

TOURISM MINISTER URGES STAKEHOLDERS TO GUARD AGAINST SEX TOURISM

The Minister of Tourism, Hon. Mrs. Sabah Zita Okaikoi has called on traditional leaders and all stakeholders to guard against sex tourism likely to creep up in the western region as a result of the oil find.

According to her the oil find in the Western region is going to open up the region for a lot of visitors and tourists who will come for business, visits and others for wrong motives including the promotion of sex tourism.

“It is necessary that we don’t lose sight of the fact that it is not all who will come to do genuine business,” she said.

The Minister said this at the sod-cutting ceremony of a Tourism Receptive Facility center in Axim in the Western region.

Mrs. Okaikoi said that although there are already existing laws against sex tourism the passage of the tourism bill will give stiffer punishments to offenders of the act.

She further urged the general public especially the hoteliers to watch out for such miscreants and report them to the appropriate authorities.

She therefore urged all traditional rulers and other stakeholders in the region to ensure that such a vice is not promoted in the region.

Touching on the construction of the receptive facility, the Honorable Minister said the construction of the facility will open a new chapter in the tourism development in the Nzema East Municipality and its environs.

“Indeed , we remember with nostalgia the major role played by Paa Grant and others during the struggle for Ghana’s independence , yet these great heroes and heroines have featured prominently in our tourism promotional activities,” she said.

She indicated that the construction of the facility will include a museum and an information centre which will fill the information gap in the provision of relevant information to serve as an avenue to tell the stories of past heroes and other historical sites in the region.

According to her the project will further create direct jobs for the youth in the area which is in line with the government's better Ghana agenda.

"The management of this facility is very crucial if we are to derive the anticipated benefits and promote sustainability of tourism development in the western region," she added.

Mrs. Okaikoi said that the tourism industry has demonstrated its potential as a viable industry which can impact significantly on poverty reduction in local communities which abound in tourist attractions, facilities and services.

The Minister said the tourism sector has the potential to facilitate job creation and improve the standard of living in areas where community based tourism initiatives are implemented.

"I wish to urge the Municipal Assembly and the Traditional Council to take an active interest in the development of tourism in the Municipality."

The Paramount Chief of Lower Axim Traditional Area, Awulae Attibrukusu III commended the Ministry for choosing the Municipality as one of the three beneficiaries of the Tourist Facility center.

He pledged the commitment of the Lower Axim Traditional council to lease lands to the Ministry for any developmental project in the area.

The Municipal Chief Executive of the Nzema East Municipality, Rev. James Ackaah Cobbinah in a speech read on behalf of the Western regional Minister commended the Ministry for the idea of promoting domestic tourism.

He indicated that the decentralization of tourist data is appropriate and the construction of the receptive facility center will help in the collection of data.

