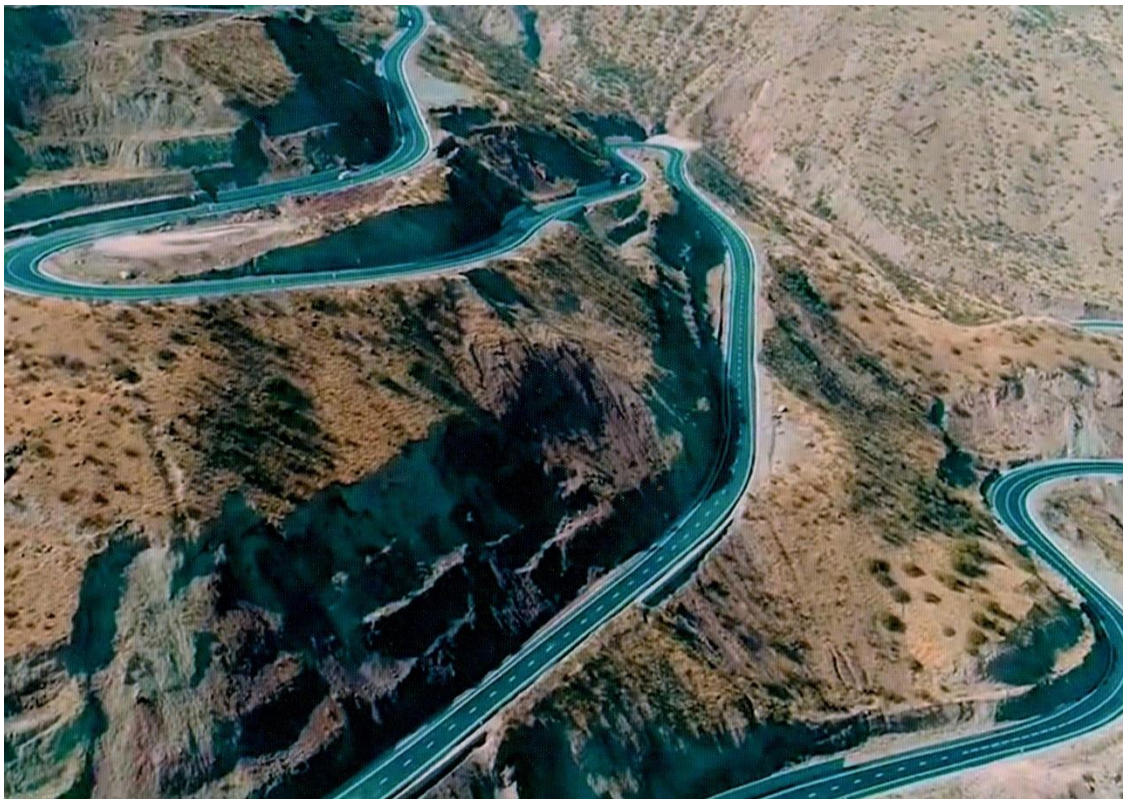


## **Bridging Mountains, Uniting Regions: A Case Study in Economic Revitalization in Tajikistan**

The Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) has a long history of supporting infrastructure development projects in the developing world. As the bank celebrates its achievements, the reconstruction of the Kulyab-Kalaikhumb road corridor in Tajikistan stands out as a prime example of its impact. This important project not only showcases the IsDB's commitment to improving connectivity and fostering economic growth but also exemplifies the power of strategic partnerships in overcoming geographical challenges.

Nestled amidst the rugged beauty of Tajikistan's mountainous terrain, the Kulyab-Kalaikhumb road corridor represents a vital artery that links the western and eastern regions of the country. This 169-kilometer passage traverses a landscape defined by the Pyanj River and towering rocky mountains, embodying both the natural splendor and the logistical challenges of the region. Before the IsDB's intervention, the corridor's deteriorating condition hindered not only local mobility but also regional commerce and integration, leaving communities isolated and economies stagnant.



In partnership with the Arab Coordination Group (ACG), the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) spearheaded the reconstruction initiative that unfolded over two decades, commencing in the early 2000s and culminating in 2020. This endeavor comprised of six distinct projects, with the IsDB financing five and the remaining one supported by ACG. This collective effort underscores a profound level of global collaboration, all directed towards rejuvenating the essential Kulyab-Kalaikhumb corridor.



To establish this vital corridor, the project required innovative engineering solutions, involving the construction of advanced superstructures like bridges, tunnels, and serpentine pathways through rugged mountainous terrain. A standout challenge was Section D, spanning 34 kilometers, showcasing the project's intricacy.

Section D demanded meticulous planning and execution, strategically divided into three projects, each addressing specific engineering challenges. Notably, the construction involved intricate rock cutting, reaching depths of about 100 meters. The precision displayed in these endeavors elevates the road to an exceptional standard.

Today, the Kulyab-Kalaikhumb road stands as the sole connector between Tajikistan's densely populated, economically vibrant west and its eastern regions, extending all the way to China. This transformation has not only facilitated smoother travel and trade but has also ignited economic revitalization across the country. The corridor's reconstruction has bridged communities, opened markets, and laid the groundwork for a future where Tajikistan can leverage its strategic location to become a central hub in regional and intercontinental trade networks.



The project's overarching impact extends beyond the tangible improvements in infrastructure. It has fostered a sense of unity and shared destiny among Tajikistan's people, proving that even the most daunting geographic barriers can be overcome with vision, collaboration, and perseverance.

The Kulyab-Kalaikhumb road corridor's journey from a concept to a concrete reality offers invaluable insights for future development projects. It underscores the importance of long-term planning, international cooperation, and tailored engineering approaches to address unique environmental challenges. Moreover, it highlights the critical role of infrastructure in unlocking economic potential, improving quality of life, and enhancing regional connectivity.

As the IsDB continues to forge pathways of progress across its member countries, the reconstruction of the Kulyab-Kalaikhumb road corridor in Tajikistan stands as a testament to what can be achieved when nations come together in pursuit of a common goal. This project not only transformed a critical transportation route but also symbolizes the journey toward a more connected, prosperous, and resilient future for Tajikistan and beyond.

In commemorating this achievement, we are reminded of the power of collective action and the enduring impact of visionary development initiatives. The road that winds through the mountains of Tajikistan is

more than just a route of travel; it is a bridge to new horizons, a beacon of hope, and a milestone in the IsDB's continuing mission to foster sustainable development across the globe.