DEVELOPMENT OF TOUR OPERATOR ACTIVITIES IN THE TOURISM SECTOR IN UZBEKISTAN

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A B S T R A C T
The article examines the role of tour operators in the development of tourism in the Republic of Uzbekistan. The concept of tour operators and their importance in the tourism sector are explained. Also, proposals are made for the development of tour operator activities.

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INTRODUCTION

Today, tourism is of particular importance as one of the strategic sectors of the economy and plays an important role in the economy and social life of many countries. In particular, for Uzbekistan, tourism is not only an economic benefit, but also a means of demonstrating national heritage, culture and history to the world. In recent years, significant work has been carried out in the country to develop tourism infrastructure, increase the flow of foreign tourists and support domestic tourism. The role of tour operator activities in this process is incomparable.

Tour operators are organizations engaged in the formation, concentration and presentation of tourist services to consumers. Tour operators create ready-made tourist packages by combining various elements such as transport, hotel, catering, excursion, guide services. They develop tour packages in accordance with the needs of tourists and monitor the quality of services provided during the trip.

Methodology.

The methodological basis of the study was the legislative and regulatory legal acts in the field of tour operator development, presidential decrees and resolutions. Also, comparative analysis, sample

observation methods were used to analyze views and opinions on the research work. Scientific abstraction and other methods were used to enrich the content of the work and provide it with conclusions.

Results.

The development of tour operator activities, first of all, leads to the improvement of tourism infrastructure, the creation of new jobs, the activation of small businesses and the service sector. This contributes to the sustainable growth of the country's economy.

The development of tour operator activities in Uzbekistan is taking place in several stages. In the early years of independence, this sector was just taking shape. In the 1990s, state-owned travel companies operated, and later private tour operators began to appear. In the 2000s, Uzbekistan's tourism potential began to be widely promoted through participation in international exhibitions and cooperation with foreign partners.

In recent years, under the leadership of President Shavkat Mirziyoyev, great attention has been paid to the tourism sector. Based on a number of resolutions and decrees adopted in 2016–2023, tourism has become one of the priority areas of state policy. In particular, the opening of the Silk Road International University of Tourism, the introduction of a visa-free regime, the creation of an electronic visa system and online booking opportunities through the Uzbekistan.travel portal have significantly facilitated the activities of tour operators.

Speaking about the current state of tour operator activity, today hundreds of officially registered tour operator companies operate in Uzbekistan. Their main areas are as follows:

Historical and cultural tourism: tours based on monuments in cities such as Samarkand, Bukhara, Khiva, Tashkent.

Pilgrimage tourism: Islamic heritage sites - Imam Bukhari, Bahouddin Naqshband, Shahi Zinda complex, etc.

Ecotourism and mountain tourism: Chotkol, Zarafshan, Hisar ranges, Lake Aydar, Aral Sea regions.

Gastronomic tourism: Tours related to Uzbek national cuisine (food festival, tea ceremony, etc.).

Some tour operators also organize tours to foreign countries, but the main focus is on inbound tourism - attracting foreign tourists to Uzbekistan.

Discussion.

There are also a number of problems in the tour operator sector. The main ones are:

The need for qualified personnel: There are not enough guides, tour operators and marketing specialists.

Lack of competitive tour packages: In some cases, tourists choose neighboring countries due to high prices.

Weak use of information technologies: Most tour operators are unable to effectively use online services and advertising tools.

Regional logistics problems: Transport and road infrastructure is not well developed in some tourist zones.

The following measures are important to address these problems:

Expanding the training of professional personnel in tourism.

Strengthening partnerships between the public and private sectors.

Introducing online marketing, CRM and AI technologies into tour operator activities.

Developing domestic flights, railways and automobiles.

Conclusion.

Tour operator activities in Uzbekistan are the heart of the tourism industry, and their development leads to an increase in the quality of tourist services, economic activity and cultural exchange. The favorable environment created by the state, new opportunities and legislative relaxations open up broad prospects for

tour operators. At the same time, modernization of this sector based on modern requirements, the introduction of innovations and adaptation to international standards will help Uzbekistan take a more stable place on the world tourism map.

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