



RELIGIOUS TOURISM IN KHOREZM REGION: CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS FOR DEVELOPMENT

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ANNOTATION

The article describes the work being done to develop pilgrimage tourism in Khorezm region, as well as the achievements, problems and obstacles in this sphere and their solutions.

KEYWORDS: pilgrimage, pilgrim, pilgrimage tourism, shrine, shrine, architectural monument.

INTRODUCTION

As long as humanity exists there will be believes, worships, and strives for spiritual purification. That is the reason why people wants to visit religious monuments. Pilgrimage (Arabic - going to a place or to a person) means visiting holy places, graves and cemeteries, performing certain rituals. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said in one of his hadiths: "There are three deeds which soften the heart: supporting orphans, visiting sick people and visiting the graves of the ancestors"¹.

Today, shrines do not only meet the spiritual needs and comfort of the people, but also play a special role in improving the economic well-being of the population and the economic condition of the state. Today, shrines are one of the most visited and lucrative places for the population. Indeed, shrines are the most visited places today. This is why the shrines have become one of the most lucrative places in terms of employment, donations and charity.

Especially today, along with world travel, one of the most developed areas is pilgrimage tourism. Pilgrimage tourism is the visitation of sacred places, cities, and cemeteries because of peoples' respect and belief in their religion².

Pilgrimage tourism is divided into several types: a) Visiting holy places; b) Observing holy places, studying their historical culture; c) Scientific

journey which means going to holy places to engage in religious research;

In addition to ancient monuments, shrines, historical and cultural monuments there are unique traditions, culture and picturesque nature which along with the efforts to attract tourists in this direction play an important role in further developments of the tourism industry and infrastructure in our country.

In this regard, on the basis of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev's decrees on August 16, 2017 "On priority measures for the development of tourism in 2018-2019"³ and on February 7, 2017 "On the Action Strategy for further development of the Republic of Uzbekistan"⁴, the decree " On the integrated development of tourism potential in Khorezm region and the city of Khiva in 2017-2021"⁵ a program for the development of pilgrimage tourism in Khorezm region was created. This gives great opportunities for the development of pilgrimage tourism.

THE CONTENT OF THE ISSUE

It is obvious that Khorezm region is a region rich in places of pilgrimage, and in the future paying more attention to the development of pilgrimage tourism

¹ Islam. Encyclopedia: A – H / Edited by Sheikh Abdulaziz.- T.: "O'zME". 2017. – P.184

² Glossary of terms. // <http://uletaemru.ru> . (Appeal 3.02.2018)

³ August 16, 2017 "On priority measures for the development of tourism in 2018-2019." / www.lex.uz

⁴ On the "Action Strategy" for the five priority areas of development of the Republic of Uzbekistan in 2017-2021 // Collection of Legislative Acts of the Republic of Uzbekistan. - Tashkent, 2017. - Article 70. / www.lex.uz

⁵ Decrees of May 4, 2017 - on the integrated development of tourism potential of Khorezm region and the city of Khiva for 2017-2021 / www.lex.uz



will play an important role in both material and spiritual developments. Since the tourism industry plays an important role in the sustainable development of the country, it is an important source of increasing foreign exchange earnings in the treasury of the host country, and most importantly, creates hundreds of work places. Today, one of the most active and promising types of tourism is pilgrimage tourism, which is highly valued by the state because travelers (pilgrims) consume food, pay for accommodation and use services during the pilgrimage. On this basis new economic infrastructures are formed in the territory of the shrine.

There is no doubt that places of pilgrimage and shrines will become a great source of income at the expense of low funds. There are dozens and hundreds of such places in Khorezm region. However, the routes to visit them are not clearly defined. We know the shrines of the saints, which are of great service in the Islamic world today, only at the local level which is at the district or provincial level. In the near future, there is a chance that such sacred shrines can be turned into objects of religious pilgrimage at the national and international levels.

We know that there are such shrines in Khorezm which are visited by pilgrims from abroad. So in the following paragraphs we divided the shrines into two groups according to the demand of the visitors.

Places and shrines of international importance. Many tourists from all over the world, especially from the countries of the Muslim world, come to visit the shrines of international importance. The shrine of Pahlavon Mahmud, Said Mohroyi Jahon, Said Alovuddin, Three Saints, Abdol Bobo, Shohimardon, Sheikh Mavlon Bobo, Bibi Khojar (Khiva), Sheikh Mukhtor Vali (Yangiariq), Said Ota (Honqa), Yusuf Hamadoni, Voyangan Bobo (Shovot) are not just sacred places but also unique architectural monuments and are included in the UNESCO list.

Shrines of local significance. Local sites include places of pilgrimage from different regions and districts of the Republic, as well as the local population. They include Dashqin Baba Complex (Urgench), Sa'd Ibn Abu Waqqas, Sheikh Hussein, Shahpir Bobo, Muzrabshah Khorezmi, Rahmonquli Aziz (Tanobli) Mausoleum, Hazrat Abul Marjan, Baqir Eshan (Sulaymon Bokirgani) - (Hazarasp) Mausoleum, Imorat Bobo Complex: The mausoleums of Sayyid Shafaat Aziz, Imorat Bobo, Mir Muhammad Aziz and the mausoleum of the mosque (Koshkopir), Sheikh Odina Muhammad Khorezmi (Bagat), John Horos Bobo (Urgench), Poyanda (Khiva).

PROBLEMS AND DEVELOPMENT PROSPECTS

Khorezm oasis is an area with great opportunities for pilgrimage tourism, so serious attention should be paid to the regional organization and development of pilgrimage tourism in the oasis. Of course there are some obstacles and problems, as well as ample opportunities to attract tourists which will be discussed in the following paragraphs.

Firstly, the research shows that the existing religious shrines in the region have not been studied deeply in terms of pilgrimage tourism, and it is recommended to study them extensively because it is very important for the incoming tourist to know about the shrine. In the future it is of scientific importance to study the history of sacred places in Khorezm region, their architectural structure. Also, there is a need to develop a map of Kadamjo and shrines in the region. Only the first steps have been taken to restore the holy places in the region. Conducting scientific research in this area is one of the current issues.

Secondly, most of the shrines are located within the districts, the internal roads leading to them and many of our historical shrines are in a bad condition and even in a state of disrepair. They need to be repaired at the required level to receive visitors.

Thirdly, as we all know, most of the shrines in the region are based on cemeteries. In Khorezm cemeteries, unlike in other regions, the corpses in the graves are buried. The tombs of the saints in the shrines are located in the middle of the cemetery. This makes foreign pilgrims who come to the province hesitant to come to the shrines. Therefore, it is necessary to separate the shrines located in the cemeteries and ensure the health and safety of incoming tourists. We need to study the demand of visitors to arrange the organization and development of local tourism.

In addition, it is necessary to develop cooperation with tourism firms and companies of Islamic countries, in particular, to develop measures to attract pilgrims from Southeast Asia and West Asia;

CONCLUSION

The people of Khorezm are generous people who are devoted to ancient history, who have left an immortal legacy, who have set an example by doing good deeds to restore the memory of great thinkers, scholars and saints. If we glorify the names of the saints, restore and preserve their mausoleums and shrines, Khorezm, especially Khiva, will inevitably become not only a tourist destination, but also a place of pilgrimage from all over the world.



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