

**PILGRIMAGE TOURISM: DEVELOPMENT, LOGISTICS, AND
INDUSTRY IN UZBEKISTAN**

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***Abstract:** Pilgrimage tourism, one of the oldest and most active forms of travel, continues to be a significant sector in the global tourism industry. This article examines the development of pilgrimage tourism resources globally, emphasizing the substantial role of Uzbekistan in this industry. The impact of government policies, socio-economic reforms, and infrastructure improvements is analyzed in relation to the pilgrimage tourism industry's growth and the enhancement of logistics management. Uzbekistan's strategic policies, led by President Shavkat Mirziyoyev, have positioned the nation as a key player in the global pilgrimage tourism network, particularly in the Islamic world. The importance of Imam Al-Bukhari's shrine and the need for robust infrastructure and logistics are also discussed. Ultimately, this article advocates for a deeper exploration of national and regional features, types, and logistics of the pilgrimage tourism industry in Uzbekistan.*

***Annotatsiya:** Sayohatning eng qadimiy va faol turlaridan biri bo'lgan ziyorat turizmi jahon turizm sanoatida muhim sektor bo'lib qolmoqda. Ushbu maqolada jahon miqyosida ziyorat turizmi resurslarining rivojlanishi ko'rib chiqilib, O'zbekistonning ushbu sohadagi muhim roli ta'kidlangan. Hukumat siyosati, ijtimoiy-iqtisodiy islohotlar va infratuzilmani takomillashtirishning ta'siri ziyorat turizmi industriyasining o'sishi va logistika boshqaruvini takomillashtirish bilan bog'liq holda tahlil qilinadi. Prezident Shavkat Mirziyoyev rahbarligidagi O'zbekistonning strategik siyosati mamlakatimizni global ziyorat turizmi tarmog'ida, xususan, islom olamida asosiy o'ringa qo'ydi. Imom Al-Buxoriy ziyoratgohining ahamiyati, mustahkam infratuzilma va logistika zarurligi ham muhokama qilinadi. Nihoyat, ushbu maqola O'zbekistondagi*

ziyosat turizmi sanoatining milliy va mintaqaviy xususiyatlari, turlari va logistikasini chuqurroq o'rganish tarafdori.

Аннотация: *Паломнический туризм, одна из старейших и наиболее активных форм путешествий, продолжает оставаться важным сектором мировой туристической индустрии. В данной статье рассматривается развитие ресурсов паломнического туризма в мире, подчеркивая существенную роль Узбекистана в этой отрасли. Влияние государственной политики, социально-экономических реформ и улучшения инфраструктуры анализируется в связи с ростом индустрии паломнического туризма и улучшением управления логистикой. Стратегическая политика Узбекистана, проводимая президентом Шавкатом Мирзиёевым, позиционирует страну как ключевого игрока в глобальной сети паломнического туризма, особенно в исламском мире. Также обсуждается важность святыни имама аль-Бухари и необходимость надежной инфраструктуры и логистики. В конечном итоге, данная статья призывает к более глубокому изучению национальных и региональных особенностей, типов и логистики индустрии паломнического туризма в Узбекистане.*

Key words: *Pilgrimage tourism; Tourism logistics; Travel organization; Optimization; Customers; Pilgrim Identification; Service management; Types of travel; Cultural Sensitivity Training.*

Kalit so'zlar: *Ziyorat turizmi; Turizm logistikasi; Sayohat tashkiloti; Optimallashtirish; Xaridorlar; ziyoratchining identifikatsiyasi; Xizmatlarni boshqarish; sayohat turlari; Madaniy sezgirlik treningi.*

Ключевые слова: *Паломнический туризм; Туристическая логистика; Организация путешествий; Оптимизация; Клиенты; Идентификация паломника; Управление услугами; Виды путешествий; Тренинг культурной чувствительности.*

Pilgrimage tourism continues to thrive globally, connecting people of various faiths and fulfilling spiritual needs through sacred journeys. Recent data show international tourism is rebounding significantly after the pandemic, with international arrivals reaching 80% of pre-pandemic levels in early 2023. An estimated 235 million tourists traveled in the first quarter, more than double the figure from the previous year. Pilgrimage tourism has long served as a bridge across cultures, enabling spiritual journeys that hold profound meaning for millions. Today, more than 330 million tourists annually undertake pilgrimages to sites sacred to their faiths, including millions of Christians Muslims, Buddhists, and Hindus, among others. These journeys fulfill their desire for spiritual purification, completion of prescribed rituals, and veneration of holy places.

The global pilgrimage tourism network is diverse, involving countries and regions worldwide. As people adhere to various religions such as Islam, Christianity, and Buddhism, pilgrimage routes crisscross the globe. Religious pilgrimage tourism has remained a vital aspect of travel throughout history, and modern trends show that it is still an active sector.

Uzbekistan, along with Saudi Arabia, stands out as a country with significant influence in pilgrimage tourism development. President Shavkat Mirziyoyev has spearheaded strategic reforms to promote the tourism sector, particularly pilgrimage tourism. The government's targeted policies and support have laid the groundwork for further growth. One prominent example is the shrine of Imam Al-Bukhari, which ranks in importance after the holy cities of Mecca and Medina for Muslims. Its international prominence attracts thousands of pilgrims annually. The development of infrastructure and facilities around this sacred site is crucial for accommodating and facilitating the influx of pilgrims. The complex includes a mosque, a library, and a mausoleum dedicated to Imam Al-Bukhari. It attracts scholars and followers of Islam from around the world who visit to pay their respects and gain spiritual blessings. A purposeful, unified tourism policy under President Mirziyoyev has driven the improvement of logistics in pilgrimage tourism. This has resulted in a multi-faceted tourism

industry economy with firms based on various forms of ownership. Improving logistics efficiency has been prioritized to optimize resource management, meet the production needs of the tourism sector, and reduce costs by leveraging international expertise. The government has worked tirelessly to establish favorable conditions for pilgrims and tourists visiting Uzbekistan's shrines. Improving logistics and infrastructure ensures smooth travel for foreign visitors. The efforts include restoration and beautification of religious sites to preserve their historical significance.

In the last 10 years, the influx of foreign tourists to Uzbekistan has significantly increased. Notably, from 2021 to 2022, the number of foreign tourists visiting Uzbekistan nearly tripled, increasing from approximately 1.8 million to 5.2 million. This represents a substantial growth, particularly considering the challenges posed by the global pandemic in the preceding years. The resurgence in tourist numbers is a reflection of both the easing of travel restrictions and the concerted efforts by the Uzbek government to promote tourism as a key sector for economic development. This reflects the government's effective economic reforms and strategic policies. The decree, "On Additional Measures for the Rapid Development of Tourism in Uzbekistan," has facilitated significant improvements in the industry and logistics of national and regional pilgrimage tourism.

Pilgrimage logistics and its associated terminology are evolving to accommodate the growing needs of religious tourism. An analysis of specific logistics terms and their definitions indicates that considerable efforts are underway to enhance the linguistic framework surrounding pilgrimage tourism. This progress signifies ongoing development in tourism linguistics, enabling clearer communication, improved organization, and more efficient travel experiences for pilgrims.

Here are some terms that might relate to logistics terminology in pilgrimage tourism in Uzbekistan:

Transportation Infrastructure - Road, rail, or air networks supporting pilgrim movements.

Accommodation Capacity - Available hotels, guesthouses, or religious lodging for pilgrims.

Visitor Flow Management - Strategies to control and direct the movement of visitors at pilgrimage sites.

Guided Tours - Organized tours for pilgrims to holy sites.

Site Accessibility - Ease of reaching pilgrimage locations for people with different needs.

Local Transportation - Buses, taxis, or rented vehicles available for short-distance travel between sites.

Visa Processing - Simplified visa procedures specifically designed for pilgrims.

Customs Clearance - Streamlined customs for religious tourists.

Security Protocols - Measures taken to protect pilgrims and religious sites.

Pilgrim Identification - Systems to identify and track pilgrims for their safety.

Crowd Control - Tactics to handle large crowds at high-density pilgrimage locations.

Information Centers - Facilities providing guidance and information to visitors.

Medical Assistance - Health care services for pilgrims in need during their journey.

Travel Agencies - Agencies offering specialized pilgrimage tours.

Religious Guide Services - Local religious leaders providing spiritual guidance to pilgrims.

Cultural Sensitivity Training - Preparing local staff to handle diverse religious backgrounds.

Financial Services - Foreign exchange and banking facilities catering to pilgrims.

Language Support - Interpretation services for non-native pilgrims.

Emergency Response - Quick-response units for accidents or natural disasters at pilgrimage sites.

Permits and Regulation - Specific permissions required for religious tourism and activities.

These terms cover aspects from site management to traveler needs, providing a glimpse into the logistics of handling large pilgrim flows.

The pilgrimage tourism sector in Uzbekistan is at a critical juncture, poised for growth due to government support and strategic development plans. There remains a need for deeper analysis of logistics and management to align the industry with evolving market dynamics. Uzbekistan's distinct national and regional pilgrimage tourism features should be further explored to ensure sustained development. By focusing on improving logistics, services, and infrastructure, Uzbekistan can solidify its position as a leading pilgrimage tourism hub.

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