

UZBEKISTAN TO DEVELOP TOURISM SECTOR AFTER YEARS OF STAGNATION



After the death of former leader Islam Karimov, Uzbekistan is looking to open its doors to the world. Shavkat Mirziyoyev, President of Uzbekistan, signed a decree on August 16. A decree “On Priority Measures for the Development of Tourism for 2018–19”. The program is aimed at the accessibility of travel to Uzbekistan and development of tourist infrastructure. It also intends to create new tourism facilities, diversify the tourist product and promote the the tourism sector in domestic and foreign markets.

Special attention is paid to measures to create modern tourism infrastructure in the country. The program plans to build recreation areas in the city of Khanabad. **Five new modern recreation areas on the shores of the Aidar–Arnasoy lakes are also planned.** Other than that, construction of hotels in Shakhrihsabz, Karshi and the Chimgan mountains will begin in the coming years.

The document to boost the tourism sector also notes that Uzbekistan will simplify the visa procedures and the organization of pilgrimage tourism for foreign tourists. To implement this task, a permanent working group is being established to prepare proposals for the step–by–step simplification of visa and registration procedures for foreigners.

This will be based on the dynamics of development of bilateral relations with these countries. Other than that, on the conjuncture of the world tourism market and the emerging international and regional situation.

Along with this, further development of international cooperation in the tourism sector is planned. To achieve this, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Uzbekistan will develop agreements and treaties with many countries. **One of the most important aspects is also the focus on creating an open environment for entrepreneurial activities in the field of tourism.**

The practice of allocating long–term loans (up to 15 years) to business entities for the construction and modernization of hotels and other tourism infrastructure will be introduced. This will include, among other things, the provision of flexible loan and interest repayment conditions. This will take into account the capital intensity and season congestion of hotels.

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