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Heritage The Way To Go For The Economy

Published on May 6, 2015 by **Jamal Weekes**



OAS Representative to Barbados, Ambassador Francis McBamette; Project Coordinator, Celia Toppin; Culture Minister, Stephen Lashley and UWI Lecturer in Archaeology, Dr. Sabrina Rampersad chatting with Archaeologist and Historian Neil Silberman at today's workshop. (C.Pitt/BGIS)

The development of a more robust heritage sector will further enhance the Barbadian economy.

These were the sentiments expressed by Minister with responsibility for Culture, Stephen Lashley, as he spoke at the opening session of two workshops on "Expanding the Socio-Economic Potential of Cultural Heritage in the Caribbean" at the Hilton Barbados Resort.

The overall objective of the workshops, which will take place over the next three days, is to strengthen the capacity of participating Caribbean countries in the preservation, development, and use of cultural heritage resources with local community participation.

"I cannot over emphasise enough the importance of cultural heritage to the diversity of our economies," Mr Lashley stated.

He added that heritage needed to be further embraced, as it would be a worthwhile contributor to the country, allowing Barbados to expand its economy 'in a purposeful way' through the investment, development and exploration of heritage tourism.

While acknowledging that heritage could provide a substantial economic boost to the country's economic development, the Minister also indicated that there were some challenges being faced when considering the further expansion of the Heritage sector.

"We've had a few cases in Barbados where some of our iconic buildings have literally been destroyed...the reality is that we need to focus our attention on rehabilitation and preservation of most of these iconic structures," he admitted.

Beyond complications with the preservation of the buildings, the Minister stated that emphasis also needed to be placed on the legislation that governed and protected the various iconic buildings. To combat these issues, Mr. Lashley said that his Ministry was seeking to make progress in creating legislation that would protect the interest of heritage in Barbados.

"We are moving towards the finalisation of a Preservation of Antiquities and Relics Bill...It is not the kind of legislation that should be left off the statute books," he stressed. The Bill had previously been submitted to Parliament and was passed in the Lower House; however, it met resistance in the Upper House and has since been under review.

jamal.weekes@barbados.gov.bb

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Please be advised that the Land Registry, located at the Warrens Office Complex, Warrens, St. Michael, has been closed due to technical problems. The department is expected to re-open tomorrow, Tuesday, September 13, at 10:00 a.m. The Land Registry regrets any inconvenience caused.

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