

TT's creativity, innovation limitless

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THE Economic Development Advisory Board (EDAB) of the Ministry of Planning and Development, in collaboration with The University of the West Indies (UWI), the European Union (EU) and the Inter- American Development Bank (IDB), recently hosted an Innovation Conference at UWI's Teaching and Learning Complex, St Augustine.

The ministry said, "The June 27-28 event brought together leaders in academia, private and public sector who articulated ideals for moving our nation towards active innovation." "The deliberations' common thread was in accord with the Deputy Permanent Secretary, Beverly Khan's sentiment that 'creativity and innovation is limitless.' However, it was agreed for us as a nation to attain this paradigm, we must strengthen three main capacities, Academia, our National Innovation Systems (NIS) and increased Research, Development and Innovation (RDI) in Trinidad and Tobago." The ministry also said the EU and IDB representatives duly noted Government's "highly supportive" move to ensure policy is laid via the National Innovation Policy (NIP) that is "presently within Cabinet and being driven by the (Planning) Minister, Camille Robinson Regis." In response to academia's deficit, Professor Brian Copeland, UWI Pro-Vice Chancellor and Principal stated in his speech that UWI needs to create a "legacy of self-sustainability".

He also indicated that UWI is prepared to move academia forward in this direction. Copeland said, "to build this legacy, we are actively expanding the current 'education-for-jobs' paradigm to one that nurtures creativity and innovation." Government partners IDB and EU have given financial and technical support to the Government through the EU - the 11th Economic Development Funds (EDF) which is further supported through a proposed implementation action plan.

The IDB, with the assistance of the Cambridge University, has facilitated extensive Foresighting Exercises that have produced a Diversification Roadmap, thus enabling the nation to make that switch. The ministry said all documents and presentations are available on the EDAB website www.edab.org.tt