

# GHANA'S EFFORTS TO IMPROVE ITS TOURISM



The Republic of Ghana, a country in West Africa, witnesses a considerable growth in its tourism industry. Last year it earned some US\$1.2 billion. The Ghanaian government wants the tourism industry to become one of the country's major revenue and foreign exchange earners.

The Executive Director of the Ghana Tourism Board, Mr. Martin Mireku claims it is thanks to the favorable socio-economic atmosphere in Ghana that the tourism grows so rapidly in recent years. The government supports the development of this sector of Ghanaian economy. There is for example the biennial National Awards scheme organized by the Ghana Tourism Board. Awards are given to those who provide the best services in the tourism sector.

The Minister for Tourism and Diaspora Relations Mrs. Oboshie Sai Cofie noted that the Ghana Tourism Federation (GHATOF) should help the industry. She sees the federation as a source of practice initiatives, relevant training grounds and innovations. The federation's aim is to support the development of an effective tourism industry. The GHATOF programs are initiated not only by the Ghanaian government but also by the private sector.

Officials seek ways how to bring in more tourists. For example the Minister of Health Major Courage Quashigah thinks that indigenous Ghanaian dishes may become a useful tourism attraction and also a foreign currency earner. The minister, however, emphasized it is necessary to ensure that the food is safe.

Another activity that should improve the country's image is the Regenerative Health and Nutrition Programme (RHNP) by the Ministry of Health launched in 2007. It is aimed to promote especially the disease prevention. There is also the Support Fund launched by members of the Ghana Traditional Caterers' Association that shell help the local governments with waste problems solutions. Mrs. Oboshie Sai-Cofie recently asked the members of the Association to improve the Ghana's tourism image. It is essential to provide better services and to protect the environment.

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