Kenya launches Tech City

Kenya's much touted first Technology City in Africa was commissioned by president Kibaki last week in one of his signature events before vacating office.

The US$10 billion project will be constructed in four faces over a span of 20 years in what will greatly transform the face and economic situation of Kenya and the region. The first phase will be completed in three years and will cost an estimated US$2.4 billion.

The president laid the foundation stone of the construction of the 'Konza Technopolis' christened as the 'Kenya Silicon Savanna', officially kicking of one Kenya's most ambitious development project.

Investors and developers will now be at liberty to start the construction of the facilities that will among other things brand Kenya as a destination for information technology innovations in Africa.

Situated along the ever busy Nairobi-Mombasa highway, Konza Technology busy sits on a 5 000 acre of land exactly 60 kilometres from the capital city.

Once completed, the project which is implemented under the Ministry of Information and Communications will attract massive investments with over 20 000 direct jobs expected in the first one year.

To be included in the Technopolis will be a Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) park, science park, mega malls, convention centre, data schools, world class hotels, international schools, world class hospitals, championship golf course, financial district, high speed mass transport system, residential housing among other world-class facilities.

"This is one project that my government has been dreaming about. The realisation of this project will apart from putting Kenya on the world technology map provide employment to our young people," said president Kibaki.

The government will facilitate the construction of both onsite and offsite infrastructure including roads, water and sewerage systems, energy and high-speed rail in order to make the city more attractive, productive and habitable.

The government is still encouraging investors to take up the remaining slots in the capital intensive project.

According to Shop Architects, the American firm that has been contracted to design the facility, the construction will be done in a way that priority projects are actualized first. These include a convention park for international meetings and conferences.

"The construction will be phased in such a way that the most crucial facilities are given precedence with the resources being heavily ploughed back into the construction of the others," said Todd Sigaty, an event director at Shop Architects.

The project will be managed and run by the Konza City Development Authority (KCDA).

Kibaki called on Kenyan investors to take the cue in the project and not wait till most of the stake has been take over by foreigners.

"We are calling on local investors to take-up a huge chunk of investment in this project. The potential of its success is enormous. We do not want people to start whining that foreigners have dominated the project," said the president.

The technology city is one of the flagship projects under the country's economic blueprint, the Vision 2030. The development plan aims to transform Kenya into a middle income, newly industrialised country by the year 2030.

Source: CP-Africa.com

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