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Ministry, Marubeni to set up sugar complex at Savelugu

ZAINABU ISSAH / 27 MARCH 2014

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A Sugar complex is going to be establish at Savelugu in the Northern Region. The complex, which will cover between 10,000 to 30,000 hectares, will comprise a sugar estate and a sugar plantation.

The Ministry of Trade and Industry has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Marubeni Corporation, a Japanese company concerning the establishment of the complex.

Under the agreement, the Ghana Government will be responsible for funding the front end engineering design for the agricultural estate, conduct the environmental impact assessment, and also facilitate the acquisition of land and permits while the Japanese company is expected to facilitate the funding arrangement for both the sugar estate and the sugar plantation.

The implementation of the MoU is also expected to span 15 months.

Background to the project

The project to establish a sugar complex in the Northern Region has been on the drawing board since 2003.

Consistent with its vision, the government has used the platform offered by Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) to court the Japanese investors to work in partnership with Ghana towards the realisation of the project.

The Minister of Trade

Speaking at the signing ceremony in Accra, the Minister of Trade and Industry, Mr Haruna Iddrisu, lauded the effort of the people of Japan for expressing interest in the establishment of the sugar estate and sugar plantation.

He recalled that the President, during his visit to Japan to renew the year-loan support to the government and the people of Ghana, invited Japanese companies to show interest in commercial agriculture and invest, in particular, in the establishment of the sugar estate.

“I should indicate that as of this morning, we have had three major expression of interest in the establishment of the sugar estate and sugar plantation and this means that the President’s dream to re-launch and resituate Ghana as a producer of sugar is in sight,” he said.

Mr Iddrisu said currently, the country spent \$173 million in importation of sugar annually and “This means that we are a major consumer of sugar, and when this dream and vision is realised, we will become a producer for domestic consumption and a potential exporter of sugar, particularly, to the West African region and other parts of the world.”

He said considering the expertise available in sugar production, the government intended to engage an operations and management company as an equity partner to manage the complex after completion.

He, therefore, assured them the government’s religious commitment to support the project and ensure that the factory was established to improve the livelihood of the people.

Marubeni Corporation

In his remarks, the Regional Chief Executive Officer for Middle East and Africa for Marubeni Corporation, Mr Masakau Kuramoto, said the sugar plantation, when realised, would increase economic growth for Ghanaians.

“It will reduce the import of sugar into the country and also create job opportunities for the people in the northern sector,” he said.

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