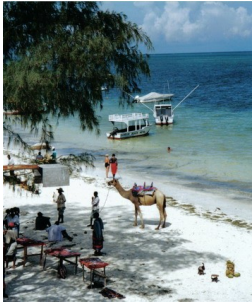


KENYAN TOURISM INDUSTRY - NOT FULLY RECOVERED



Kenyan tourism industry was severely damaged by the 2007 post election violence. No tourists were hurt during the time and also the tourism industry infrastructure was spare but the image of the country as a tourism destination suffered a lot anyway. Hundreds of people died during the period which has naturally scared the international tourists off. Tourism agents started to look for alternative destinations. Before the elections, Mombasa received some 41 chartered flights weekly, right after the election violence there were only three. According to Kenya Association of Hotelkeepers and Caterers Association chief executive officer Mike Macharia, there are only 11 flights weekly coming to the city these days.

Tourism is an important foreign currency earner for the Kenyan economy therefore the Kenya Tourist Board hoped to bring it back to life by an aggressive marketing. Nevertheless, the global financial crisis has come and hit the Kenyan economy. Major source market for Kenyan tourism industry is Europe and the US. The combined effects of the post election violence and the global economic downturn cause that the number of tourists coming to this African country drops. According to the tourism board the number of European tourists' arrivals has dropped by approximately 50 per cent between January and October last year compared to the numbers from 2007. The drop in American visitors was 30 per cent. Despite this decline, Europeans still remain the most numerous group of visitors.

The decline in the tourism industry naturally results in laying off. Reportedly 20,000 Kenyans lost their jobs because of the decline. The financial crisis prevented the Kenyan government from raising \$500 million for infrastructure development through a debut sovereign bond. The tourism board, however expects the tourism industry situation to improve after the global financial crisis is dealt with in their source markets. They will also continue in their aggressive marketing to lure tourists back to Kenya.

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