

NIGERIA AIMS TO MAKE USE OF ITS ASSETS



For a country so rich in natural assets and attractions, tourist arrivals to Nigeria are not as frequent as they perhaps should be. Tourism is indeed vital to any economy, bringing important revenue to either developed or under-developed countries. Since the introduction of democracy to the African nation in 1999, modern federal capital has been profiting and Nigeria's political importance has been growing. This has, in turn, very much helped the growth of inbound tourism and made its future look a lot rosier.

The original problems behind Nigeria's seeming inability to use its potential in the tourism sector lay in economic unrest, military problems, the country's reputation as dangerous and the lack of sufficient and appropriate infrastructure. These are issues, which local tourist organisations and the Nigerian government have been aiming to tackle. The bad roads, unsafe streets, lack of electricity are clear impediments to potential visitors. Similarly, although Nigeria boasts over 800km. of golden coastline with coconut and palm trees and the possibility to enjoy deep sea recreational fishing, most of these attractions are unkept and are considered unsafe. The improvement of the Nigerian economy has gone some way to providing a way to sort out the problems of the roads, beaches and facilities. The repair of roads has facilitated the safari industry as tourists have been given the chance to go game and gorilla viewing in safety.

Staying with the economy, the introduction of the so-called tourist bank. This new scheme was introduced in order to give potential tourism practitioners the opportunity to take out loans and thrive in the industry. This has been seen as an extremely wise investment. After decades of civil unrest, economic turbulence and danger, Nigeria is finally realising its potential in the tourist industry and is making steps towards becoming a major attraction of Africa.

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