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UTB starts campaign to promote Uganda as tourism destination

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KAMPALA. Members of Uganda Tourism Board (UTB) have embarked on a recovery campaign in a bid to breathe life into the tourism industry and to promote Uganda as a tourism and investment destination.

The UTB chief executive officer, Mr Stephen Asiimwe, said the country's abundant wildlife in national parks and game reserves, as well as in the lakes, rivers and mountains are among Uganda's main selling points.

"With all that is on offer, one of the main challenges facing tourism in Uganda is how to develop and package tourism products in a way that meets consumer needs, enabling the creation of a viable business and this is what we have embarked on as UTB," said Mr Asimwe.

He said this month, UTB has been spreading the word about Uganda's diverse and awe-inspiring travel experiences across the United States and Canada as part of a multi-city roadshow organised by its appointed North American public relations and marketing firm, PHG Consulting.

PHG Consulting firm [North America] is one of the three Public Relations (PR) firms hired to carry out promotion and marketing of Uganda tourism sites at a total cost of Shs5.4b for a five-year project.

The money was provided by the World Bank under the World Competitive Enterprise Development Project. Other PR firms include Kamageo for the United Kingdom and Ireland; and KPRN for German-speaking Europe.

More Shs5 billion has been spent on three global public relations firms to market Uganda's tourism potential as the UTB works to meet President Museveni's goal of four million tourists annually by 2020.

A delegation including UTB chief executive officer Stephen Asiimwe, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Tourism, Wildlife and Antiquities Doreen Silver Katusiime, and UTB Quality Assurance Coordinator James Ssebagala travelled to North America to meet with top journalists, tour operators, and travel agents during two exclusive media breakfasts, a series of one-on-one meetings, and the Ugandan heritage celebrations at the World Bank.

The UTB public relations officer, Mr Vincent Mugaba, said the tour helped UTB to get a clear-cut strategy for promoting tourism at home and abroad.

Mr Mugaba noted that with 10 per cent contribution to Uganda's GDP, tourism will directly impact on development and employment in Uganda as the country works to attain middle income status.

He explained that Uganda's priorities seem mixed up and that it is time the tourism industry as a whole, as well as the individual players, worked on the basis that the largest markets, and the ones with massive growth potential, are the domestic and regional ones.

Shs5b

AMOUNT GIVEN TO PHG CONSULTING FIRM TO CARRY OUT MARKETING OF UGANDA TOURISM SITES

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