

ZAMBIA GEARED TO SHOWCASE TOURISM POTENTIAL



TOURISM, Information and Broadcasting Services Permanent Secretary Amos Malupenga on an elephant ride at Mukuni Big Five Resort in Livingstone. - Picture By Ndubi Mvula

TOURISM, Information and Broadcasting permanent secretary Amos Malupenga says Zambia is geared to showcase its rich tourism products during and after the 2013 United Nations World Tourism Organisation General Assembly to be co-hosted by Zambia and Zimbabwe.

And Senior Chief Mukuni of the Toka Leya people of Kazungula district told Mr Malupenga that he has set aside 25 hectares of land for the construction of a convention centre in Livingstone and urged Government or the private sector to take up the challenge of building the centre. Mr Malupenga, who was checking tourism facilities in Livingstone, said President Sata's declaration of Livingstone as Zambia's tourism capital means that the town is heading towards becoming the best tourism destination of choice for both domestic and foreign tourists.

He emphasised the need to enhance awareness by marketing the rich and pristine tourism attractions the country has, to domestic tourists before drawing the attention of foreign tourists.

Mr Malupenga said the Patriotic Front administration is dedicated to the promotion of domestic tourism and called on the media to help market the country's rich tourist destinations.

“We have to market our tourism sector and more so, promote domestic tourism. But we can only achieve this if the media go flat out and market the sector so that Zambians can appreciate it fully,” he said.

Mr Malupenga also commended Chief Mukuni for his commitment to the promotion of tourism. He said he has all the confidence that Zambia will present to its visitors the best product, to encourage them to return.

Mr Malupenga said once Cabinet Office gives a go- ahead on some of the measures to hasten the promotion of tourism, citizens should expect more development in the sector and Livingstone will experience a lot of change.

And Senior Chief Mukuni said his Mukuni Big Five Resort is ready to provide the best facilities in 2013 and beyond.

He also revealed that he is introducing hyenas at his resort, giving the visitors a rare opportunity to come up close with rare wildlife.

The enterprising traditional leader said much as Zimbabwe has an upper hand on accommodation, Livingstone should also lead in outdoor activities and assured Mr Malupenga that the tourism capital is ripe for the challenge.

“What we are trying to make sure that what our colleagues in Zimbabwe do not have, we should have the facilities, so that we balance the scale. We need to promote domestic tourism,” he said. Animal interaction is free for all schoolchildren at Mukuni Big Five and many schools from the Copperbelt have been to the resort for learning purposes.

Source: Zambia eye