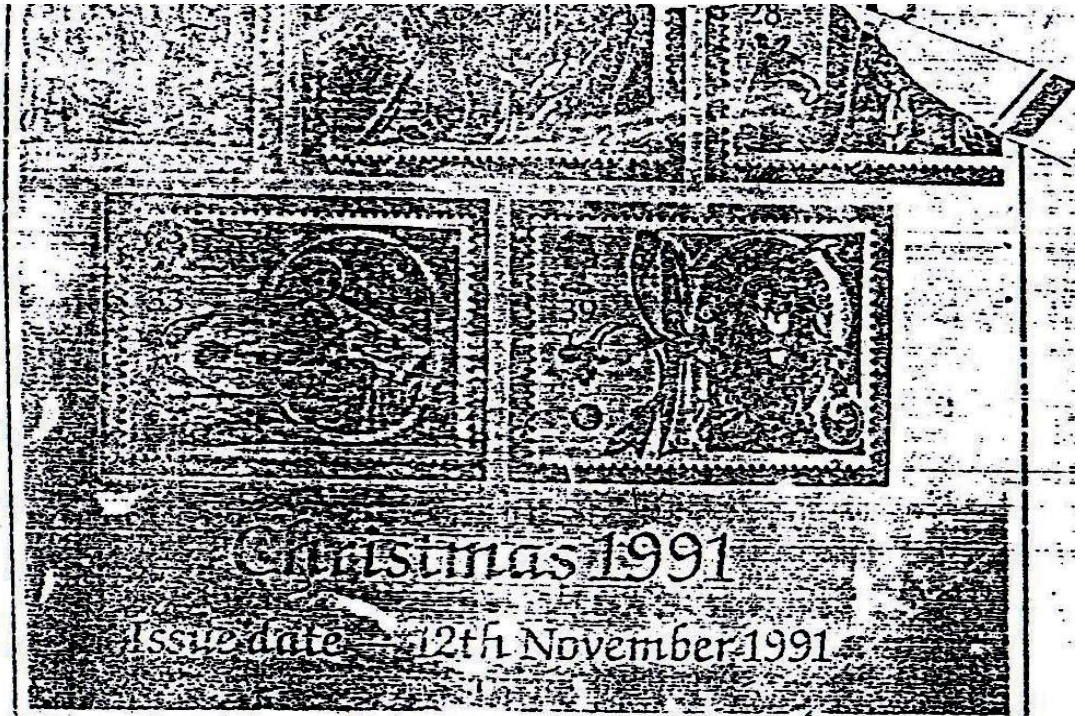




The blessed virgin with Christ, the architect of christmas.



Veretian illuminations on British christmas stamps.

Enhancing the tourism industry in C.R.

(Contd from P10)

cessing and Export Free Zone in Calabar, the number of visitors to Cross River State from within and outside the country is expected to increase considerably. A well developed recreation and tourism industry would be necessary to cater for their extra curricula interests.

•THE CULTURAL CENTRE: Located in Calabar, the State capital, the centre will be one of the centres of attraction in the State when complementary shows, music

festivals and cultural shows would be staged there. This will no doubt boost tourism in the State.

•ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS: At present, there is no functional zoo in the State as the only important zoo which was located at the Forestry headquarters, Calabar, has since been out of use. Most of the cages have broken down and have no animals in them. The zoo needs to be rejuvenated. It will serve as an alternative or complementary attraction to the Cross River Na-

tional Park. Tourists who for one reason or other cannot go to the National Park could go to the zoo and see the typical animal species from the National Park as animals captured from within and outside the National Park would be kept there.

•OPEN SPACES: These are pieces of land in built up areas provided with shade and facilities for resting and playing. Most of the towns in Cross River including the local government headquarters do not have open

spaces. It is necessary to provide these in order to enhance recreation and tourism in the State.

The Cross River is one of the few states of the Federation that is blessed with many natural features that form tourist attractions. From the benefits of recreation and tourism enumerated earlier, it becomes economically sound for the State and local governments as well as private entrepreneurs to invest reasonable sums of money in the recreation and tourism industry in the State. This will go a long way to make a whole world of difference.

MAINTAINING THE TOURISM INDUSTRY IN CR

in the world, surpassed only in 1979, international tourism generated earnings of US \$75 billion, a figure representing 5.5% of international trade as reported by World Tourism Organization (WTO).

Tourism generates taxes and other direct and indirect revenues for government, which can be used to extend education, health and other public services to the local population. It also stimulates activity in the agricultural, industrial and commercial sectors of the economy that come into contact, directly or indirectly with the tourism industry. Finally, tourism fosters foreign and local investment and capital formation.

TOURIST ATTRACTIONS:

The thought of tourism conjures up pictures of the four 'S's in the minds of many people i.e. sea, sun, sand and sex. Palm-fringed tropical islands bordered with white beaches and brown bodies represent the image of an ideal tourist destination for many people and such images are created and promoted by marketers from many parts of the world including the Caribbean, the Mediterranean, West and South Africa, the Pacific and Australia.

While tourism is highly visible in such locations and may dominate the economies of many coastal areas in the tropics, not all tourism is of this type. Permanent residents in cities together with regional residents and tourists from greater distances have demands which sustain wide variety of high order functions. Such functions include major museums and art galleries, concerts by prominent groups and artists, theatrical productions, professional sports events, specialist shops

and restaurants and educational establishments with well established reputations.

Other tourist attractions include wildlife in game reserves, National Parks and zoological gardens, the rich and diverse culture of the people, historical monuments, interesting landscape and vegetation. Wildlife is the principal tourist attraction particularly in African countries where there are few major ~~attractions~~; Casino, night

of the economy would suffer accordingly. West Africa's wildlife suffers from comparison with that in the east and south because a wildlife based industry has hardly developed in West Africa.

Tourist attractions in Cross River include the Cross River National Park. This is one of the five National Parks in Nigeria established by decree 35 of 1991. Others are Lake Chad Basin, Shaka Gunti, Kainji and Old Gwa

There are 15 types of primate, forest buffalo, elephant and leopard. Lowland gorillas and two species of monkey-Pruess' guenon and crowned guenon, though to be extinct in Nigeria have been found in the Okwango division of the National Park. The Cross River National Park is being jointly developed by the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), the Nigeria Conservation Foundation and the Federal Government.

•THE CATTLE RANCH: This is located in Obanlikwu local government area. It is situated on a high plateau and is 104 sq km. in area. It has a temperate climate and a beautiful scenery of flat topped mountain ranges. The multimillion naira Presidential lodge and international conference centre being constructed in the Cattle Ranch will help to boost tourism in the State.

•WATER FALLS: There are two important waterfalls in the State. These are the Kwa falls in Akamkpa LGA and Agbokim-Water-Fall in Ikom LGA. These give a spectacular sight. Swimming pools, boating and camping sites could be developed at the waterfalls to enhance tourism.

•BRASS WORKS: These are decorative ornaments made from brass. They are made in Calabar and Odukpani local government areas. These works form important souvenirs which tourists would like to buy and take back to their home countries.

•CALABAR PORT COMPLEX: With the establishment of the Export Pro-



Ntufam Innocent Ntuyang

CR Commerce & Industry Commissioner.

clubs, shopping activities and cultural shows as compared to developed countries.

Tourism has expanded world-wide over the past few decades with the development of air travel and many of the countries visited contain substantial wildlife population. It is wildlife that attracts the vast majority of foreign visitors to East Africa, and if the primary interest is removed, the tourist traffic would decline and other sectors

National Parks. The Cross River National Park comprises of two divisions: Oban division located in Akamkpa and Ikom local government areas and Okwango division located in Ikom, Boki and Obanlikwu local government areas. The vegetation in the National Park is tropical rain forest. It is vital for making the rains and maintaining a healthy climate. Over 1000 plant species and 100 animal species are found in the Cross River National Park.