

Bastions restoration works start



Photo: Saviour Cassar, DOI

Works on the restoration of six kilometres of bastions has started with a €36 million restoration fund.

The works on the Valletta bastions – from St Andrew's Bastion to just beneath Castille, will start soon and scaffolding is being installed. The funds will also be used to restore sections of the bastions at the Cittadella and in Vittoriosa, Mdina and Valletta.

The project is co-funded by the EU.

Resources Minister George Pullicino pointed out that Malta had 60 kilometres of fortifications and a tenth of them would be restored through this fund. This restoration project would create around 120 new jobs.

He said that together with Minister Austin Gatt, he was looking for ways to restore Fort St Elmo.

The government also had plans to convert Biaggio steps into a visitor's centre. Lands Parliamentary Secretary Jason Azzopardi said that Malta was on the verge of witnessing the birth of a new Valletta.

He pointed out that the lower bastions were recently cleared from squatters and said that abuse of public land would not be tolerated, especially when this land was vital to the country's cultural heritage.

The bastions' restoration project, he said, was one of the largest and most ambitious in the past century.

The tender for the Vittoriosa and Valletta works was awarded to a joint venture composed of a Maltese and two Italian firms. That for Mdina was awarded to the same Italian firms with another Maltese company. The tender for the Cittadella has not yet been issued.

Comments

C Gatt (2 days, 7 hours ago)

@Mr L Borg

Please note that the cavalier in question is St John's not St James

M.L.Schembri (2 days, 10 hours ago)

What Mr. Tony Abela has commented on this subject is 100% TRUE.

victor pulis (2 days, 14 hours ago)

Is fort St. Angelo included in this scheme? Fixing just the bell isn't going to save the fort.

Martina Caruana (3 days, 5 hours ago)

Projects such as this should give opportunities to people qualified from vocational training programmes, and undergraduate and postgraduate courses to be employed alongside specialists of a multidisciplinary team. It is through such projects that further interest in careers in conservation and restoration is cultivated, encouraging more people to follow suitable programmes in the field. One looks forward to more projects being secured, including those involving other areas of specialisation. Our rich and diverse heritage deserves it.

Jesmond Micallef (3 days, 6 hours ago)

It always good news to read of such restoration work. Well done indeed.

I do tend to agree with more emphasis being made on the opportunity of such professional work experience being given to the local skilled workers. Maybe MCAST graduates or even students, if not paid, be given exposure to such qualitative skilled workmanship.

This is only my own opinion, off course.

With my very best wishes.

J Azzopardi (3 days, 6 hours ago)

At long last. We got started. This project has the potential to bring Valletta back to its past glory.

N.Calleja (3 days, 6 hours ago)

@ I.Abela

I suggest that you should stop being rude and arrogant ASAP! Even seeing such a

project being initiated, have to be that negative. I think that you have been wishing that this government resigns for a whole 23 years...but it was your MLP government that resigned after only 22 months because the great Mintoff could not stand it any longer!!

Lawrence Borg (3 days, 6 hours ago)

While welcoming the news, one wonders why have to rely on Italian Firms to carry out such works.

In the last years, various locations have been restored by able Maltese firms. Some serious doubts are being raised if one Italian firm; which by the way is sourcing out its work to inexperienced firms and so turning out to be a TURNKEY CONTRACTOR would be able to deliver this task.

Doubts as how work shall be completed on time have more been raised when this month erection of scaffolding on St. James Cavalier was completely halted. Even areas where scaffolding is in place no work has yet started. Keep in mind that these are European Funds with a timeframe to be spent.

Re new jobs, these cannot be created that easy as workers need to be experienced, so either it would be movement of labour or the Italians would have to get their hands dirty with our local stone.

Here it's our heritage that is at stake. The Italian Government surely does not leave its heritage in the hands of some FOREIGN SPECULATOR. Hope we are proven wrong.

tony abela (3 days, 6 hours ago)

A very good initiative, and as usual better late than never.

I have my doubts where to find 120 trained and qualified architecture restoration workers as the Government did not invest in the training of such trades. The handful of students which trained at Heritage Malta and the Restoration Unit of the Resources Minister are either employed on no related work, such as Take Away outlets, working abroad or as general builders. These young people who took the related courses at MCAST, apart from being very few were never given the opportunity to work on restoration and conservation after they finished their training.

I hope the persons involved will have the chances to be employed by this Italian company. In fact it is the duty of the Ministry to bind the Company to give first preference to the persons who graduated from MCAST on Restoration and Conservation.

I Abela (3 days, 7 hours ago)

@ George Pullicino "This restoration project would create around 120 new jobs." - Does this mean that the contractors who will be awarded this tender, don't have the resources to carry out such work or that 120 people will be working on site. Whatever it is I don't believe your "120 new jobs" catchphrase. I do believe though that you and your government should resign ASAP, and should stop thinking that the citizens are imbeciles.

albert leone ganado (3 days, 7 hours ago)

Great news.

These are the sort of initiatives which not only protect our heritage but are likely to attract the discerning tourists who cannot but marvel at the extent and imposing beauty of our awesome bastion walls.

S. Zammit (3 days, 7 hours ago)

Finally some good news, among all the weirder stuff after all ;)
