

St George's square: the heart of our capital – PM

by Annaliza Borg

Maltese people have expressed their beliefs, turmoil and celebrations, developments and growth, at this square, said Prime Minister Lawrence Gonzi at the unveiling ceremony of St George's Square in Valletta yesterday evening.



“The heart of our capital city” witnessed the story of our nation since Valletta was named capital. The square therefore represents Maltese identity and great events that our country, the Mediterranean region, and Europe, went through, Dr Gonzi explained.

St George's square or Palace square, was recently turned from a car park into an open space for the enjoyment of Maltese people, families and tourists who visit the islands.

The project, Dr Gonzi noted, was part of plans to make the Palace, the centre of the city, thus restoring its dignity. It is intrinsically linked to plans for City Gate and what Dr Gonzi described as the “most ambitious” government project so far. The general picture portrays the President's Palace as a showcase of Maltese identity, culture and history when the House of Representatives moves to the current opera house ruins.

“Valletta is a part of national heritage, but also part of world heritage and we are obliged to protect, improve and embellish it,” Dr Gonzi quoted Valletta mayor Alexiei Dingli to have said.

St George's square allows people to enjoy the Palace's grandeur. It is now an appropriate entrance to The Palace, our country's jewel, he added. The project also links to the regeneration of Valletta, which the government is committed to continue.

“Investment is necessary to preserve our heritage and pass it on to future generations,” Dr Gonzi said while pointing out that works at Palace square should strengthen economic and social activity in the area, making it a prime attraction.

Resources Minister George Pullicino dubbed St George's square as “the people's square”.

Some 70 ministry employees together with some others from the private sector managed to turn the 3,500-metre-squared space into a square in six months.

Its design respects the architectural heritage around. Meanwhile, a restoration project for the Palace façade is taking place. Such works complement a similar project on the national library and its entrance.

Modern creativity was intertwined with history, with the use of water, light and music, creating a fresh and live space which enables Wi-Fi use.

Activities will be held every day between 6 and 12 December at the same square. They are intended to give much-needed life to the heart of Valletta, once the project is complete.
