THE OPPORTUNITIES OF TOURISM DEVELOPMENT OF SAMARKAND REGION

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ABSTRACT

The article discloses information on how the tourism industry developed after the declaration of independence of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the created conditions for the progressive development of tourism and tourism opportunities of Samarkand and the current benefits provided by the state for the development of tourism.

INTRODUCTION

Since ancient times, tourism has served to strengthen the bonds of friendship between the peoples of the planet. People travel to discover new countries, see and know the world, develop commerce, and establish cultural and diplomatic ties.

Samarkand, a peer of ancient Rome and Babylon, famous for its medieval centers of science, art and culture, and included in the UNESCO World Heritage List, has been a center for the formation and development of ancient statehood on this land. As this city was the cradle of ancient culture, education, crafts and commerce was developed in the early and late Middle Ages, magnificent palaces, mosques and madrasas were built. To build such a beautiful city needed not only the skillful masters and builders, but also the knowledge and experience of scientists who have profound knowledge of fundamental sciences such as mathematics, astronomy, physics, architecture, geometry, geodesy, seismology, and chemistry.

It is precisely this city and the center of culture that the Great Silk Road passed through the most important cultural and socio-economic event in the history of the world. The communication networks that emerged in the III- II millennium BC connected the cultures and countries of the vast Mediterranean region stretching from the Mesopotamian plains to the Indian Valley, the Central Asian oasis and the Arabian Sea. Later, these regions became one of the main routes of the Great Silk Road.

Expansion of trade relations has led to the migration of the population. They also brought with them their own traditions and worldviews reflected in architecture, cultural monuments, numismatics and crafts. All of this is reflected in the diaries of famous travelers and explorers who have traveled the Great Silk Road at different times. These people are from different nationalities, including Zhang Tsyan from China, Marco Polo from Italy, Claudio from Spain, Ibn Fadlan and Ibn Battuta from UAE, Jenkinson from England, Schiltberger from Germany, Marten and Bonvalo from France, Vamberi from Hungary, Hedin from Sweden and Mayar from Switzerland. Among them they were pilgrims, missionaries, traders, scholars, diplomats, researchers and writers. Each of them has made a significant contribution to the history of the formation and formation of international tourism, and we are very grateful to them for it. The wall paintings in Samarkand reflect the visit of ambassadors, traders and travelers from around the world to Central Asia. This unique historical work depicts the reception of ambassadors from China, Korea, South and North Asia and other countries in the palace of the Afrosiab ruler over 2,500 years ago. One can speak a lot about the historical significance of the city of Samarkand and its unique beauty. The city of Samarkand attracts the attention of travelers,
tourists and visitors with its majestic architectural monuments, blue domes, unique oriental appearance and spirit. This charming city captivates anyone. Anyone who has ever seen it will never forget it. “The Huffington Post, an internationally acclaimed and well-respected American publication, lists Samarkand as one of the top 50 cities in the world. And a person must visit at least once in their lifetime” [2]

The firm peace and stability in our country, the atmosphere of mutual respect and harmony, world-renowned Uzbek hospitality, modern hotels and resorts, and high-quality service provide a great opportunity for tourists to enjoy meaningful recreation. June 2, 1995 The Decree of the First President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Islam Karimov “On Measures for the Promotion of the Republic of Uzbekistan in the Restoration of the Great Silk Road and the Promotion of International Tourism in the Republic” was adopted.[3]

In this decree the issue turning Samarkand region into a special open economic zone for international tourism was raised. The resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of October 10, 2012 "On measures to further support and develop the tourism industry in the Republic of Uzbekistan" [4] is an important guide for the development of tourism and tourism infrastructure, active promotion of national tourism services in international tourism markets.

Uzbekistan became a member of UNWTO (world tourism organization) in 1993. There is a regional center for tourism development in the Great Silk Road in Samarkand. At the General Assembly of the UNWTO in South Korea in October 2011, Uzbekistan was elected for the second time as a member of the Executive Council of this organization. Few countries in the world have earned this status.

The decision to hold the next 99th session of the Executive Council in Samarkand at the 98th session of the Executive Council of the UNWTO in June 2014 in Santiago de Comostela, Spain, is the result of our country's successful tourism sector.

Ancient and eternally young Samarkand, "The pearl of the earth" and "The pearl of the East", has been fascinated by its beauty and grandeur. The ancient and modern buildings of the city, it’s beautiful and picturesque nature create great opportunities for the development of tourism.

According to the folklore, there is wisdom in every particle of Samarkand soil, and every street, square and alley has its own beauty and grace. Each brick of this ancient and eternally young city embodies the great talents and skills of our creative people and their eternal values.

On June 21-22, 1995, with the initiative of the Konrad Adenaur, former Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany, seminars were held in Urgut district and in Samarkand. It focused on improving governance and developing tourism in Samarkand.[5]

During independence years, Samarkand has become even more beautiful and magnificent. In connection with the 660th anniversary of Amir Temur and the 600th anniversary of Mirzo Ulugbek, large-scale construction works have been carried out in Samarkand. A magnificent monument to our great ancestor Sahibkiran was erected in the city center. The Observatory and Madrassah of Mirzo Ulugbek have been reconstructed. On October 18, 1996 by the decree of the first President Islam Karimov, Samarkand was awarded the Order of Amir Temur. Since then, October 18 is celebrated as the Day of Samarkand.

On the initiative of the first President Islam Karimov, an invaluable work was done to restore the historical appearance of Samarkand and increase its economic potential. In 2007 the 2750th anniversary of Samarkand was widely celebrated. On the eve of this anniversary, the eternal city became even more beautiful. Dozens of erected social, educational institutions and sport grounds, medical institutions and hotels, highways, beautiful parks add much more beauty to the ancient city and at the same time it provides good opportunity the residents and guests of the city. Amir Temur’s mausoleum, Ruhbad, Registan Square, Hazrati Khizr and Bibikhanim mosques, Shahi Zinda and the Mirzo Ulugbek observatory were reconstructed. The construction of a small ring road connecting them has become another convenience for city dwellers and tourists.

The tourism potential of Samarkand is an important factor in the further development of the city’s economy and employment. Today, more than a hundred travel agencies and over a hundred hotels operate here. Thetourist attraction of Samarkand region is divided into several types.

Ancient architectural monuments: Architectural and historical monuments of Samarkand are included in the World Heritage List at the 25th session of UNESCO in Finland in 2001, and currently there are 73 major historical monuments in Samarkand. Samarkand, the regional center, is rich with ancient architectural monuments. The Ulugbek Madrasah (1420), Ulugbek Observatory (1424-1428), The Registan Square (Sherdor Madrasah 1619-1636, Tillakori Madrasah 1647-1660), Ruhbad (XIV Century), Abdi Darun Mausoleum (IX century), Hazrat Khizr mosque (16th century), The complex of Shahi Zinda, Bibikhanim Mosque (XIV century), Mausoleum of Gur Amir (15th century) are certainly admired by foreign tourists.

Archeological excavations: As a result of archaeological investigations in the village of Sazagon (27 km south-west of Samarkand) from 1966 to 1972, 4 neolithic sites was added to the archaeological map of Samarkand region. All of these habitats are located in the wooded terraces of the Zarafshan peaks above the Sarazagon River. Most of the collected artifacts are stone objects: nucleus of different shapes, plate cutters, firearms, grain mills, and axes of flattened shapes.

Samarkand is situated in the centre of Movarounnahr, in Zarafshan valley. The geographically comfortable location of Samarkand makes it to be the first among the cities of the Central Asia. It was evidenced by the excavations of the Afrasiab ruins of the XVIII century. The Afrasiyob area extends to 288.9 hectares, along the margins of the depths and boundary is 5.4 km.

Archaeological data of the city of Dobusia (Dobuskala), the ruins of the ancient city of Dobusia, is located in the western part of Samarkand region, in the present administrative division, in the Pakhtachi district of Samarkand region, 12 km northeast of the city Ziyoviddin. It is located in the northeast part of the village Dobusqala. Topographically, it occupies the upper left bank of the Zarafshan River. The city, like many
other cities in Central Asia, it consists of three parts and the Ark of the city considers as a core of the city.

The Ark is located in the north of the city, and the arc is separated from the main part of the city by a deep defense pit. The Ark's square shape allows us to guess that it was founded in Ellinism or antiquity.

**Pilgrimage and Religious Centers:** Samarkand is regarded as a place where holy saints and great people live forever. Our religious leaders, great men and saints visit the cemeteries of Samarkand and its districts in order to pray for the passed away ancestors.

There are opportunities for developing religious tourism in Samarkand, such as the Shokhi Zinda, Hazrat Khizir, Ruhabab, Imam Bukhari, Moturidi, Hazrat Dawud, Imam Bahra Father Complex, Chorchinor and many others. Specialists' research shows that "the information about 28 cemeteries in Samarkand is fully explored." [6] The cemeteries from IX-XI century Shokhi Zinda, Hazrati Khizir, Chokardiza, from XIV-XV century Khuja Gulom, Khuja Ahor Vali, Sultan Khavondbek (Governor), Khoja Ahor Vali, Khoja Muhammad Sangirason, Qubbi Chohardahum are also in Samarkand.

**The Memorial complex of Imam al Bukhari**

Imam al Bukhari complex is situated the village of Khartang in Payaraq district in Of Samarkand region. The tomb of Imam - al- Bukhari was laid by the Muslim Board of Central Asia and Kazakhstan in the early 1970s and dome shaped terrace was built in mid-70s.

In 1989, Suharto, the President of the Republic of Indonesia, visited Samarkand. “Suharto began his journey to visit the grave of our great ancestor Imam Ismoil-al Bukhari. In his interview in Registan Suharto mentioned that Ismiol-al Bukhari is a spiritual figure of the Indonesian people. [7] We should consider this as a great honor to our great ancestors, our history and our homeland. In 1998, in honor of the 1225th anniversary of Imam Bukhari, a magnificent monument was erected according to the decree of the first President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Islam Karimov.

**The Mausoleum of Imam al-Moturudi:** The mausoleum was built in 2000 on the initiative of the first President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Islam Karimov in the Chokardiza cemetery in Samarkand. The role of scientific and religious heritage of our great ancestor Abu Mansur al-Moturudi plays enormous role in the spiritual life of our people. He was known throughout the Islamic world with the honorable titles "Ismi al-Huda" (Imam who leads the Guidance) and "Imam al-Mutakallimini" (Imam of the scholars of the word).

**The mausoleum of Imam Bahri-ota:** The tomb of Imam Bahri-ata (1500-1594-95) is located near the north-western corner of the city of Dabussia (according to some sources, the mausoleum of Abu Khuraira Dobby). The mausoleum was specially built in honor of the Imam and it was an architectural monument of the Shaybanids era. Inside the mausoleum, there is a huge pillar of the Imam. Its dimensions are: the length - 4,73; and the length of bottom -5,07; in height – 1,18 cm. It was made of black marble and it was set stand upright. The marble monument is a rectangular shape. The surface of the monument is well-polished.

At the entrance of the mausoleum and 5-10m in the distance of it there is another stela. Next to it there is a chest stone, which stands on a stela. Nowadays only its south door is used. According to the size of the brick used in the construction of the mausoleum, it was built in the 16th century, during the time of the representative of the Shaybanid dynasty Abdullah II. It was completely renovated several years ago.

On December 22, 1999 the first President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Islam Karimov at the meeting with voters of Samarkand region he also pointed out the issue of tourism. “The tourists coming to our country, especially those who r coming to Samarkand we should do our best to take care of them and to make a profit from their visit.

From this point of view, the issue of tourist business should not be avoided, it is important to understand and to implement it. Tourist business is, in a broad sense, the most important thing we need. Today's tourism cannot be separated from the tourism business. Take these great tourist countries, and we should certainly take the example of Spain, Italy, Greece, Turkey, India, Egypt, Japan, which have the highest profits. Spain, Turkey, and Egypt make at least $ 10-20 billion a year US dollars earning from tourism”. But most of the above countries do not have the wealth we have. Samarkand is a beautiful place for tourists. It is hard to find the city comparable to Samarkand in the world.

In order to increase the volume of hotel services, to carry out extensive beautification around the historical monuments and tourist routes “The Regional Tourism Development Program for 2010” was adopted by the regional administration. The role and importance of the transport structure in the development of regional tourism is enormous, and Uzbekistan Airways is also a major contributor in this process. The Samarkand airport can serve over 1000 passengers an hour.

Passengers can travel from Samarkand to Tashkent, Moscow, St. Petersburg, Simféropol, Kazan and many other countries, as well as Western Europe and Asia, providing services that meet international standards.

Rail transport, which is an important type of transport for tourists, is also important for the development of tourism. A convenient, high-speed train between Tashkent and Samarkand has provided great convenience for tourists.

**CONCLUSION**

When we speak about the enormous tourism potential of Samarkand, we mean, first of all, the most ancient and unique examples of ancient civilizations and cultures, unique historical monuments, material culture and architecture that have been formed and developed in the territory of Samarkand. They are currently being studied by many scientists and specialists from Japan, France, Germany and other countries. Samarkand region regularly participates in major tourist exhibitions in Paris, London, Berlin, Rome, Tokyo, Madrid and other cities.

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