Central Asia. The "MIDASIA" company, which produces canvas from cotton waste, has an overall project value of 41.9 billion soums. For this project, 5.88 hectares of land were allocated from the "Monshaqli" neighborhood, and the factory was launched in November 2023, creating 120 new jobs.

Additionally, a small industrial zone has been established, where plots have been allocated to entrepreneurs. In this industrial area, the "LIANTAI KC LICORICE" company has implemented a project to build a "Licorice Root Processing Plant" with a direct foreign investment of 2 million dollars. Here, licorice root extract is being produced in powder form in cooperation with Chinese partners. In order to increase production, another 2 million dollars in direct foreign investment was attracted this year, leading to the creation of 40 new jobs. By the end of the year, the team plans to produce 500 tons of product worth 32.1 billion soums and achieve 2.2 million dollars in exports.

These changes in Shumanay are bringing prosperity and blessings to the lives of those who have been growing cotton for years. The ongoing construction and beautification works, along with the strong support for entrepreneurship, are laying the foundation for this transformation.

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### V. CONCLUSIONS

The transformation of Shumanay district exemplifies the broader socio-economic advancements taking place across Karakalpakstan. With a well-structured and comprehensive development program, the region is undergoing a profound economic diversification, shifting from traditional agrarian practices to industrial and manufacturing sectors. The district, once solely dependent on cotton farming, now hosts a range of modern enterprises that are creating jobs, stimulating local economies, and improving living standards. The successful establishment of industrial zones, such as the textile and licorice root processing factories, along with foreign investments, has paved the way for Shumanay to emerge as a vital player in Uzbekistan's economic landscape.

As the district continues to develop, the combination of strong government support, infrastructure improvements, and a focus on education and healthcare will ensure that the benefits of these reforms extend to all segments of the population. The ongoing changes not only promise a prosperous future for the people of Shumanay but also contribute to the overall growth of Karakalpakstan and Uzbekistan as a whole.

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