

ATTENTION PAID TO PILGRIMAGE TOURISM IN UZBEKISTAN**Teacher of history in Oriental University****Kabulov Rustam****ABSTRACT**

Pilgrimage tourism today is a widespread and developing tourism industry. This field of tourism is a trip organized by travelers for religious purposes to mosques, shrines, and other religious destinations in a certain place. Our country is the homeland of great thinkers and scholars, a significant part of domestic tourism in our country corresponds to pilgrimage tourism. In the article, we will focus on the importance of pilgrimage tourism in Uzbekistan.

Keywords: Pilgrimage tourism, religious pilgrimage, shrine.

Pilgrimage tourism is the religious travel of people for pilgrimage. This trip can also be of worldly significance for the pilgrim. So, the purpose of pilgrims is not only to visit holy places, but also to get acquainted, gain new knowledge, enjoy aesthetic pleasure, and socialize. In modern literature, a "pilgrim" is defined as a religious traveler and a tourist as a vacationer [1:6].

People travel to certain destinations for spiritual nourishment or religious enlightenment during difficult times. A significant part of pilgrimage tourism in our country comes from domestic travel. Pilgrimage and tourist tourism - although there are different forms of activity, they have an internal commonality, complement and develop each other [2:2]. Mainly, trips in spring and summer are organized by educational institutions, organizations, and families. According to the results of ethnobiological research, pilgrims

60% answered that they are pilgrims and tourists. So, the pilgrim is performing both religious and worldly tasks together. Through this analysis, it can be seen that the folk proverb "both pilgrimage and commerce" has found its confirmation [3:19]. At this point, it should be acknowledged that in recent years, the number of pilgrims to the holy cities of Mecca and Medina, using the opportunities that have arisen among our compatriots, is increasing day by day.

The number of places related to religion in the republic is more than a thousand, and more than 10 thousand of the objects of cultural heritage are shrines and holy places. 7,570 of these objects are protected by the state, 2,330 of them are examples of ancient architecture, 3,945

are archeological, 1,138 are sculptures, monumental works of art, 157 are places of interest, more than 700,000 movable cultural heritage objects [4:35-37].

In recent years, the measures implemented by the government of Uzbekistan to develop tourism, especially pilgrimage tourism, attracted many tourists.

On February 21-23, 2019, the first International Pilgrimage Tourism Forum was held in Bukhara. Scholars of Islam and tourism experts from more than 130 countries of the world took part in it. In the "Bukhara Declaration" adopted at the end of the event, Uzbekistan was recognized as one of the most important pilgrimage tourism centers in the world.

Domestic tourism in our country is mainly carried out in the cities of Samarkand, Bukhara, and Khiva, which have a rich and ancient history.

Today, Samarkand attracts not only guests from neighboring regions but also the whole world. The proof of our opinion is that the 25th session of the General Assembly of the World Tourism Organization was held in the historical city of Samarkand. Despite the restrictions of the pandemic, 800 infrastructure projects were implemented in Samarkand in two years. More than 1 billion US dollars have been invested to improve the tourism infrastructure of the city of Samarkand alone.

Samarkand will be the capital of world tourism in 2023. The city is an open-air museum and was included in the UNESCO World Heritage List in 2001. The modern Congress Hall, the Expo Center, several top hotels, and a huge recreation center hosted all the General Assembly events, including a spectacular cultural night at the "Eternal City" amphitheater [5:12].

The next 43rd session of UNESCO in Paris was officially approved in 2025 in Samarkand. The last session of the General Assembly was held outside Paris in 1985 (Sofia, Bulgaria). About 7 million tourists visited Uzbekistan in 2023. These numbers are expected to double in the coming years. Domestic tourism is planned to reach 25 million. Samarkand is a tourist city of incomparable importance.

The city of Khiva is one of the tourist destinations that are always full of tourists. On November 30, 2019, at the 37th meeting of the International Turkish Cultural Organization - Turkey, the city of Khiva was declared the cultural capital of the Turkish world in 2020.

The city of Bukhara is a region with high tourist potential. There are 530 historical monuments in the city of Bukhara, of which 130 are included in the UNESCO World Heritage List [6:73].

Every region of our country has a rich history and tourism opportunities. In particular, Surkhandarya is a real discovery for foreign tourists traveling around Uzbekistan. In recent

years, the necessary infrastructure with modern services and favorable conditions has been rapidly strengthened here, and interesting destinations have appeared. It should be noted that a significant number of foreign tourists come to this ancient region to get to know the centuries-old history of human civilization. Therefore, in the coming years, it is planned to allocate a large amount of funds from the state to carry out archaeological excavations in the Surkhandarya region. In addition, measures are being taken to protect historical monuments of Buddhism from natural disasters. In the last six years, the number of tourists who came here has increased 13 times. According to estimates, the number of foreign tourists coming to Surkhandarya will reach 900 thousand by 2030.

To sum up, our country is one of the countries with beautiful nature and rich historical and cultural heritage. Kata has great potential for the development of pilgrimage tourism, and effective work is being done for it. Uzbekistan ranks among the top 10 countries in the world in terms of attractiveness, security, and tolerance among the member states of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation. In the near future, our country will become a land overflowing with tourists from Muslim countries.

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