

AFCON 2025 boosts Morocco's tourism push ahead of 2030 World Cup

- A Monitor Desk Report

Date: 28 January, 2026



Dhaka: Morocco's tourism sector has received a major boost after the successful hosting of the Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON) 2025, which reinforced the country's preparations for the 2030 FIFA World Cup.

The continental tournament concluded on January 18, 2026, with the final held at the Prince Moulay Abdellah Stadium in Rabat. Senegal defeated host nation Morocco 1-0 in extra time in a closely contested match that drew widespread attention across Africa.

AFCON 2025 kicked off on December 21, 2025, and quickly gripped the nation. Stadiums were filled throughout the competition, while host cities such as Rabat, Tangier, Fez, and Casablanca emerged as vibrant centers of football and tourism activity.

The tournament attracted visitors from across Africa and other regions. Many fans extended their stays and traveled between host cities to explore Morocco's cultural, historical, and natural attractions.

In 2025, Morocco welcomed 19.8 million international visitors, a 14% increase year-on-year. Tourism revenue reached MAD 124 billion, equivalent to USD 13.74 billion, representing a 19% rise compared to the previous year.

The figures exceeded government targets and positioned Morocco as Africa's top tourist destination, ahead of Egypt. Analysts attributed the growth to improved infrastructure, expanded air connectivity, and the global exposure generated by AFCON 2025.

Achraf Fayda, director general of the Moroccan National Tourist Office (ONMT), said visitor activity went far beyond stadium attendance. He noted that longer stays and multi-city travel aligned with the Tourism Roadmap 2023-2026 and accelerated service upgrades nationwide.

Air connectivity improved significantly ahead of the tournament. Airlines added new routes from several European cities before the winter 2025 season, increasing overall air capacity to Morocco by nearly 30% compared to the previous year.

The hospitality sector also expanded rapidly. By the end of 2025, Morocco had added more than 43,000 hotel beds, with 53% of properties now rated four- or five-star. Over 100 new hotels opened with support from the Moroccan Society for Tourism Engineering.

AFCON 2025 also served as a test run for the 2030 World Cup. Morocco invested EUR 1.8 billion, equivalent to USD 2.15 billion, in stadium construction and renovations, including six new venues and three refurbished facilities.

Despite some social criticism over spending and controversy during the final, the Confederation of African Football described AFCON 2025 as the most commercially successful edition in the tournament's history.

With a target of 26 million tourists by 2030, Morocco views major sporting events as a central pillar of its long-term tourism and economic strategy.

