



## DEVELOPMENT OF PILGRIMAGE TOURISM IN UZBEKISTAN: STRATEGIES AND PROSPECTS

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Article history:	Abstract:
<b>Received:</b> December 26 <sup>th</sup> 2023 <b>Accepted:</b> January 20 <sup>th</sup> 2024	The article analyses the role of pilgrimage tourism in national tourism in the rise of the international image of Uzbekistan, the policy of the state in the field of the development of pilgrimage tourism, the objects of pilgrimage tourism in Uzbekistan, the work carried out in them, the economic, socio-political, spiritual and ideological issues of improving the infrastructure of pilgrimage tourism. The legal bases of the development of pilgrimage tourism in Uzbekistan, its role and importance in the rise of the country's international image are considered.
<b>Keywords:</b> International image, national tourism, pilgrimage tourism, tourist facilities, pilgrimage tourism infrastructure, systematic approach to pilgrimage tourism, pilgrimage tourism and information communication system, pilgrimage tourism and tourism organizations.	

### INTRODUCTION

Today, much attention is paid to the development of pilgrimage tourism in Uzbekistan, improving the use of pilgrimage tourism facilities at the level of modern requirements in enhancing the international image of the country. There are more than 200 types of tourism in the world, among which one of the rapidly developing, promising areas is pilgrimage tourism.

As is known, the peoples of Turkic-speaking countries have a unique cultural, historical and spiritual heritage, which is the heritage of all humanity, said President Shavkat Mirziyoyev. Historical monuments of Turkic and Islamic civilizations, the heritage of great scientists, poets and thinkers, and artists are preserved in our countries. This is an invaluable wealth - the property of all humanity, which the whole world should enjoy. This is facilitated by the active development of pilgrimage tourism. The tourism industry as a component of the economy plays an important role in bringing countries and peoples closer together [1:266-267].

To ensure the sustainable development of pilgrimage tourism, it becomes important to pay attention to the following issues: First of all, strengthening the integration of the countries of Central Asia, further developing cultural ties, introducing the idea of "our Central Asian common home" into the minds and hearts of citizens of the Central Asian states; so that every person, no matter where he lives and no matter how he acts, remembers his ancestors, great, great, revered those who are pure in soul, creating the necessary conditions, opportunities for visiting; assessment of the number of pilgrims before religious holidays and events, study of management, logistics of the flow of pilgrims and tourists; protection of religious sites, promotion of the historical significance of religious monuments; protection of the natural environment of areas where mass religious events are held; special preparation for the implementation of activities related to pilgrimage tourism, ensuring certification of pilgrimage tourism routes; compliance with the principle of safe tourism, increased attention to environmental cleanliness, widespread and effective use of the achievements of new information technologies in the organization of pilgrimage tourism; organizing advertising marketing of new tourism products and services related to pilgrimage tourism; carrying out a policy of sustainable development in this area in order to develop pilgrimage tourism, introducing a policy of sustainable development into historical practice of pilgrimage tourism, it is important to consider issues related to the impact on the environment.

In Uzbekistan today, much attention is paid to the development of pilgrimage tourism; many religious and cultural shrines are being reconstructed and turned into tourist sites. Pilgrimage tourism is one of the most active and has great potential in the development of types of tourism; in Uzbekistan, attention is increasing to the issue of forming new infrastructure around existing shrines.

Policies and activities aimed at developing pilgrimage tourism in Uzbekistan have yielded results, and in recent years our country has risen from 34th to 9th place in the world ranking of pilgrimage tourism. Of the more than 8 thousand cultural heritage sites in Uzbekistan, 1257 are shrines, of which 1183 belong to Islam, 57 to Christianity. Uzbekistan also has 9 Buddhist and 8 Jewish shrines [2].

Pilgrimage tourism is a secular journey or worship of travellers and pilgrims to holy places located outside their usual habitat, with the aim of obtaining religious (lives of saints), historical (history of holy places) knowledge, expanding

the philosophical worldview, spiritual and aesthetic enjoyment of works of architecture and art in shrines. In this direction of tourism, pilgrims visit for both religious and secular purposes [3].

### LITERATURE REVIEW

Russian scientist in the field of pilgrimage tourism A. Babkin believes that "pilgrimage tourism is a visit to holy places by people professing any religion for the purpose of making a pilgrimage." K. Mazin believes that "pilgrimage is the origin of religious life, and tourism is the origin of cultural life," and he completely disagrees with the recognition of pilgrimage as tourism. A scientist from Uzbekistan, A. Khudoyarov, noted that "pilgrimage tourism includes trips to visit sacred places, veneration of our great ancestors, acquaintance with their past life and the created cultural, architectural and historical heritage, their memory, as well as participation in religious and secular ceremonies" [4]. According to D.M. Rakhimova, "pilgrimage tourism (also called religious tourism)" is a trip to places significant for Muslim culture. For example, to memorial complexes and shrines. The organizers of this type of tourism provide hotel accommodation according to honest standards, providing comfortable conditions with honest food, mountain biking [5]. In our opinion, pilgrimage tourism is a type of activity aimed at satisfying the spiritual, spiritual, psychological needs of a person to visit places associated with religion, his affiliation with a religion.

### METHODOLOGY & EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS

The article analyses the role and importance of pilgrimage tourism in enhancing the international image of Uzbekistan. Methods of theoretical and comparative analysis and a systematic approach were used as the research methodology.

In order to develop pilgrimage tourism in Uzbekistan, much attention is paid to the development and acceleration of the "small hajj" program, which consists of visiting sacred places and monuments in the cities of Samarkand, Bukhara, and Tashkent. A lot of work is also being done in Uzbekistan to develop a new tourism brand related to pilgrimage tourism, create all the necessary conditions for pilgrims, and improve existing tourist routes taking into account the requirements of pilgrims.

"The collection" Al-Jome al-Sahih, recognized in the Islamic world as a reliable source of the collection of hadiths of the Prophet Muhammad, is the fruit of many years of dedicated searches by Imam Bukhari, the mentor of all muhaddis, said President Shavkat Mirziyoyev. For twelve centuries, this work has been the most important the second most important reliable Scripture about Islam after the Holy Quran remains a source. It is no coincidence that thousands and millions of Muslims not only in our country, but also in other countries strive to visit Bukhara, where this valuable was born, and to visit his grave in Samarkand. The teaching of Moturidiy, based in the X century, Samarkand thinker Abu Mansur Moturidiy, who became famous as "Imam al-Huda" (Imam of the path of leadership), became widespread throughout the Islamic world. Moturidiy's teachings pay great attention to the role and importance of human intelligence, based on the idea of tolerance in the process of acquiring knowledge. This, in turn, played an important role in the widespread popularity of this teaching. Such ideas are still in dire need of humanity today. Nothing in great history passes without a trace. It is stored in the blood of peoples, in their historical memory and manifests itself in their practical work. That's why he is powerful. Preservation, study and transmission of historical heritage from generation to generation is one of the most important policy priorities of our state" [6:28-29].

The Centre for Islamic Civilization of Uzbekistan and international research centres such as the International Islamic Academy, the Mir Arab Higher Madrasah, Imam Bukhari and Imam Termizi serve to study and promote the rich scientific and historical heritage of Uzbekistan. To develop pilgrimage tourism in Uzbekistan and increase its attractiveness, first of all, attention is being paid to the issues of drawing up a tourist map of the sacred places of Uzbekistan, creating favourable conditions for pilgrims, establishing propaganda work, improving the maintenance of the transport system, and training guides and translators.

A number of measures have been implemented to increase the attractiveness of Uzbekistan in the field of pilgrimage tourism; in accordance with the Decree of the President of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev No. 5611, from January 5, 2019, a pilgrim visa was introduced to foreign citizens for a period of up to 2 months to study the cultural, historical, religious and spiritual heritage and traditions of Uzbekistan. Since 2018, catering establishments and restaurants in Uzbekistan have been working to implement the "halol" standard into practice, and since February 2018, the state standard ISO 22000 and the "general guide to Halol food products", its own DSt 3286:2018, have been officially introduced. The State Committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan for Tourism Development, the state unitary enterprise "Centre for Certification of Tourist Services" has developed a new state standard - its own DSt 3220:2017 "Tourist services. Deployment tools. General requirements", from January 1, 2018, it is established that every hotel must have religious books, including the Koran for Muslims and a sign indicating place of prayer (at least 10% of rooms) and the direction of Mecca (qibla) for prayer (at least 30 % of rooms). At the same time, much attention was paid to the organization of prayer and ablution halls at international airports, railway stations and hotels. The introduction of a visa-free regime in 45 countries, an increase in the number of countries whose citizens can enter Uzbekistan without a visa are up to 64, and citizens of 76 countries have the opportunity to obtain an electronic entry visa.

The travel company "Muslim-Tour" under the administration of Muslims of Uzbekistan serves to organize large-scale pilgrimages of local and foreign citizens to places of pilgrimage, creating decent conditions for pilgrims. In the development of pilgrimage tourism in Uzbekistan, much attention is paid to the development and expansion of pilgrimage tourism routes. Tourist route "Seven Feasts" in Bukhara, the role of mausoleums and shrines such as Imam

al-Bukhari, Shahizinda, Khoja Ahrori Vali, Mahdumi Azam, Abu Mansur Moturidiy, Khoja Ishak Wali, Khoja Daniyar, Sheikh Burhaniddin Sagardzhi, Khoja Abdu Darun and Khoja Abdu Berun in the development of pilgrimage tourism in Samarkand and the importance of these shrines has increased, attention to issues of improvement, restoration, repair, and the formation of appropriate infrastructure for tourists is increasing.

Today, representatives of other religions other than Islam also travel to Uzbekistan as part of pilgrimage tourism. In the Surkhandarya region in the south of Uzbekistan there are monuments associated with the Buddhist religion, such as Fayoztepa, Karatepa, Airitom, Dalvarzintera, and currently tourists from countries such as Japan, Korea, China are showing great interest and attention to Buddhist monuments and temples, located here.

The storage in Uzbekistan of one of the samples of the Koran in the Islamic world - Usman Karan, the mentor of hadith scholars Muhammad al-Bukhari, many mature followers of the Naqshbandi tariqa, the presence of a number of religious centres indicate the high potential of Uzbekistan in the field of pilgrimage tourism.

Today, Uzbekistan is increasingly known as a country that opens new opportunities to the world, is steadily developing, and is safe to visit and travel. This leads to an increase in the international image of Uzbekistan in the field of pilgrimage tourism.

On January 28, 2022, Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev No. PF-60 "On the new development strategy of Uzbekistan for 2022-2026" was adopted, according to which goal 35 in Appendix 1 to the decree: to increase the number of local tourists from 12 million within the framework of the program "Travel around Uzbekistan", as well as increase the number of local tourists visiting the republic. number of foreign tourists Up to 9 million [7].

On July 29, 2022, presidential decree No. PP-338 "On measures to accelerate the development of cooperation in the field of tourism with Turkic states" was adopted. The decision approved the concept of tourism "valuable pilgrimage" within the framework of the Turkic world. As part of the concept, seminars, symposia, conferences, scientific and practical conferences on the scientific and cultural heritage of great scientists will be held in Tashkent, Samarkand, Bukhara, Khiva, Shahrisabz, Margilan, Kokand, Termez and other historical cities. Thanks to interaction within the framework of the organization of Turkic states, the brand Valuable pilgrimage will be created [8].

Appendix 1 to the Resolution of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated July 29, 2022 No. PP-338 was adopted; Chapter 2 of the appendix indicates the work carried out in the field of international cooperation to build the potential of pilgrimage tourism in Uzbekistan. These are: establishing cooperation in the field of transport logistics within the framework of the organization of Turkic states; development of a conceptual online platform and mobile application on the web portal of the organization of Turkic states; Establishing an exchange of experience with the participation of pilgrim tourism specialists from authorized bodies in the field of tourism of member states and observer states of the organization of Turkic states; holding mutual presentations, exhibitions and meetings in the "B2B" format in order to widely promote the potential of pilgrimage tourism of our country in member countries of the Organization of Turkic States, as well as showing films dedicated to the life and scientific heritage of our great scientists; Establishing regular cooperation with authorized bodies and specialists of member states and observers of the organization of Turkic states on the conservation and restoration of objects of common Turkic cultural heritage; establishing cooperation with authorized bodies in the field of tourism of member states and observers of the organization of Turkic states in matters of conducting research work in the field of tourism [9], consisting of the like.

On September 16, 2022, a meeting of the Council of Heads of State of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization was held at the Congress Centre of the international tourist complex "Great Silk Road" in Samarkand, at which it was proposed to declare 2023 the Year of Tourism Development in the SCO space in order to give new impetus to cooperation in the field of tourism. At this meeting, President of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev noted that Samarkand, since time immemorial, has been a centre of spiritual, economic, cultural and scientific exchange between peoples inhabiting the space from East Asia to North Africa, the Middle East and Europe. Therefore, he launched an initiative for Samarkand solidarity in the name of common security and prosperity. Its goal is to attract to the global dialogue everyone who is not indifferent to our common future, is ready to look for coordinated approaches and solutions, despite disagreements, and agrees with the principles of the "spirit of Samarkand". To discuss the implementation of this initiative, the Samarkand International Forum will be held next year with the participation of political leaders, the public, businessmen, influential representatives of academic and expert circles. [8] this forum will be important for the development of pilgrimage tourism in Uzbekistan and enhancing its international image.

At the same time, at the XI session of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation in Baku in 2022, Khiva was declared the "tourist capital of the Islamic world" in 2024. The Organization of Islamic Cooperation particularly noted the reforms carried out by the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev in such areas as the policy of openness in the field of tourism, simplification of the visa regime, preservation of cultural heritage, and improvement of historical cities.

## RESULTS

Major sites of pilgrimage tourism in the Republic of Uzbekistan include the shrine of Sultan Uwais on the territory of the Republic of Karakalpakstan, the mausoleum of Kutaiba ibn Muslim in the Andijan region, the shrine of "Yeti Pir" in the Bukhara region, seven mentors of the Naqshbandi Order - Abdukholik Gijduvani, Here are the shrines of Arif Revgari, Anjir Fagnavi, Ali Romitani, Samosi, Amir Kulol and Bahauddin Naqshband, as well as the Poi Kalon complex, which is also associated with the Prophet and his descendants (Ayub Aleihissalam, Davud Aleihissalam, Hazrat Khoja

Ubbon), associated with scholars of Sufism (Jelani, Zinda fil Ahmadi Jami, Saifiddin Boharzi, Khoja Ismatullah Bukhari, Shohi Akhsi Fayzabad), associated with artisans (Khoja Asbgardon, Poradoz, Khoja Bulg'or, Burki Sarmast), named after women (Bibi Orifa, Bibi Makhsimai Pok, Kiz Bibi, Childukhtaron), which have healing properties (Khoja Zafaron, Sarichashma, Tuyavovul chashmasi, Kotyrbulok, Bibi Kabudposh), can be organized in the form of shrines. Temple and mosque of the shrines Novka Ata, Osmat Ata, Saad Ibn Abu Waqqas, Sayfin Ata, Sovruk Ata, Khojai Sarab Ata, Sayid Burhaniddin in the Jizzakh region. Shrines of Abul-Muin al-Nasafi, Khoja Imkonaghi, Darvesh Muhammad Vakhshivari in the Kashkadarya region, the Chashma complex in the Navoi region, the Sultan Uwais Karani complex in the Namangan region, Imam Al-Moturidih mausoleum in the Samarkand region, complex Imam Al-Bukhari, mausoleum complex Shakhizinda, mausoleum Khoja Ahror, mausoleum Hazrat Rukhabad or Sheikh Burkhoniddin Sogarji, Khoja Abdu Darun, Khoja Abdu Berun, Burkhoniddin Marginani, Abu Mansur Moturidi, graves of Khoja Ishak Vali, Mausoleum of Khoja Danier, Hazrat Khizr Mosque, Hazrat Khoja Zudmurad Mosque, Namazgoh Mosque, Gulistan Mosque Jame in Syrdarya region, Mustafakul Ata Turbat, Torah Suleiman Turbat, Abu Isa Muhammad Imam at-Tirmizi in Surkhandarya region shrines Hakim al -Termizi, Alouddin Attar, Mavlona Muhammad Zahid, the Zangiota complex in the Tashkent region, the Burkhaniddin Marginoni memorial complex in the Fergana region, the Pakhlavon Mahmud mausoleum in the Khorezm region, There are Tashkent complexes Hazrati Imam in the city, and they are important for the development of external and internal pilgrimage tourism, as well as for raising the international image of Uzbekistan in the field of pilgrimage tourism.

From November 1 to 3, 2022, the International Week of Pilgrimage Tourism will be held in Uzbekistan in the cities of Samarkand, Bukhara, Khorezm, and Tashkent, the main goal of which is to unlock the potential of pilgrimage tourism in the country, promote Uzbekistan as one of the most important centres of world civilization, gain recognition from the world community and international organizations, as well as the development of pilgrimage tourism services for diversification and increasing tourism exports" [10].

President Shavkat Mirziyoyev, at a video conference on measures to further increase the potential of domestic and external tourism, emphasized the need to fully utilize the potential of pilgrimage tourism and set the Ministry of Tourism the task of increasing the number of flights to Samarkand, Bukhara and Tashkent from Indonesia, Malaysia, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Arab countries. countries with high potential for pilgrimage tourism. Officials have been tasked with approving a program to attract at least 1 million tourists a year, making full use of the more than 1,200 pilgrimages across the country. Considering the diversity of confessions, sects, and approaches of tourists coming on pilgrimage, it was shown that it is impossible to do without scientific approaches to what food to offer to representatives of what religion or sect, how to equip hotels and places of worship. It was also said that there were few experts and guides who could provide information about sacred sites, saints and feasts. In this regard, the Islamic Academy of the Silk Road University was tasked with developing scientifically based approaches for countries with a large flow of pilgrimage tourism [11]

### CONCLUSIONS

In general, today pilgrimage tourism plays an important role in enhancing the international image of Uzbekistan in the field of tourism, in-depth study of the history of Islamic religion and culture, increasing the tourist prestige of our country, and promoting it as a centre of pilgrimage tourism. Today it is necessary to increase attention to the issue of effective use of foreign experience in the field of pilgrimage tourism, attracting experienced specialists and scientists conducting research in the field of pilgrimage tourism into the industry. Drawing a map of pilgrimage tourism sites, ensuring the relationship of pilgrimage tourism with other types of tourism, the relationship of pilgrimage tourism sites in Uzbekistan with pilgrimage tourism sites in Central Asia, training specialists relevant to the industries, organizing the infrastructure of pilgrimage tourism, roads, hotels, food outlets, production of various items associated with religious beliefs. amplification becomes important. Uzbekistan has great potential in the field of pilgrimage tourism. Therefore, establishing interaction with foreign tourism organizations, developing pilgrimage tourism based on scientific approaches, increasing attention to promoting the capabilities of Uzbekistan in the field of pilgrimage tourism abroad are becoming important for the further development of pilgrimage tourism in Uzbekistan and enhancing its international image.

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