



The Voice of the Maltese

(We are for the Greater Malta)

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**Another view of a
Valletta street with
the Choo Choo fun
train crossing
Old Bakery Street**



Thanks to the pandemic ...

The lessons Malta has learned



Chris FEARNE
*Malta's Deputy
 Prime Minister and
 Minister for Health*

Allow me to shock you. The pandemic has created enormous, acute challenges to our health, economy and society. But it is bequeathing to us, particularly politicians, a wealth of insights.

My colleagues and I have done our utmost to triumph over the virus. We did our best to take the right and timely decisions with the best means at our disposal. Above all, people backed us to the hilt.

To everyone's credit, we took the lead in Europe from the word go, and still have it.

Politically, the pandemic has been unique. We couldn't anticipate it. Certainty remained elusive, particularly before the vaccine was rolled out. There was no past we could rummage through for badly needed answers.

A stable policy has proved impossible because the virus kept changing the goal posts. We were forced to choose between equally valid yet conflicting, sometimes even contradictory, goals.

Yet the country's clarion call was loud and clear, and we had the responsibility to face a political world we did not fully know. It was precisely this experience which, in my view, led us to explore new political avenues. The process of preventing the pandemic from wreaking havoc on us was the best crash course in what lies ahead.

Lesson one: The pandemic made us instinctive practitioners of the art of political compromise. We could neither endanger people's health nor that of the economy. We had to keep people distant from infection without removing essential liberties. Education had to march on but not as we knew it. In each case, we had to do both.

At the height of the pandemic, political clichés and facile grandstanding stood out in all their fake and useless glory. Results supplanted empty rhetoric.

Difficult and risky compromises, coloured in the right shade of grey between black and white, had to be found through prudence and foresight.

This daily exercise put us at the forefront of Europe's successes against the pandemic. But it did something equally vital to us politicians. It brought this government closer to the people.

We would do well to remember this insight. In tomorrow's world characterised by globalised and shifting scenarios, the art of compromise is what will keep delivering success.

Lesson two: Traditionally, policymaking aims at fixed targets. You discuss, agree and implement. The pandemic has forced us out of this comfortable cocoon. One day we are fighting one virus, the next we're up against two or more. A new fact pops up that renders today's brilliant policy an instant failure, and yet another blows our remedy out of the water. And on it goes.

With this becoming the new normal, my cabinet colleagues and I increasingly gravitated towards placing facts and science above yesterday's opinions and political gut feelings. It was becoming second nature for us to place the irrefutable at the heart of our vision and principles.

As a government we became more agile, creative and disposed to thinking outside the box – exactly what tomorrow's world will be asking from us.

Lesson three: By touching everyone and every sector, the pandemic obliged us to think not only laterally but multilaterally, as it were. Since the problem was everywhere the solution had to be found everywhere, by everyone. Rather than a 'topic' dealt with by one minister, the entire cabinet had to function like one well-oiled and coordinated ministry.

If all of us in the country retain this holistic approach to the technologically-driven future, we shall continue to flourish and prosper.

Final lesson: This one deeply inspires me. It was the government that took decisions on the pandemic. But we could not have succeeded without the strength and internal resources of our people.

Malta's men, women and children rose to the occasion brilliantly – the courage of our frontliners, dedication of our civil and security forces, patience of those whose medical interventions had to be postponed, the solidarity shown between families, friends and strangers, inventiveness of our entrepreneurs, resilience of our workers, teachers, parents and children who changed their lives overnight to keep work and education going.

This is the nation emerging from the pandemic. Our Malta. People's wits, creativity and determination overpowered the invisible mutating virus at every turn.

We need to keep remembering these lessons. They will help us face future pandemics even better. And shall need them most in tomorrow's world.

Q. I am 59 years of age and have decided to retire. I have around three months of long service leave and holiday pay which I am planning to take as a lump sum which amounts to approximately \$25,000 after tax. My super fund is valued around \$500,000. Can I make withdrawals from this super fund once I fully retire?

A. As you are 59 years of age you have reached preservation age. You can make withdrawals from your super fund but for the withdrawals to be tax-free you need to be 60 years old.

As you are taking your holiday pay as a lump sum an option would be to use these funds to live on and once you turn 60 any withdrawals you make from super or if you commence an account based pension, this will all be tax free.

Q. I have three children all under the age of 10. They each have around \$10,000 in their bank accounts, which has built up with money they get on their birthdays and pocket money.

I have been thinking of investing these funds in a managed fund so that they will have some growth on their earnings as these last couple of years they have hardly earned any interest on this money. Do you think this to be a good idea?

A. I think this would be an excellent idea. As they are under 10, they probably would not need the money until the age of 18 or even later so you will be investing for the long term. You can open up an account for each child and have it in your name "in trust" for them.

This will avoid them having to pay large amounts of tax whilst under the age of 18. You can add to these managed funds any time the children have money available. This would be a great savings plan for your children.

Q. We are pensioners and have a reverse mortgage on our house. My father is 95 years old and financially quite comfortable, and has started to give us \$5000 per month, as he knows that we are struggling financially.

This amount plus our age pension is more than sufficient for our needs. Are we able to pay back some of the funds borrowed through our reverse mortgage as our surplus income builds up?

A. You are most definitely able to pay back some of the funds borrowed through a reverse mortgage. You could also consider building up your bank account with some of the money in case of emergencies and then make lump sum payments to reduce the amount owing on your home.

Q. My mother has been living with me

This is a monthly service offered by The Voice of the Maltese in which Marie Louise Muscat from the Fiducian Financial Services helps our readers understand the complexities associated with financial planning. If you need more advice send an email to Marie Louise via: maltesevoice@gmail.com.



for the last six years. Unfortunately, her health has deteriorated and I am unable to continue to look after her at home. We have agreed for her to move into an aged care facility close to my home so that I can visit her daily.

They require a Refundable Accommodation Deposit (RAD) of \$750,000. My mother has around \$350,000, which is well below the amount she needs to pay the RAD. Is there a way around this?

A. Your mother is able to pay part of the Refundable Accommodation Deposit (RAD) as a lump sum and pay the rest as a Daily Accommodation Payment. This means she will pay interest on the amount still outstanding on the RAD. The rate is fixed at the date of entry and is currently 4.10%.

The only other cost would be the Basic Daily fee that is normally covered by her age pension. She has to maintain \$50,500 of the money she has and pay the \$300,000 as RAD. If she is unable to pay the DAP the amount would be taken out of the RAD that has been paid.

Q. I am in the process of commencing a new job. My new employers have recommended their own super fund but I would rather maintain the super fund that I have. Do you think this is an option?

A. There is no harm in asking your new employer if this is allowed. These days employees have freedom of choice and can use a super fund of their choice. Unless the employer has a specific reason why they want you to use their super fund, I believe that they will allow you to use your existing one.

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Veronica Barbara

We are pleased to announce another contributor to our magazine that should enrich even further the value of our publication.

Veronica Barbara, born in Malta in 1987 spent her childhood in the village of Tarxien, where a stop at the Tarxien Prehistoric Temples for her became a must every weekend. It was an excursion that probably led to her interest in archaeology, a field she eventually pursued at the University of Malta.

Her Masters dissertation focused on the multi-vocal approach in interpreting and presenting Maltese archaeological heritage.

Veronica currently works at the Conferences and Events Unit of the University of Malta. She is also a licensed tourist guide and lectures part-time at the Institute of Tourism Studies. Her hobbies include reading, writing, cooking and travelling.



The Inquisitor's Palace – Stories and Experiences

The locality of Birgu (also known as Città Vittoriosa), situated in the harbour region of Malta, boasts a number of historic buildings that not only exhibit amazing architectural features but also tell stories of scandal, hardships, courage and hope. Few are as interesting, however, as the Inquisitor's Palace, which is the only inquisitor's palace in the world that is still intact and open to the public as a museum. The structure itself presents features that indicate what happened not only within the building but also around it.

One of the details we cannot miss when visiting is the erratic nature of its construction, with different parts exhibiting different styles, since they belong to different periods. There is an interesting reason for this.

When Mons. Pietro Dusina arrived in Malta as apostolic delegate of the Pope in 1574, the Knights of the Order of St John who ruled Malta at the time, were not happy at all with this intrusion and offered this distinguished representative a building



in a very poor state.

In spite of this, when the Roman Inquisition established itself permanently in Malta, they kept the same site to serve as residence of the Inquisitor, tribunal and prison, with the hope of upgrading the structure to suit their needs.

Since the Maltese inquisitors received a limited budget from the Holy See, they always hoped to do the maintenance required through the land confiscations from those found guilty of religious crimes.

This was soon to end however, as the Church authorities were being heavily criticised for this materialistic approach and confiscation of land was carried out only on rare occasions. Works within the building, therefore, had to be done slowly and haphazardly, when budgets permitted.

The walls of the prison cells are also highly interesting to observe, with numerous graffiti carved by the inmates. These graffiti have supplemented in-depth studies of archives, bringing to the fore so many stories about who was being kept in

One of the prison cells at the Palace. Some were full of graffiti carved by the inmates that used to occupy them

these cells, as well as what their crime was. Cases of witchcraft, blasphemy and superstition abound.

Even the exterior walls have their own story to tell.

Recent restoration of the building has kept the dents in the fabric of the building resulting from the shrapnel damage done during WWII, when the harbour area was heavily bombed and many buildings left in ruins. The palace has experienced so much and yet here it still is, for both locals and foreigners to explore and enjoy.

Heritage Malta, the national heritage agency that is responsible for the management and upkeep of the site as well as for its interpretation, has installed a number of displays that explain the different life stages of the building, including the reconstruction of the tribunal room, the warden's bedroom, and the torture chamber.



◀ **The Tribunal Hall at the Palace in Birgu**

**continued on opposite page*



The majestic staircase at the Inquisitor's Palace

The Inquisitor's Palace Site that brings to light details of past centuries

**from opposite page*

An ethnographic museum has also been set up in the upper halls, with displays taking visitors through the religious festive calendar – blessed Christmas, colourful Carnival, sombre Holy Week, and the joyous Rxoxt, when the statue of Risen Christ is taken out in procession.

The latter celebrations are especially popular in the Cottonera area (Birgu, Isla and Bormla), where the community participates each year with enthusiasm in the processions and exhibitions, attracting crowds from all over the Maltese Islands.

The ground floor kitchens have also been set up as if they are still in use today and offer the opportunity to explore the theme of historic food through demonstrations

and tastings. Coffee, chocolate and the popular traditional *fira* have all found their way in the interactive interpretative activities organized before the COVID-19 pandemic.

One hopes that, as soon as everything is back to normal, similar activities are organised once again, activities that teach through experiential interpretation and a pleasant social setting for the enjoyment of all participants.

The Inquisitor's Palace in Birgu is surely one of those sites that have brought to light so many interesting details about Malta's past, especially during 16th, 17th and 18th centuries.

New information is being uncovered all the time, making each visit to the site a unique experience of new discovery and enjoyment.

Explore more via the official website of the Palace: <https://heritagemalta.org/the-inquisitors-palace/>

The Great Siege of 1565: A catastrophe of massive proportions

AndyBusuttill

It was with great interest that I read the article by Joseph Buttigieg about the Great Siege of 1565 in the last issue of *The Voice* (No. 259). It was a succinct and, to the best of my substantial research into the event, an accurate account of what happened at the time of the liberation of the Island.

Given census figures taken around 1575 it would be reasonable to assume that the Maltese population of the Islands in 1565 would have been in the vicinity of 32,000.

By some estimates one-third of the population was slaughtered during the siege with many others being permanently incapacitated. This would have been a catastrophe of massive proportions.

As evidenced by a letter written to the Chief Inquisitor by a parish priest on behalf of a Maltese farmer following the siege, the Knights were still demanding taxes and tithes. This letter can be seen in the museum in Valletta.

The farmers not only went back to barren land, they also returned to poisoned wells, destroyed seedstock and no farm animals to help them till the soil and transport themselves and their goods and were still required to pay taxes. Their suffering would have been immeasurable.

While the Knights are given great credit for the winning of the Siege, it must always be remembered that our forefathers and foremothers and their children played a significant and consequential part.

In his book 'Empires of the Sea' Roger

Crowley made an interesting and informative comment. It appeared that prior to the Siege, La Vallette regarded the Maltese people as indolent and cowardly.

La Valette's view experienced a forced change as a consequence of the extraordinary heroism shown by our ancestors when Malta was invaded. The Maltese had no choice and they knew it. They knew that, if they failed, the Maltese as a people would disappear from the face of the Earth.

This was evidenced by Dragut's invasion of Gozo in July 1551, prior to the siege and his killing and enslaving the whole island's population in revenge for the killing of his brother and the refusal of Gozo's governor to release the body to him. It is conceivable that none of us would have existed today.

It must always be remembered that the main attacking arm of the Ottoman, the janissaries, was made up of Christian children abducted by corsairs and taken in battle and indoctrinated into a radical form of Islam.

They were renowned as 'the worst of the worse' in terms of their brutality. They were, regardless, Christians by birth sent to fight Christians.

The Knights and the other crusaders who had gone before them were no saints. They too were brutal in battle and were responsible for the deaths of many including women and children who they saw as infidels, those lacking faith.

What is clear from this period and from the subsequent centuries of war between Islam and Christianity, is that the war be-

tween faiths, destruction in the name of God is an aberration and has no place in the human world.

The great siege, while fought on both sides in the name of God, surely had nothing to do with the wishes of God but in the political failures of the rulers of the time and the ongoing desire for power and domination of leaders and their followers. It appears fair to say that not much has changed.



Memorial to Dragut's 1551 invasion of Gozo at Victoria's Villa Rundle Gardens

Opinjoni:

Negattiv jew pozittiv?

Dejjem kont tal-fehema li biex nikkontrollaw il-pandemija li hakmitna rridu nlaqqmu kemm jista' jkun nies. Użajt il-kelma "nikkontrollaw" għax mhux faċli li teqred pandemija kompletament. It-tilqim fl-maġġoranza tiegħu johloq dak il-paravendu li jzommok milli jkollok tmur l-isptar u forsi wkoll tasal biex titlef hajtek.

Għad hawn hafna li ma jridux jitlaqqmu. Dawn għandhom ir-raġunijiet tagħhom. Hafna jkollhom id-dubbi għax jisimghu konfużjoni ta' opinijoni-jiet, kulhadd ifajjar bl-addoċ. Izda fejn tidhol is-saħħa ma tmurx titlob parir minghand l-avukat, mhux hekk? Imma tmur għand it-tabib tiegħek li jaf l-istorja medika tiegħek.

Jien u marti li ngħixu fi NSW u ahna ta' etá avvanzata smajna mill-parir tat-tabib tagħna u hadna ż-żewġ tilqimiet mingħajr ma kellna l-ebda kump-likazzjonijiet. Kollox mexa harir. Issa kuntenti li għandna t-tilqima doppja.

Izda dan l-ahhar l-istess tabib tagħna iddeċieda li biex tmur tarah irid ikollok rizultat negattiv riċenti ta' *viral swab*. Ir-reazzjoni tagħna kienet li ahna diġà għandna tilqima doppja, b'danakollu t-tabib insista. Allura kellna mmoru testing centre qrib fejn ngħixu. Attwalment kien drive-in.

Immaginajna li jkun hemm kju kbir u dewmien ta' siegħat. Fortunatament ma domniex aktar minn nofs siegħa. Kollox kien ippjanat u organizzat.

Dahhluna xi stika fl-immieher waqt li hadulna d-dettalji. Sa hawn kollox sewwa izda mbagħad għandek żmien ta' anzjeta tistenna ir-rizultat: Posittiv jew negattiv. Fil-kaz tagħna b'effiċjenza, sirna nafu r-rizultat fi żmien ta' inqas minn 10 siegħat. Konna negattivi. Serrahna rasna għax konna fuq ix-xwiek.

Fil-hajja normal kulhadd jgħidlek biex tkun pozittiv, izda biex isserrah rasek f'dan l-eżami tal-pandemija trid iġġib rizultat negattiv. Veru bil-maqlub, mhux hekk?

Xtaqt naqsam mal-qarrejja din l-esperjenza għax hawn hafna jibżgħu, mhux biss mit-tilqima izda anke biex imorru jittestjaw.

LawrenceDIMECH



Inawguratur investiment ta' €3m f'lift tal-jottijiet

Fl-inawgurazzjoni ta' *yacht lift* ġdid mibni minn Yacht Lift Malta Ltd, l-ewwel operatur ta' liftijiet għad-dgħajjes fil-Mediterran b'investiment ta' €3 miljun, il-Ministru tal-Infrastruttura u l-Proġetti Kapitali Ian Borg qal li Malta tinsab fuq quddiem fis-settur marittimu u li l-gvern hu kommiss li jkompli jahdem aktar biex Malta tibqa' fuq quddiem f'dan is-settur.

Semma kisbiet kbar li saru fis-settur, fosthom li hemm kważi elf *superyacht* irregistrat taħt il-bandiera Maltija. Qal li dan il-lift joffri kunċett ta' servizzi u manteniment tad-dgħajjes uniku għar-regjun tal-Mediterran.

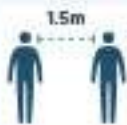
Il-lift tal-jottijiet ġibed ukoll sidien ta' dgħajjes barranin minn pajjiżi madwar il-Mediterran u fl-Ewropa li sabuha iktar konvenjenti li jużaw din il-kumpannija minflok tarznari ta' dgħajjes barranin. Il-lift jahdem għal kull tip ta' dgħajjes, vapuri u opri tal-baħar.

Il-lift jagħti lis-sidien tad-dgħajjes l-għażla li jiehdhom, fuq il-baħar minflok fuq l-art u b'hekk jiffrankaw il-flus u jnaqqas il-hinijiet ta' stennija. Barra minnhekk ma jhalli l-ebda pressjoni fuq il-basimenti, għalhekk anke jevita kwalunkwe hsara.

CHRIS BOWEN MP

FEDERAL MEMBER FOR NEWCASTLE

Social distancing rules apply to prevent the spread of Coronavirus and save lives in our community.



Please keep a 1.5 metre distance from people, don't shake hands or exchange physical greetings



Wash your hands regularly for 20 second or more with soap and water.



Always cough or sneeze into your arm or use a tissue and put it in the bin straight away.

For more information on Coronavirus visit www.australia.gov.au
You can also call Coronavirus Health Information Line 1800 020 080.

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The final recollections and Experiences of a Maltese Octogenarian of the Millenium years (2000-2020)

My three meetings with Dom Mintoff



Joseph Lanzon

During my time, within a time-span of 40 years I met the late Dom Mintoff, Prime Minister of Malta

on three separate occasions. The first meeting was in 1970 when he was 54 years old, then leader of the Opposition and just a few months before he was elected Prime Minister of Malta.

At the time I was on holiday in Malta from my post at the Maltese Embassy in Rome. A friend had arranged for me a meeting with him in his office in Parliament.

Sharp, to the point, impatient, few preliminaries, he fixed his eyes on me and in his typical enthusiastic style; he explained to me his intentions with regard to Malta's relations with Italy if Labour won the coming elections.

He was determined to open negotiations for financial and technical assistance especially in Agriculture, Public Works and the Armed Forces.

My second meeting with him was 40 years later, in 2010, when he was 94 and no longer in the political scene. I was at the Valetta Bus Terminus on a very hot afternoon. I saw him coming straight at me. How old he had become!

He was bent down, hobbling on a walking stick, his face wrinkled with age, dressed in shabby clothes and a plastic bag in his hand. He appeared worn-out and tired. "Where is the Date Kiosk? He

growled at me. I accompanied him to the kiosk from where he bought two 'imqaret'. I said to him, "Sahha Perit. Is there anything I can do for you?" "No, thank you" he replied, and proceeded slowly towards Valetta City Gate.

I kept my eyes firmly stuck on him as he walked slowly onwards, slow steps, face down, leaning on his walking stick, the plastic bag now sweeping the ground. Nobody was taking any notice of him. Nobody seemed to care as if he did not even exist.

He was a forgotten man. Those who recognised him now saw him as irrelevant old man. At that moment in time, while I still could see him, my mind went back to many years before when this fiery orator addressed thousands of his supporters ending his speech with the stirring and patriotic words "Malta First and Foremost".

My third meeting with Dom Mintoff, in different circumstances, was on 22nd August 2012, when he was 96 years old and he was on a visit to his birthplace Bormla for the last time. The squares, the streets, the bastions all along the route to the Parish Church were filled with hundreds of people.

Many applauded him, some even cried, others prayed silently or loudly, and some were recounting episodes they remembered of him. These were scenes to break one's heart.

As he passed so close to me that day, I remembered my two previous meetings with him. But this time, he did not speak to me.



Dom Mintoff at his best at the Freedom Day ceremony on 31st March 1979

I hope that the readers enjoyed reading my recollections as much as I have liked recounting and writing them.

As I now move closer to the twilight of my life, I often recall the emotional lyrics of the Maltese song "Fil-Pjazza tar-Rahal" ('The Village Square'), composed, written and sung by one of Malta's most popular singers – Enzo Guzman.

He recounts how for a long time he used to notice three elderly men, daily sitting on a wooden bench in the church parvis, each of them recounting and boasting about his exploits when he was much younger.

However, some time later he missed seeing them and the wooden bench was always empty. Out of curiosity he asked the parish priest about them. The priest, with very sad eyes, told him that:

*"Grezzu, Pawlinu u Karmenu m'ghadomx jiltaqghu
Fl-ahhar tarġa taz-zuntier,
Għaliex ingabru fejn Dak li habbew sewwa,
U minn hemm fuq tismagħhom it-tlieta jinbxu lil xulxin:
'Niringrazzja lill-Mulej li issa qiegħed Hdejh
Ingawdi frott it-tbatija li batejt.'"*

Here and now, the curtain falls for the last time, the clapping has ceased, the audience has departed, and the lights are spent.

Tomorrow is another day. I will end these recollections of my memories by quoting William Shakespeare, England's famous writer and dramatist:

*"All the world's a stage.
All men and women are merely players.
They have their exits and their entrances.
And one man in his time plays many parts."*

This, my dear readers, is my exit!

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Have your say/Xi trid tgħid?



The Voice of the Maltese

Print & Digital magazine

This is a bi-lingual (in English and Maltese) fortnightly magazine that specifically targets all Maltese living abroad with emphasis on the Australian and Maltese scenes.

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Letters for publication in *The Voice* magazine, either in Maltese or English should include name, e-mail address and residence of the writer, and be e-mailed to: maltesevoice@gmail.com.



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Your letters/ L-ittri tagħkom ...

Maltese movies on SBSTV

Tony Borg from Broadmeadows Victoria writes

Do you remember the old times on SBSTV? The news from Malta on Thursdays and Sundays used to be three weeks old. It was an embarrassment. It was a case of, from Malta to SBS Sydney by snail mail.

Tassew prosit Sandra!

Anthony Gatt minn Brisbane Qld jikteb:

Tassew fraħt u hassejtni kburi meta f'paġna 2 tal-harga ta' *The Voice* (Sett. 14), rajt stampa tal-pont tagħna fil-belt ta' Brisbane mixgħul bil-kuluri bojod u homor ta' Malta fl-okkażjoni ta' Jum l-Indipendenza li għadu l-Jum Nazzjonali ta' Malta.

Ftit nisingħu b'dak li jagħmlu l-Konslijiet Onorarji ta' Malta fl-istati tal-Awstralja, izda l-konslu onorarja fi Brisbane, Sandra Micallef imexxiela twasslilna dan ir-ritratt storiku ta' Story Bridge. Tassew prosit.

Dan il-pont importanti u storiku ilu miftuħ minn Lulju 1940 wara li dam hames snin biex inbena. Inbena fi żmien id-diressjoni u haddem hafna nies. Jaqsam ix-xmara minn Kangaroo Point.

Existence of God and the afterlife

Doris Cannataci from Rabat, Malta writes:

Iam glad to read that certain Maltese and expatriates in Australia still uphold their Catholic FAITH, and show respect towards the Pope. I refer to the letters: *Existence of God and the afterlife* and *Hitting below the belt* that were published in the No. 259 issue of *The Voice of the Maltese*.

It used to be a struggle to convince Malta to go satellite. Now we have instant news. Even the content has improved as in the old times it used to be so politicised.

However, SBS still think sport events are more important than news as, at times we lose our spot to some sport event.

When dealing with the Maltese, SBSTV is not being fair. When did we see a Maltese film on SBSTV? Malta is producing top class feature films like *Simshar*, *Limestone Cowboy*, *Id-Destin*, *Luzzu* and others.

Recently, the Maltese feature film *Luzzu* even won the grand prize in the international feature competition at Skip City International D-Cinema Festival in Japan.

Please, SBSTV give us a go.

Misleading the VOTM readers

Victor Zammit PhD Retired lawyer from NSW writes:

Iwish to inform your readers that your correspondent Herbert Cachia misled your readers when he stated in the *Letters to the Editor* page in the last issue of *The Voice of the Maltese* that I had said that science has proved the existence of God.

I said no such thing. I stated that science has proved the existence of the afterlife. And I have some twenty areas of empirical evidence citing many scientists - evidence which no one from around the world has been able to disprove.

And I have not only legal qualifications but also a major in Scientific Method from the University of NSW to show I know what I am talking about.

In thirty years no genius atheist, no genius scientist or anybody else from around the world took on my one million dollar challenge if they could disprove my scientifically based argument about the afterlife I have in my book - *A LAWYER PRESENTS THE EVIDENCE FOR THE AFTERLIFE*.

Editor's Note: This correspondence is now closed.

Queen Elizabeth I not Queen Victoria

Editor's Note: In Joseph Buttigieg's feature about *The Holy war that saved Europe* in the last issue of *The Voice*, issue (No. 259), it was inadvertently stated that at the time of the Great Siege of Malta in 1565, the reigning Monarch of England was Queen Victoria. In fact it was Queen Elizabeth I. We apologise.



Dr Hugh McDermott MP State Member for Prospect

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The changing face of Malta - 5

Continuing our series in which we highlight the various projects, infrastructure and/or otherwise, that are changing the face of the Malta that many of the Maltese currently living abroad, particularly those who emigrated decades ago, don't know much about.



The award-winning AUM building in Bormla

The American University in Bormla

A British-era building in Bormla (Cospicua) designed by architect William Scamp between 1841 and 1844 as a workshop that included Dock No. 1 (at Malta Drydocks) for the British Royal Navy, has been renovated and converted into an award-winning project that embraces a part of the American University of Malta (AUM) Campus.

The conversion of the old Dock No. 1 building (*right*) carried out by architect Edwin Mintofoff was initially approved by the Planning Authority on August 25, 2016 and completed in March 2019, and in February 2020 it won the Golden 'A' Design Award.

The project included conservation of the existing building, reconstruction of the parts that had been destroyed during the war as well as the construction of an intermediate level, and adding of new floors with a contemporary glass-and-steel design.

In spite the fact that the pandemic has affected many people economically, AUM, a private, American-style university dedicated to providing quality higher education and research for an international community has reportedly attracted an encouraging number of applications 30 per cent of whom are Maltese.



Parvis at Rabat's St Paul's Basilica restored



Infrastructure Malta has worked with the Rabat Parish and the Supt of Cultural Heritage to complete a project costing €350,000 to restore and embellish part of the parvis leading to the Basilica of St Paul in Rabat. The works included new paving, decorative lighting and the planting of 15 olive trees and three cypress trees.

The agency restored a 19th century arch by removing the old

repairs made on the concrete and re-building it from scratch using limestone, while still retaining its original design. A cross made of stone and other ornaments that formed part of the original arch were re-integrated into the structure.

A steel door was also installed based on a style similar to an older one on the other side of the Basilica, which was also restored.

Perspettiva

A version of this series in English may be found in the author's blog at:
<https://ivancauchi.blogspot.com>

kitba ta'
**IVAN
 CAUCHI**



Il-ħajja virtwali

Dan l-aħhar kollega tiegħi semmietli s-suġġett tal-ħajja virtwali u l-effett fuqha li qed ikollha din il-pandemija. Jien inqis li l-orijini tal-ħajja kif mgħixa llum bdiet hafna sekli ilu, meta r-razza umana bdiet tgħaddi messagġi minn persuna għall-oħra meta dawn ikunu 'l bogħod wisq biex jisimghu jew jaraw 'l xulxin.

Qed nitkellem fuq il-mezzi ta' komunikazzjoni, fil-bidu bil-kitba jew bis-sinjali, imbagħad bl-iżviluppi tat-telekomunikazzjoni bħat-telefex, it-telefon, il-faks.

B'dan il-mod, individwi, komunitajiet jew gemgħat setgħu jikkomunikaw u jiehdu ċerti azzjonijiet bbażati fuq din il-komunikazzjoni, anke meta fizikament ma kinux iltaqgħu, imma daqs li kieku. Qed nitkellem fuq l-iżvilupp ta' relazzjonijiet personali, il-kummerċ, id-disseminazzjoni tal-informazzjoni u l-bqija.

Bl-iżvilupp tal-kompjuter, l-internet u fl-aħħarnett il-komunikazzjoni bil-fibri tal-ħġieġ, bis-satelliti u sistemi ċellulari (bil-mowbajl, biex niftiehm), din ix-xejra żdiedet u ssahhet. Illum, mhux biss titkellem ma' siehbk mit-telefon tad-dar, imma x'aktarx tista' wkoll tarah u tagħmel dan kważi tkun fejn tkun madwar id-dinja, bi prezz li iktar ma jgħaddi żmien iqsar lejn iż-żero.

Anke qabel ma faqqgħet il-COVID, stajt tiltaqa' ma shabek bil-kitba (imejl jew *chat room*), jew b'mod awdjo-viżiv minflok tmur tiltaqa' x'imkien. Wiehed jista' jagħzel rappreżentant imsejjah avatar u jmexxi l'ħajja soċjali kompletament fittizja li teżisti biss fuq il-kompjuter.

Tista' tiltaqa' b'mod virtwali ma' familjari, ħbieb, persuni li għandhom interess komuni, u tiddiskuti jew issejwi l-kummenti li jkun qegħdin jagħmlu.

Tista' tftitx is-sieħeb jew sieħba ta' hajtek bil-kwantità ta' websajts jew apps ta' dan it-tip li jezistu, uħud ġenerali u oħrajn speċjalizzati għal gruppi b'karatteristiċi speċifiċi (abbażi ta' reliġjon, orjentazzjoni sesswali, età, interess eċċ).

Tista' wkoll tagħmel korsijiet ta' kwalunkwe tip, inkluzi dawk universitarji, mingħajr ma terfa' patattek mis-siġġu favorit tiegħek.

Dawn huma kollha faċilitajiet importanti, għax jaġevolaw l-aċċess għal servizzi utli għal hafna u hafna nies, basta, ċioe, li għandek flus biex tixtri t-teknoloġija li hemm b'żonn u li tinsab f'post li għandu n-network ta' komunikazzjoni adekwata.

Dan kollu kien fil-post qabel il-COVID. Li ġara issa kien li bil-miżuri li ttiehdu mill-gvernijiet biex jikkontrollaw l-imxija tal-virus, speċjalment bl-gheluq tal-ekonomija, ordnijiet biex persuni jibqgħu d-dar kemm jista' jkun u restrizzjonijiet fuq il-moviment kemm fuq bażi reġjonali kif ukoll statali jew internazzjonali, dak li qabel kien faċilità li tisma' biha sar faċilità mhux biss b'żonnjuża imma essenzjali.

Issa li jergħu jibdw jillaxkaw l-affarijiet biż-żieda ta' nies bitilqima kontra l-COVID-19, wiehed forsi jistenna li l-użu tal-



ghodda virtwali jerga' jonqos għal li kien qabel il-pandemija. Jien għandi dubbi tiegħi jekk hux dan li fil-fatt se jiġri għal kollox.

Hu per eżempju l-użu tat-teknoloġija mit-tfal, speċjalment dawk żgħar. Għal hafna żmien, kien ikun rakkomandat li tfal żgħar ma jkollhomx aċċess għal skrin, bħal televiżjoni, tablet jew mowbajl, għal iktar minn siegħa kuljum.¹

Issa waqt l-gheluq tal-iskejjel, it-tfal tiegħi ta' hames snin kienu mbuttati biex joqogħdu quddiem il-kompjuter biex jagħmlu l-lezzjonijiet tal-iskola tagħhom għal xi erba' sigħat kuljum, dan apparti xi xogħol ieħor li jkollhom jagħmlu għad-dar. Issa f'daqqa waħda jien irrid nikkonvincihom li ma jistgħux idumu iktar minn siegħa quddiem skrin għax dan mhux tajjeb għal saħħithom?

Hafna intrapriżi kien mitlub minnhom li jhallu lill-impjegati tagħhom jahdmu mid-dar. Din ma kinetx xi haġa li bdiet issa, imma f'daqqa waħda hafna iktar impjegati bdew jagħmlu din l-attività. Meta tgħaddi din il-buraxxa, tgħid ma nsibux li xi intrapriżi jindunaw li jistgħu jgħaddu mingħajr ma jkollhom jinvestu f'uffiċini ċentrali għaljin immens, u li hafna impjegati toġġgħom li ma jkollhomx għalfejn jgħaddu sigħat fix-xarabanks jew ferroviji?

Il-problema ewlenija bil-ħajja virtwali hija n-nuqqas ta' kuntatt fiziku u personali li tista' ggħib biss meta tkun hdejn jew quddiem persuna oħra. Quddiem skrin, jew fuq it-telefon, wiehed jista' jaġixxi differenti milli jkun wiċċ imb'wiċċ ma ieħor. Smajtha diversi drabi li nies iħossuhom iktar faċli jgħidu affarijiet negattivi meta jużaw it-teknoloġija milli meta jkun quddiem dak li jkun.

Meta tkun quddiem persuna tkun tista' tosserva iktar ir-reazzjoni tiegħu jew tagħha għal dak li jkun qed jintqal jew isehh, affarijiet li forsi jintilfu jekk il-kamera ma tkunx iffukata, jew qed taqta' biċċa mil-wiċċ barra eċċ.

Il-ħajja virtwali għandha l-limiti tagħha. Huwa tajjeb li niehdu vantaġġ minnha. Huwa essenzjali madankollu li ngħixu wkoll ħajja shiħa tad-demmu u l-laħam - il-ħajja fizika.

Referenzi

1. <https://www1.health.gov.au/internet/publications/publishing.nsf/Content/gug-indig-hb-inactivity>, retrieved 6/10/2021



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Roundup of News About Malta



In private audience with PM Robert Abela ...

Pope Francis applauds Malta's efforts with regards to immigration, confirms visit to Malta early next year

What people in Malta most wanted to know after Prime Minister Robert Abela's first-ever meeting with Pope Francis at the Vatican late last week was a confirmation of the date of the Pontiff's visit to Malta next year, which, the PM said, would be sometime in the first quarter of 2022. The Pope had earlier postponed his planned visit in December due to the pandemic,

Following his private audience the Prime Minister said that the Pope is very enthusiastic to visit Malta. He also confided that they discussed other themes, which included immigration. He said the Pope applauded Malta's efforts in following through on its responsibilities with regards to immigration and for safeguarding the humanity of the migrant, ethics and peace.

Robert Abela said the Pope understood the pressure that Malta faces and appealed for more solidarity between nations.

Another subject on their agenda was climate change. They discussed Malta's initiative on this theme that is to be discussed during the UN Climate Change Conference – COP26 – from 1-12 November in Glasgow. The Pope also expressed concern on the increase in energy prices, and their social impact.

After the private audience Pope Francis met the Prime Minister's family, his wife Dr Lydia and their daughter Giorgia Mae and exchanged gifts. Minister for Foreign and European Affairs Evarist Bartolo and Malta's Ambassador to the Vatican City, Frank Zammit were also present.

The Prime Minister and Minister Evarist Bartolo later also held in talks with the Vatican Secretary of State, Cardinal Pietro



Pope Francis welcoming Malta's Prime Minister Robert Abela for the private audience

Parolin, and the Vatican Secretary for Relations with States, Paul Richard Gallagher.

Later, in a communiqué the Holy See Press Office said that during the "cordial talks", the Holy See and Malta took note of the good bilateral relations and the fruitful collaboration between the Church and the State in the Mediterranean island nation.

Both sides noted the contribution of Christianity to the history, culture and life of the Maltese people, and the Church's commitment to the human and social de-

velopment of the country, especially in the field of education and welfare.

The Press Office said the talks then reviewed issues of common interest, such as migration, to which the Church and the Government are strongly committed, and some ethical issues, about the European and international situation, with particular attention to the Mediterranean region, as well as the importance of ecumenical and interreligious dialogue in building peace and fraternity among peoples.



Prime Minister Robert Abela, his family and the Maltese delegation with Pope Francis and the Vatican Secretary of State



Roundup of News About Malta



Prime Minister describes 2022 General Estimates as:

'A realistic budget from a united government'



The Minister of Finance Clyde Caruana, presenting the general estimates for 2022 in Parliament

The final Budget of the Labour administration for 2022 and the first presented by Finance Minister Clyde Caruana, on Monday evening received positive reaction from most quarters, including the major part of the media, the employers the social partners and the general public. The only truly negative reaction, came from the opposition Nationalist Party, while the MUT also criticised it.

The budget document that took Minister Caruana over two-and-a-half hours to read, focussed on the theme 'The Malta that we want for our kids,' was described as a good news budget for all sections of the community, with the Malta Chamber of Commerce welcoming the fact that it would not place any further burdens or costs on the private sector.

The Chamber of SMEs welcomed it as it would be leaving more money in people's pockets and encourages work and investment, though ignoring the way that greylisting was affecting the backbone of the economy.

The General Workers' Union said it was 'so-

cially bold and courageous, while the UHM Voice of the Workers praised the budget's social benefits, but complained there was little emphasis on long-term economic vision.

The Malta Hotels and Restaurant Association (MHRA) pointed out that it includes measures that would support the tourism and hospitality sector.

In general, the budget included so many social measures intended to improve the people's welfare and the economy that some even described it as the budget with the most social measures in history.

Among the measures to be taken in the coming year, are free transport for all (from October 1), increase of €260 a year to old-age pensioners, increases to widowers, and the disabled, and higher in-work benefits. Free childcare services will be extended for parents who work late hours, shift and weekends. Income tax for working pensioners will be levied only on work income, not pensions.

A number of other measures that are bound to improve the well being of the Maltese were also announced, they are too many to mention here. But anybody interested should log on to the Ministry of Finance website.

Govt. unveils proposal for Metro system

The Government has unveiled a 25-station, €6.2 billion underground Metro proposal that could take 15 to 20 years to build. Nothing has yet been decided but everybody is being urged to scrutinise the studies presented by the London-based consultants Arup Group.

Prime Minister Robert Abela and the Minister for Transport, Infrastructure and Capital Projects Ian Borg made the announcement of the proposal at a news conference. He stated that the study would allow for a mature and informed discussion on the subject of mass transport, including whether the country was ready to undertake such a long-term project, and also its financing. He added that he also saw strong potential for the involvement of the private sector.

He pointed out that this proposal shows that the country is ready for ambitious reforms. "We will continue to lead an honest discussion with the goal of understanding the sort of country we want to leave to our children," he said.

It was stated that the proposed first phase of the network would cost €3.9 billion and could be operational in five to eight years.

Minister Ian Borg said the studies were aimed at prompting discussion around the issues associated with the project, including understanding and justifying the time and cost it would entail.

The project, resulting from an intensive, professionally-consulted study regarding the possible implementation of a mass transport system would incorporate three lines, covering a total of 35km of track, running from Bugibba to Pembroke, Birkirkara to Valletta and Mater Dei to Cospicua.

The system would entirely be underground except for a short stretch between Naxxar and Bugibba. Stations would be located at hubs across Malta's main urban area that include Sliema ferries area, the Triton Fountain outside Valletta (with part of the existing bus), the square by the Old Station Garden in Birkirkara, and an open area outside Mater Dei Hospital.

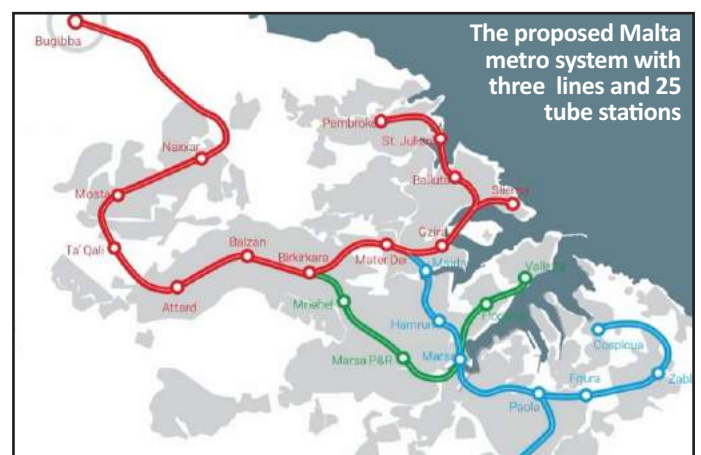
The proposed underground system would use twin tunnels at an average of 10 to 12 metres below street level to minimise the impact on the properties above.

Excavated material will be reused for land reclamation, subject to further environmental analysis and assessment.

Arup Consultant Donald McDade said the studies had considered various mass transport options, including trams and elevated monorail systems, but concluded that these options would have had too high an impact on existing transport networks, negative visual impacts, and not sufficiently served historic and hilly areas. He added that the proposed system would address the urgent need to reduce traffic congestion in Malta.

McDade said that Malta has been suffering from increased congestion, deteriorating air quality and a reduction in quality in life as people spend more and more time commuting. "The road network in Malta does not have the capacity to accommodate continued growth despite the recent infrastructural upgrades," he said.

According to him, a metro system would reduce the need for private cars, providing more space for recreation, greenery, and commercial activity, as well as generating less air pollution per passenger than cars. It would indeed reduce Malta's carbon footprint and promote a healthier lifestyle with more physical activity. The network would not extend to Gozo as the studies concluded that a population increase of 50,000 on the smaller island would be necessary to make the link viable.





Roundup of News About Malta



Government launches National Employment Policy for 2021-2030

In the week leading to the 2022 Budget, Minister for Finance and Employment Clyde Caruana introduced the new National Employment Policy for 2021-2030, marking out the government's holistic vision for employment in Malta for the next nine years.

The policy is aimed towards a better quality of life, higher standards of living facilitated by higher incomes, and improved well-being, whilst equipping workers with the needed tools and skills for the future. The policy is fundamentally based on the premise that work gives not just dignity, but personal enrichment and life satisfaction.

He said that Malta is at a turning point and explained that the policy document professes change in both the way one looks at work and productivity in Malta.

Minister Caruana added: "We have already achieved a lot over the past few years in relation to employment. As local figures verge close to full employment, it is time we raise the bar and raise the value of what we produce.

"It is no easy task. Innovation demands that we continue to upskill and change our businesses and workforce. Failure to do so has consequences. Just as we have beaten difficult odds in the past, we must continue to do so today and tomorrow."

He said that in drawing the new National Employment Policy, a foundational step was to understand the

economic fundamentals of the island and their development over the past few years.

Whilst highlighting the economic realities of Malta's economy, the document also forecasts the key drivers of change that are expected to drive the global economy and impact the world of work, as well as the local perceptions of the Maltese workforce towards their own world of work based on income, well-being, career and skills. This makes the Employment Policy tailored around Malta's particular circumstances, potential, challenges, and opportunities.

The Minister said that that cognizant of the challenges and opportunities Malta's labour market is facing, the government is presenting 40 recommendations based on three guiding principles. They are:

- Equipping individuals in acquiring the needed and industry-demanded skillsets for tomorrow's world and empowering all workers to actively participate in Malta's labour market and to ensure that they can achieve a higher standard of living through employment.
- Enabling employers and businesses to continue investing in business growth and employment.
- Designing institutions of works that are responsive and that level the playing field for all workers to work with dignity.

Malta's households most confident in Euro area

The latest monthly survey of households and businesses carried out by the European Commission early September has confirmed that Malta's households are the most confident across the Euro area, and when asked about their financial situation over the next year, a majority of 7% of respondents believed it would improve.

The percentage was much more pronounced than the proportion observed on average across the EU, and in Germany. By contrast more than a third of Greek households expect their financial situation to deteriorate further; a majority of 8% of Cypriots feel the same.

A majority of 14% of Maltese households said they feel they can make major purchases. By contrast, a majority of 17% of EU citizens said they couldn't afford to make major purchases. A data on retail sales confirms that in August, growth in Malta was the highest around the EU.

In Malta, retail sales were up by 20% compared to 1% in the EU. This indicates that in Malta they are 10% higher than their pre-pandemic level, while those in the EU are just about the same as they were before COVID-19 struck.

While a majority of 14% of Maltese households feel they currently can make major purchases, more European households are still worried about their economy, and 5% more people expect their national economy to worsen rather than improve over the next year.

Maltese and Gozitan families believe that the decline in unemployment would persist. In contrast, the majority of households across Europe believe that in the respective countries unemployment would continue to rise.

A majority of 10% of the factories interviewed said they experienced increased production in recent months, and a majority of industry operators said they expect further growth in the coming months. In fact, they stated they have around six months of guaranteed production in orders they have already received. Ten per cent of the factories in Malta said that in recent months they had experienced increased production.

Minister Evarist Bartolo visits NY Maltese Centre

During a recent busy week to the United Nations in the United States, the Minister for Foreign and European Affairs Evarist Bartolo and his delegation paid a visit to the Maltese Centre of Astoria in New York, where he was given a great welcome.

The visit was given prominence in the Centre's publication that thanked and described it as a "High Level visit".

The committee said it was honoured to host the delegation that also included the Malta's Ambassador to United States Keith Azzopardi, Ambassador Vanessa Frazier from the Permanent Mission of Malta to the United Nations in New York, and the Deputy Permanent Representative Giovanni Buttigieg.



Minister Evarist Bartolo (left) guested at the Maltese Centre at Astoria NY

Mix-xena tal-ħajja Maltija

minn Ġużè Camilleri

Nagğornaw is-sistema elettorali



L-iċċekjar u l-ghadd tal-voti

Is-sistema elettorali Maltija għada bażikament dik li l-Awtoritajiet Ingliżi kien mponew fuq Malta fl-1921, l-hekk imsejja *"proportional representation"* fejn il-vot jintiret bl-eletturi mitluba jiktbu n-numru wiehed quddiem il-kandidat preferut tagħhom u mbagħad ikompli bit-2, 3, 4..... eċċ fuq il-kandidati l-oħra... Din sistema li f'it huma l-pajjiżi li llum jużawha.

Maż-żmien saru xi tibdiliet fiha, l-aktar wahda li forsi tispikka kienet dik li giet wara li fl-1981 il-Partit Laburista irnexxielu jtellja' aktar kandidati mill-Partit Nazzjonalista għalkemm il-perċentwal ta' voti ta' dawn tal-aħħar kien ikbar minn dak tal-ewwel.

Dan wassal biex filwaqt li l-Partit Nazzjonalista kellu l-mağğoranza tal-eletturi warajh, il-Gvern spiċċa f'idejn il-Partit Laburista. Dan minhabba li dakinhar il-Kostituzzjoni kienet tgħid li l-Gvern jintreba minn min jirnexxielu jeleggi l-akbar għadd ta' kandidati u mhux minn min ikollu l-aktar voti.

Dan wassal għall-kriżi kostituzzjonali bil-PN saħansitra ma jaċċettax ir-riżultat u bħala protesta jibbojkottja l-Parlament.

Biex dan ma jsehhx aktar, fl-1987 giet emendata l-Kostituzzjoni biex gie żgurat li l-Partit politiku (dejjem jekk dawk eletti jigu minn żewġ partiti politiċi biss) li jgħib l-akbar għadd ta' voti fl-ewwel għadd jiggverna, anke jekk ma jgħibx l-akbar għadd ta' kandidati.

Dan ikun jista' jsir billi l-partit li jgħib l-

aktar voti, jekk ma jkollux l-akbar numru ta' kandidati eletti, jiżdidulu kandidati oħra biex ikollu mağğoranza. Finalment gie deċiż li l-perċentwal ta' voti jkun jirrifletti l-perċentwal ta' votanti.

Huwa propju għalhekk li llum, meta ssir elezzjoni, min se jkun fil-Gvern qed jithabbar ferm qabel minn qabel... dan għax fejn qabel hafna drabi kien irid isir il-proċess tal-għadd tal-voti, illum min se jkun fil-Gvern jithabbar malli jingħadd l-ewwel count.

Huwa wkoll għalhekk li bħalissa, għalkemm il-Parlament Malti suppost li hu ta' 65 membru (5 membri minn 13-il distrett) attwalment fil-Parlament hemm 67 membru. Dan minhabba li lill-Partit Nazzjonalista żdidulu żewġ membri biex jirrifletti l-għadd ta' voti li kiseb fl-elezzjoni.

Għalkemm għal hafna din is-sistema Maltija tal-elezzjonijiet, speċjalment kif emendata, hija wahda mill-aktar ġusta u li tati rappreżentanza xierqa skont ix-xewqa tal-elettorat, xorta minn żmien għal żmien tqum polemika jekk wasalx iż-żmien li

nağğornaw din is-sistema.

Attwalment, bħalissa għaddejja kampanja shiha dwar dan. Biss dak li qed jigi l-aktar diskuss mhix is-sistema ta' votazzjoni, imma aktar l-interpretazzjoni tal-vot u ċerta logistika.

Punt li ilu żmien jissemma hu dak li għal hafna snin, din is-sistema spiċċat biex attwalment bħala membri tal-Parlament jigu eletti biss kandidati tal-Partit Nazzjonalista u dak Laburista.

Dan forsi jfisser aktar stabbilita' fil-pajjiż, għax il-Gvern ikun magħmul minn Partit wiehed mhux bħal ma jgħiri, per eżempju fl-Italja fejn il-Gvernijiet ikunu ffurmati minn diversi partiti politiċi u għalhekk ma jkunux daqshekk stabbili u kultant iwasslu biex l-Gvern lanqas jirnexxielu jtemm il-leġislatura tiegħu.

Biss dan mhux meqjus daqshekk demokratiku, għax dawk il-partiti, hekk imsejja żgħar, għalkemm igħibu numru ta' voti fl-ebda distrett ma jirnexxielhom it-tellgħu kandidat.

U allura qed jigu proposti diversi miżuri.

Allura x'jista' jsir?

Meta kien qed jindirizza l-Parlament taż-Żgħażaġh, Il-Prim Ministru, Dr Robert MAbela aċċenna għal dan. Staqsja jekk għall-argument id-distretti għandhomx jibqgħu kif inhuma jew jekk għandhomx jonqsu. Punt iehor hu jekk Malta u Għawdex għandhomx jitqiesu bħala distrett wiehed bħall-elezzjonijiet tal-Parlament Ewropew.

Il-Prim Ministru staqsja wkoll x'raġuni b'saħħitha hemm li żagħżuġh ta' 16-il sena bi dritt tal-vot ma jkollux ukoll dritt ikun kandidat u anke jigi elett.

Bħala eżempju semma l-episodju ta' sentejn ilu fejn żagħżuġh, Carlos Zarb ingħata l-mandat li suppost issarra, li jkun Viċi Sindku, imma minkejja li n-nies tawh il-fiduċja ma setax jokkupa l-kariga minhabba l-età.

Mistoqsijiet oħra li qed isiru huma: Jekk għandux ikun hemm sistema li permezz tagħha jekk partit igħib ċertu perċent-

wal ta' voti mid-distretti kollha flimkien (per eżempju 5%) għandux jingħata kandidat. Dan biex il-partiti ż-żgħar ikollhom aktar ċans li jidhlu fil-Parlament u l-voti li jingħatawllhom ma jispiċċawx fix-xejn.

Titqajjem polemika

Sintendi, kull proposta tqajjem polemika, bħal dik kbira li kellna, u li xi kultant għadha tqum, dwar l-emendi li saru biex jekk l-għadd ta' nisa eletti fl-elezzjoni jkun inqas minn 40% tal-membri tal-Parlament (għalkemm l-emenda fil-fatt titkellem dwar dak is-sess li ma jkunx rappreżentant biżżejjed u allura jista' xi darba jgħodd ukoll għall-irgħiel) jiżiedu sa 12 il-membri iehor fil-Parlament, sintendi lkoll nisa.

*Għall-paġna li jmiss



Jintefa' l-vot fl-elezzjoni f'Malta

Mix-xena tal-ħajja Maltija

minn Ġużè Camilleri

F'Malta jista' jkollna l-metro

Bl-ghadd ta' karozzi li jinħarġu fit-toroq Maltin ta' kuljum, qed ikompli jżdid it-traffiku fit-toroq Maltin u wkoll is-sejha biex l-Awtoritajiet jagħmlu xi haġa dwar dan.

Għalkemm f'dawn l-aħħar snin rajna żvilupp qawwi fl-infrastruttura tal-pajjiż bi proġetti kbar bħal dawk tal-Marsa, is-Central Link li mill-Belt twassal għar-Rabat u twessiegh ta' diversi toroq, f'ċerti hinijiet it-traffiku xorta jiġġammja.

Għalhekk l-istudji u l-proposti ta' kif dan it-traffiku jista' jtnaqqas ma jieqfu qatt, biex issa tħabbret il-proposta tal-akbar proġett fil-qasam tat-traffiku f'Malta.

Skont din il-proposta għandu jsir metro (Underground) li jinkludi 35 Km u 25 stazzjon u li jkun fih tliet linji li jkunu kkonċentrat fuq l-aktar żoni urbani ta' Malta – jiġifieri ż-żoni ta' madwar il-Port il-Kbir u jibqa' sejjer sal-Imrieħel, il-Fgura, Haż-Żabbar u Buġibba – li jingħaqdu permezz ta' tliet linji: Il-Linja l-Ħamra, il-Ħadra u l-Blu. Il-proposta giet varata għad-diskussjoni.

Il-Linja l-Ħamra - l-itwal u li hemm ċans li titlesta f'bejn hames u tmien snin - tghaddi minn Buġibba, in-Naxxar, il-Mosta, Ta' Qali, H'Attard, H'al Balzan, Birkirkara, Mater Dei, il-Gżira, Tas-Sliema, il-Balluta, San Ġiljan u Pembroke.



Kif propost li jiġi l-istazzjon tal-metro fil-belt Valletta

Il-Ħadra tghaddi minn Birkirkara, l-Imrieħel, il-Marsa Park and Ride, l-Im-sida, il-Furjana u l-Belt Valletta.

Il-Blu tghaddi minn Mater Dei, l-Im-sida il-Ħamrun, il-Marsa, Raħal Ġdid, il-Fgura, Haż-Żabbar, Bormla u anke l-Ajruport Internazzjonali ta' Malta.

Huwa stmat li biex isir, dan il-metro fuq pjan magħmul minn esperti Germaniżi, jiehu minn hmiestax sa għoxrin sena bl-ewwel parti tiehu xi tmien snin. L-ispiża hu stmat li

tlahhaq mhux inqas minn €6.2 biljun.

Tgħid din tibqa' holma jew issir realta'?

Fi stqarrija l-Partit Nazzjonalista sahaq li qed jilqa' l-pubblikazzjoni tal-istudju magħmul minn esperti internazzjonali dwar is-sistema tal-metro għal pajjiżna.

Iżda fakkar li bħala partit, kienu diġà ppublikaw din il-proposta qabel l-elezzjoni ġenerali tal-2017.

Il-PN temm jgħid fi stqarrija: "Intennu li sistema ta' trasport effiċjenti u affordabbli huwa neċessita' għal pajjiżna u ninkoragixxu lill-istakeholders kollha biex isemmgħu lehinom fl-interess ta' sistema li tibbenefika lil kulhadd u li fl-aħħar mill-aħħar tegħleb il-problema tal-kongestjoni tat-traffiku f'pajjiżna."



Għadd ta' immigranti jipprotestaw fil-Belt Valletta

Polemika/minn paġna 14

Ma jistax jonqos li jkun hemm dawk li joġġez-zjonaw għat-tnaqqis fl-ghadd ta' distretti għax b'hekk kull membru tal-Parlament ikollu firxa akbar ta' kostitwenti u allura ma jkunx daqshekk qribhom. Min-naħa l-oħra hemm min juża l-istess argument biex isostni li b'hekk ma jkunx hemm il-klijen-teliżmu li hemm illum, u li jista' jwassal għal aktar abbużi u 'pjaciri' politici.

Inqas popolari hija l-proposta li Malta u Għawdex ikunu distrett wiehed.

Għalkemm id-diskussjoni hi miftuħa u donnha qed tingħata mportanza anke mill-partiti politici, wiehed ma jistennix li se jsir xi tibdil qabel ma ssir l-elezzjoni ġenerali li jmiss li tista' tissegħja kull mument minn tmien Novembru sa Settembru 2022.

Xokkanti!

Każ xokkanti, u li qajjem reazzjoni qawwiya mhux biss mill-mexxejja tal-pajjiż, inkluż il-President ta' Malta l-E.T George Vella,

kien ta' haddiem barrani li nstab mixhut fuq bankina jokrob bl-uġiegh. Meta ngħata l-ghajnuna minn tfajla li kienet għaddejja gie allegat li kien waqa' minn għoli ta' żewġ sulari, u minflok hađu l-isptar, min jimpjegħ, xeħtu fuq bankina.

Jingħad li l-imghallem għamel dan għax il-haddiem ma kellux permess tax-xogħol, allura malli kien jiddaħhal l-Isptar il-kaz kien jiġi rrapportat lill-pulizija li jiċċekjaw il-fatti u jittieħdu passi kontra l-haddiem min ihaddmu.

Finalment il-pulizija sabu minn kien il-kuntrattur li allegament għamel dan l-att tressaq u qed jiġi mixli fil-Qorti.

Il-kaz kixef kif ċerti kuntratturi, u individwi, qed jinqdew b'xi immigranti illegali, u b'dawk li m'għandhomx permess biex jahdmu, halli jhaxxnu b'wethom, billi jhaddmuhom hafna drabi f'siti ta' kostruzzjoni u bi ftit hlas.

Infatt dawn stqarrew xi immigranti meta dahlu jipprotestaw il-Belt dwar il-qagħda tagħhom. Sostnew li l-filwaqt li Malta tinsab quddiem nett fid-drittijiet għall-persuni LGBTIQ, l-immigranti mhux jingħataw drittijiet bażiċi.

Huma fissru d-drittijiet li jstennew f'lista li pprezentaw lill-Ministeru

għall-Intern, is-Sigurta' Nazzjonali u l-Infurzar tal-Ligi.

Fost it-talbiet hemm, biex t-fal tal-immigranti li twieldu Malta jingħataw id-dritt tal-isem u tan-nazzjonalità Maltija, l-aċċess għad-drittijiet tax-xogħol, għal tibdil fil-qafas legali li jirregola l-ażil u l-immigrazzjoni fil-gżejjer Maltin.

Sadanittant mistoqsi minn ġurnalista ta' *The Times* dwar it-talbiet tal-immigranti l-Ministru kkonċernat, Dr Byron Camilleri, qal: "Some of the migrants were calling for stability...there are those who have the right to asylum but others who do not. Our policy on migration is firm but fair...Some of those who were protesting today had their request rejected so they need to go back to their country of origin."

Naħseb hafna jaqblu mal-Ministru li filwaqt li għandna nagħtu d-drittijiet li jixirqilhom lil dawk bi dritt tal-ażil, wasal ukoll iż-żmien li dawk li m'għandhomx dan id-dritt jitreġġgħu lura lejn pajjiżhom.



A quick glimpse at Australia

An earthquake in NSW Parliament

Politics in New South Wales has been rocked by three major resignations, developments that will have consequences not just for the state but the country.

Deputy Premier and Nationals Leader John Barilaro followed Premier Gladys Berejiklian and Transport Minister Andrew Constance in announcing a departure from state politics. New South Wales has fixed terms of parliament, which means the incoming Premier would not be able to call a snap poll.

At the last election in 2019, the Liberal Party had 34 seats in the New South Wales lower house of parliament, the Legislative Assembly, while the Nationals have 12 and the opposition Labor Party 36. There are 11 others as well.

The Government, a coalition between the Liberal and the National parties, has since lost two members to the crossbench, meaning it currently governs in the minority.



From left: John Barilaro, Gladys Berejiklian and Andrew Constance

A new Premier has been elected



The 46th Premier of NSW is 39 years old father of six Dominic Perrottet (*left*). He is the youngest Premier ever. He became treasurer and deputy leader of the Liberal Party in 2007.

A devout Catholic, Mr Perrottet, voted against decriminalising abortion in 2019 - warning supporters of the legislation they were on the "wrong side of history".

"Faith is important to me and my view in the

Liberal Party when it comes to those types of issues - we always have a conscience vote," said Mr Perrottet. The new Premier is an admirer of Donald Trump. He described his victory to the top as a victory for people who have been taken for granted by the elites.

The new deputy leader of the NSW Liberal is Stuart Ayres, member for Penrith and the partner of Federal Senator and Foreign Minister Marisa Payne while deputy Premier and leader

of the Nationals is Paul Toole the MP for Bathurst.

Gladys Berejiklian, age 51 years daughter of Armenian parents, the 45th Premier of the most populous state, resigned as NSW premier and leader of the NSW Liberal party after the state's anti-corruption watchdog opened an investigation into her conduct.

The Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) said it would investigate Ms Berejiklian for potentially breaching public trust by failing to disclose her relationship with embattled former Liberal MP Daryl Maguire, the then Wagga Wagga MP.

Ms Berejiklian said she'll also resign from the NSW Parliament as a member for Willoughby since 2003, after consulting the electoral commission on appropriate timing for a by-election.

John Barilaro, 49 years old, has resigned as NSW Deputy Premier and Nationals leader, sparking another wave of Coalition instability at Macquarie Street.

Mr Barilaro, who was born in Queanbeyan to Italian migrant parents, said his focus was to make regional NSW a better place to live and work. He was Minister for Regional NSW, Industry and Trade and member for Monaro.

Transport Minister Andrew Constance also resigned, meaning there will be three by-elections in NSW, which is battling a major COVID-19 outbreak.

Migrants to wait longer for welfare payment

Laws forcing new migrants to wait longer to access certain welfare payments risk entrenching a "two-class system" prioritising short-term budget savings over long-term settlement outcomes, an inquiry has heard.

A parliamentary committee is currently examining the Government's Social Services Legislation Amendment (Consistent Wait Periods for New Migrants) Bill 2021.

If passed, the bill would impose a consistent four-year waiting period on new migrants from next year before they can access multiple welfare payments. This includes the Carer Payment, Parental Leave Pay, Dad and Partner Pay, the Carer Allowance, the Family Tax Benefit, and low-income health care and Commonwealth seniors health cards.

The move was first announced in this year's federal budget and is expected to save the Government \$671 million over five years.

Mohammad Al-Khafaji (*right*), head of the Federation of Ethnic Communities Council of Australia, told the committee on Monday the measures were "deeply unfair" and short-sighted. "What this is creating is a two-class system. That's not the Australia that I know."





A quick glimpse at Australia

The Pandora Papers and Australia

The Australian Tax Office says it will investigate data from the recently released Pandora Papers for any Australian links to illegal tax evasion and wrongdoing. It was reported more than 400 Australians were named in the data leak.

ATO deputy commissioner Will Day said there are legitimate reasons Australians may have for offshore bank accounts and that being included in a data leak does not indicate evidence of tax evasion or a crime. But he warned the agency would take a hard line on anyone found to have rorted the system.

He described the information as "interesting" but said the ATO does not solely rely on data leaks to conduct its job. It has some of the best auditors, investigators, analysts and data scientists in the world who work together to sort the good from the bad.

The ATO is a member of the Joint International Taskforce on Shared Intelligence and Collaboration, an international grouping of agencies to help fight global tax evasion.

New submarines spending priorities

In the recent issue of the Eureka Street, Bishop Vincent Long Van Nguyen OFM Conv the chair of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference's Bishops Commission for Social Justice, Mission and Service, wrote that the new submarine deal comes with the additional cost of compensating the French builder Naval Group for breaking an existing contract. Australia has already spent \$2.4 billion on the scrapped project.

But the cost of this new arrangement is much more than money. He said that trust has been broken and relationships strained. The response in France, and in Europe more broadly, means we may miss out on a free trade agreement with Europe. Trust is the basis of all commerce and exchange.

He added: "Trust is also essential to real peace and security. Our neighbours in the Asia Pacific region are understandably unsettled by the AUKUS alliance. Given

the history of the region, and the escalating tensions in the South China Sea, one can hardly blame them for nervousness about intensifying military cooperation between Australia and other Anglophone settler countries. They do not wish to become entangled in a new cold war.

"If we want to live in peace with our near neighbours, and with old and new powers, increasing our military strike capacity is not the answer," he said.

Scott Morrison "deliberately deceived France"

Former Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull has gone nuclear on Scott Morrison in a weapons-grade attack over the scrapped French submarine deal worth \$90 billion in an explosive National Press Club speech aimed squarely at his predecessor.

Deceitful, devious, untrustworthy, double-crossing and bad faith were among Mr Turnbull's descriptions of the prime minister's conduct. The decision sunk diplomatic relations between Canberra and Paris to rock bottom, but Mr Turnbull warned of even more serious flow-on effects.

"This betrayal of trust will dog our relations with Europe for years," Mr Turnbull said. "It won't be forgotten. Every time we seek to persuade another nation to trust us, somebody will be saying 'remember what they did to Macron'. If they can throw France under a bus, what would they do us?"

Visit to places of worship

Before resigning, the former Premier of NSW Gladys Berejikian revealed the state's three-stage plan out of lockdown which outlined the restrictions set to be relaxed at 70 and 80 per cent double dose vaccination.

She revealed unvaccinated residents would be subject to stay-at-home orders until December 1 but said they would be

Business support payment

Businesses in NSW, Victoria and ACT will no longer receive federal cash injections when vaccination coverage milestones are reached as the government phases out coronavirus support.

Treasurer Josh Frydenberg confirmed business assistance would end for states and territories that reach an 80 per cent over-16 immunisation rate. The 80 per cent mark expected to be reached in mid-November.

The schemes have pumped \$13 billion into businesses suffering because of lockdowns, with the figure expected to rise to \$20 billion by the time the tap is turned off. Finance Minister Simon Birmingham said extending support after high vaccination rates are achieved would hurt the budget bottom line.

"These payments should not go on any longer than necessary," he said Support for workers who lose hours because of lockdowns will also be wound down once immunisation goals are reached.

able to visit places of worship once the state reaches 80 per cent double dose vaccination, expected by the end of October.

She had warned there was "a risk involved" for the unvaccinated when visiting places of worship which will be subject to "very strict" COVID-safe plans including the one person to 4-square metre rule, mask-wearing and limited singing or chanting.

The exemption extends to all places of worship with the faith leaders allowed to decide whether unvaccinated can attend, the Premier confirmed.



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Australia Hall in Pembroke, Malta

The majority of the Maltese living in Australia would like to see the Australia Hall in Pembroke, Malta restored to its former glory. Many attempts had been made in the past to untangle the web of intrigue with no success. Today it stands there in ruins, a shell of twisted metal and fallen walls.

It has a chequered history. It is a WW1 remnant. It was constructed in 1915 by the Australian Branch of the British Red Cross to provide a place for entertainment and refreshments for the thousands of ANZACs who were wounded in Gallipoli and taken to Malta for medical treatment and convalescence.

The building also became an important step for recovery through its service for the allied forces fighting in World War I.

The Voice of the Maltese has recently interviewed two well-meaning individuals who are making another attempt at the restoration but using different tactics. They are determined to convince the Australian and New Zealand authorities to officially recognise this building as part of the Australian and New Zealand (ANZAC) war effort before it is too late.

If this recognition were achieved, the end result would be in sight. Educating the Australian people, especially the young to better understand the importance Malta played in the Gallipoli venture is also essential.

Andrew Wilkinson is an archaeologist with over ten years experience in heritage work throughout Australia, Singapore, Malta, and Italy. Andrew served for 15 years in the military (RAAF), and has managed to get the support of fellow war veterans.

John Calleja has been a Justice of the Peace for South Australia for the last 25 years, a member of the Knights of the

Australian, New Zealand must recognise it as part of the ANZAC history



Australia Hall, the building is now in a dilapidated state

Southern Cross. More recently he formed the Malta ANZACs. For over 25 years he has occupied the position of Quality Manager in Australia's largest defence industry.

Marisa Previtera, a member of the Council of Maltese Living Abroad (CMLA), is assisting the two men in this campaign.

Australia Hall is privately owned, and it could be argued that some of the previous legal complications are now manageable. Others that have used the restoration of this iconic building that symbolises the spirit of ANZACs for political gain must be sidelined.

The Voice of the Maltese is of the opinion that Australia Hall must be restored. Importantly both Australia and New Zealand have to recognise that Australia Hall was built for the ANZACs not for the Maltese. Its history needs to be investigated and documented.

Without a voice, especially from those that

built it, Australia Hall is destined to become another faded memory, another pile of dust and debris, another military building in Malta left in urgent need of restoration. The connection ANZACs had with the Maltese nation, which continues to this very day, cannot be understated enough.

Malta is the only country in the world that commemorates ANZAC Day and even has a monument at the Argotti Gardens in Floriana. Australia Hall would therefore be a tourist attraction for

Australians and Maltese visiting Malta.

Australia Hall was built by the Royal Engineers and took two months to complete. It was officially opened on 22 January 1916 by the Governor Field Marshal Lord Methuen.

When the British military facilities in St Andrew's Barracks were closed down in 1978, Australia Hall became the property of the Maltese government. In 1979 it was granted to the Labour Party on a long lease as compensation for the compulsory acquisition of land that the party owned in Marsa for use by Malta Shipbuilding Corporation.

In December 1998 Australia Hall suffered severe damage when its ceiling of metal trusses and sheeting was gutted by fire.

Since 1996 the building has been classified by the Malta Environment and Planning Authority (MEPA) as a Grade 2 building of historic, architectural and contextual value (as it forms part of a larger protected military complex).

It is worth recalling that in one of her speeches when he touched on the state of the Australia Hall, in January 2016, former Australian High Commissioner to Malta, Jane Lambert said, "Contrary to some recent media reports that the building has been abandoned and left to be a canvass for graffiti, this is not the case. The owners are committed to the building's restoration," she said. The current private owners of the building (or what is left of it) had also informed the members of the CMLA about its possible restoration.

This continuing saga must end. We urge all those involved, especially Governments of all the countries involved, to stop dithering and get on with it. We also urge all Maltese organisations in Australia to get behind this latest appeal.



Australia Hall when it was first constructed ... serving the purpose

Is-sitt *Stage and Proms on the Sea* suċċess

Minkejja r-restrizzjonijiet tal-pandemija, iżda b'rispett lejn il-protokolli kollha mill-Awtoritajiet tas-Saħha, *The Gozo Youth Wind Band* fi hdan il-*Gozo Youth Wind Band & Orchestra* tellgħet is-sitt edizzjoni ta' *Stage and Proms on the Sea* fl-Imġarr Marina f'Għawdex li għal darb'ohra kien suċċess mil-lat mużikali u wkoll tal-attenzenza.

Għall-apprezzament ta' bosta residenti barranin li jgħixu fil-Gżejjer Maltin, kif ukoll il-pubbliku iġenerali l-Gozo Youth Wind, taħt id-direzzjoni tal-fundatur u Direttur Mużikali tagħha Mro Dr Joseph Grech, esegwiet siltiet minn musicals, films kif ukoll kompożizzjonijiet marbuta mas-serata finali li ssir ta' kull sena fir-Royal Albert Hall fir-Renju Unit.

Is-siltiet kienu minn: *Mary Poppins*, *Chitty Chitty Bank*, *Cats*, *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Wicked*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *Les Miserables* u wkoll *Fantasia on British Sea Songs*, *Music ta' John Miles*, *Pomp and Circumstance* u *Best of Maltese Folklore*. Il-Band kienet akkumpanjata minn

żewġ kantanti stabbiliti fix-xena mużikali pop, Ludwig Galea u Sarah Bonnici.

Għall-kunċert li seta' jkun possibbli bil-għajnuna tal-Ministeru għal Għawdex, id-Direttorat tal-Wirt Kulturali, il-Kunsill Malti għall-Arti, Kinnie, Cisk Lager, Mgarr Marina, Malta Tourism Authority u Paul Stellini Design Studio, kien preżenti l-Ministru għal Għawdex Clint Camilleri.

**Mill-Gżira
Għawdexija**

Charles Spiteri



Il-kantanti Ludwig Galea u Sarah Bonnici waqt il-kunċert

Dehra panoramika b'sezzjoni mill-folla li attendiet għall kunċert *Stage and Proms on the Sea*. Fl-isfond tidher l-orkestra



Fra Alessandro waqt il-kunċert f'Għajnsielem taħt id-direzzjoni ta' Mro John Galea



Fra Alessandro f'Għajnsielem

Għawdex laqa' lill-kantant Alessandro Brustenghi magħruf bħala Frate Alessandro, l-ewwel Fra Frangiskana Taljan minn Assisi li beda bħala mastrudaxxa mal-Ordni Frangiskana u li illum, bil-lehen sabih tiegħu sar figura internazzjonali. Huwa ha sehem f'kunċert fil-Knisja Parrokkjali tal-Madonna ta' Loreto f'Għajnsielem taħt id-direzzjoni ta' Mro. Dr. John Galea.

Fl-istess kunċert miegħu hađu sehem ukoll il-JP2 String Quartet, l-Urbanus Junior Choir, taħt id-direzzjoni ta' Maureen Zerafa, u s-solisti, is-soprani Yvonne Galea u Ruth Portelli, il-baxx Noel Galea, il-mezzo soprani Hilda Grima u Mary Xerri u t-tenur żagħżuġ Angelo Muscat.

Fl-aħħar, il-pubbliku preżenti gie mistiedna minn Mro. Galea jingħaqad ma' Fra Alessandro għall-kant ta' l-Ave Maria ta' Schubert.

Post li attendew kien hemm l-Isqof George Bugeja, patrijiet tal-Komunità, fosthom Patri Marcello Ghirlando u Patri Dijonisju Mintoff, l-Arcipriet tal-Parroċċa ta' Għajnsielem il-Kanonku Frankie Bajada, kunsilliera tal-Kunsill Lokali u s-Segretarjat tal-Ministeru għal Għawdex.

L-SBS jistharreg fehmet il-komunitajiet dwar il-futur tas-servizzi bir-radju u l-lingwi tiegħu

Bhala parti mill-impenn tal-SBS li jkompli jevolvi biex jissodisfa l-htigijiet tal-Awstralja kontemporanja, l-SBS beda r-reviżjoni regolari tas-servizzi tal-lingwi tiegħu, ipprovduti permezz tar-Radju tal-SBS. Illum fetaħ il-konsultazzjoni pubblika biex jistieden tagħrif mogħti b'rispons dwar l-abbozz tal-kriterja ta' selezzjoni.

Ir-Revizjoni tas-Servizzi tal-Lingwi tal-SBS hija proċess li jittiehed kull hames snin skont iċ-Ċensiment nazzjonali biex jiżgura li s-servizzi tar-Radju tal-SBS jirriflettu l-bidliet mgħagħla u s-soċjetà li qed tiżdied diversifikament fl-Awstralja. Il-kriterja ta' selezzjoni se tintuża flimkien mad-data taċ-Ċensiment 2021 biex tiddetermina s-servizz tal-lingwi u tghin fl-informazzjoni tal-mod kif jingħataw dawk is-servizzi għal hames snin li ġejjin.

Ir-Revizjoni tas-Servizzi tal-Lingwi tkopri s-smiġħ u l-lingwi offruti fuq l-SBS inklużi r-radju, SBS On Demand, podcasting u pjattaformi diġitali oħra.

Il-konsultazzjoni pubblika ta' sitt ġimghat, li għad kif bdiet u tintemm fit-12 ta' Novembru 2021, hija opportunità importanti għall-komunitajiet biex jikkontribwixxu għas-servizzi futuri tar-Radju tal-SBS u l-kontenut aktar wiesa' tas-smiġħ u lingwi tan-network, bir-rispons kollu li jingħata jkun ikkunsidrat fit-fassil tal-kriterja ta' selezzjoni finali li tintuża.

Id-Direttur tal-Kontenut tal-Awdjo u l-Lingwi tal-SBS, David Hua qal, "L-SBS għandu kapacià unika biex jilhaq u jikkonnettja mal-komunitajiet diversi tal-Awstralja permezz tas-servizzi mul-



tilingwali tiegħu, permezz ta' diversi mezzi ta' kuntatt. Għal aktar minn 45 sena, komplejna nadattaw il-mod kif nipprovdut servizzi innovattivi u relevanti għall-komunitajiet, u llum nagħmlu hekk permezz tar-radju, on-lajn, podcasts u apps f'aktar minn 60 lingwa. Din ir-reviżjoni tghin fil-formazzjoni tal-SBS waqt li nħarsu lejn għeluq il-50 sena.

"Is-sehem vitali tas-servizzi multilingwali tal-SBS intwera waqt il-COVID-19, b'xandir ta' aġġornamenti importanti u informazzjoni dwar is-saħħa lill-komunitajiet fil-lingwa preferuta tagħhom. Ir-Revizjoni tas-Servizzi tal-Lingwi hija opportunità importanti biex tiżgura li nkomplu nirriflettu l-bżonnijiet tal-komunitajiet fl-Awstralja llum.

"L-aġġornament regolari tas-servizzi tal-

lingwi tagħna, jippermetti lill-SBS biex jaqdi aħjar il-komunitajiet il-kbar bi sfond kulturali u lingwistiku divers, kif ukoll joffri servizzi lill-komunitajiet li qed jittfaċċaw u komunitajiet bi htigijiet kbar. Li nagħtu lehen lill-udjenzi tagħna f'dan il-proċess huwa element kritiku, u ninkoraġġixxu lill-komunitajiet madwar l-Awstralja biex jagħtu l-opinjoni tagħhom."

Il-kriterja ta' selezzjoni mistennija li tkun finalizzata sa Mejju 2022 bis-servizzi riveduti tal-lingwi tal-SBS ikunu implimentati sal-aħħar tal-2022.

Il-perjodu ta' konsultazzjoni pubblika għall-kriterja ta' selezzjoni huwa sat-12 ta' Novembru 2021. Biex wiehed jara l-abbozz tal-kriterja ta' selezzjoni u biex jissottometti l-informazzjoni tiegħu għandu jur fuq sbs.com.au/consultation.

It-Teatru Manoel beħsiebu jipproduċi l-ewwel *musical* internazzjonali tiegħu

Għall-ewwel darba, it-Teatru Manoel se jiffaċċja l-isfida li jipproduċi l-ewwel *musical* kompletament tiegħu wara li s-soltu kien itella' dawk ta' kumpanniji indipendenti. Tista' wkoll tinqata' x-xewqa tal-Manoel li jahdem b'artisti Maltin, jew artisti li huma bbażati f'Malta.

Fl-edukazzjoni Malta aħjar minn qabel il-pandemija

Jirrizulta li minkejja li l-edukazzjoni bil-mod tradizzjonali f'Malta waqt il-pandemija COVID-19 kienet differenti mis-soltu, l-aħħar eżamijiet tal-*benchmark* juru li l-istudenti rnexxiellhom jmorru ferm tajjeb.

Il-Ministru tad-Edukazzjoni Justyn Caruana tenniet li skont analiżi jidher li l-istudenti rnexxiellhom jegħlbu l-isfidi u jiksibu riżultati aħjar. Sostniet li l-livell għola bl-istudenti marru aħjar minn qabel il-pandemija.

Kisba oħra pożittiva hi li f'testijiet internazzjonali fis-suġġetti tal-Matematika u x-Xjenza l-istudenti tal-oħames sena marru aħjar mill-medja ta' oħrajn minn madwar id-dinja.

Il-Ministru spjegat ukoll kif wara li kienet harget statistika dwar studenti li jittilqu mill-iskola qabel iż-żmien, u li kienet uriet lil Malta fl-aħħar post, ġie nnutat li l-mod li bih tinħadem l-istatistika ma kienx qed juri l-istampa reali tas-sitwazzjoni

Din l-isfida se tkun fil-forma tal-verzjoni ta' Sweeney Todd: *The Demon Barber of Fleet Street*, ta' Stephen Sondheim ambjentata fiż-żmien Vittorjan f'Londra. Fiha se jiehdu sehem madwar 27 mużiċist u 20 attur.

Il-produzzjoni li se tittella' f'Lul-ju tas-sena d-dieħla se tkun f'idejn Michael Mangion, uffiċjal responsabbli mill-produzzjonijiet u l-avvenimenti tat-teatru Manoel, li qal li jinsab herqan li t-teatru nazzjonali daħal għal din l-isfida.

F'kummenta li ta, Mangion qal li s'issa l-Manoel (*stampa lemin*) kellu l-esperjenza li jipproduċi xogħlijiet operistiċi, filwaqt li din se tkun l-ewwel darba li se jtella' ġeneru ġdid, *musical* fuq skala ta' opra b'kast kbir ta' mużiċisti.

Ix-xogħol se jkun jikkonsisti f'taħlita ta' mużika klassika u operistika, bid-direttriċi Lucienne Camilleri tispjega l-ġenjalità ta' Sondheim, li jikkomponi l-mużika u jikteb il-lirika wkoll billi tghid li tishajjel qisu meta wiehed umur l-ewwel darba l-baħar u jaqbeż u jiehu dik id-deħxa.

Skont Lucienne, Sondheim hu żatt hekk,



jigifieri esperjenza kemm għall-udjenza, għan-nies li jipparteċipaw, għad-direttruri u anke għan-nies fuq in-naha ta' wara tal-palk.

Il-Kap Eżekuttiv tat-teatro, Massimo Zammit hegġeg lill-artisti Maltin li jgħożzu l-arti performattiva u li huma bbażati Malta biex japplikaw u jagħmlu l-awdizzjonijiet li qed isiru l-bħalissa.

The miracle of Fatima and the Christian faith

The article by Victor Zammit on life after death (*The Voice of the Maltese* No. 257) seems to have unsettled a lot of this magazine's readers as proven by their letters to the editor.

I wish to remind the readers of the miracle of Fatima that occurred on 13th October 1917. Three months earlier in a message they had received from heaven three shepherd children at the Cova da Iria, in Fátima, Portugal, Lucia, Francesco and Jacinta had predicted that a miracle would take place, on that spot, at that particular time "so that everyone would believe".

Miracles by the very fact that they are miracles seem unreal. Childbirth may be a "miracle" to some, but to others flying saucers may be a "miracle". However, a miracle in the true sense of the word is a wonderful event from above, contrary to, outside nature.



Mr. Higino Faria ...he was a witness of the miracle of Fatima in October 1917

In his book 'Meet the Witnesses of the Miracle of the Sun' that he wrote in 1960 John M Haffert, an American Roman Catholic author and editor, wrote: Over 70,000 persons were gathered on the mountain where the children had witnessed their "visions" and they experienced ten minutes of such terror that even today over forty years later, a look of fear often comes to their eyes when they are asked to describe what they saw".

The author, who was a strong advocate of the message of Our Lady of Fatima looked for and found a certain number of persons who witnessed the miraculous event that the children of Fatima had foretold. He heard their testimony in their own words, without consideration of their social level or degree of education.

I will quote from just one interview John Haffert conducted with an American witness Mr. Higino Faria, who lived in Oakland, California.

In 1917 Mr. Faria lived in Olaia about seven miles from Fatima. At the time he was 17 years old.

He says that two days before the miracle "Caravans of people were passing in front of the house". On the day of the miracle the 13th October, Mr. Faria left his house at nine in the morning. He continued to say that by the time he reached the top of the mountain at Fatima: "We became victims of a heavy rain which wet our clothes and made us very cold".

He then describes what he saw. "When I arrived at eleven o'clock, I was surprised at the great number of people on the slope of the hill. Completely wet, dirty and frozen, we waited.

"At one o'clock the clouds gathered into a very thick and dark form, giving the appearance of an eclipse. At that moment I looked at the multitude and had the impression that it was the day of final judgement. The faces of the people looked thin, long and yellow.

"Then the dark cloud broke into parts, and

through the break we saw the sun shining, spinning in a shape of a wheel of fire. It seemed to approach the earth... everyone was dried, cleaned.

"I who was sick returned completely cured. In thanksgiving for such a great grace and my cure, I promised to recite the rosary every day of my life..."

For those of you who would like to do more research, there's a book written by Lee Strobel called 'The Case for Christ'. Lee Strobel was a journalist with *The Chicago Tribune*. He and his wife were both atheists until in autumn of 1979 his wife Leslie told him that she converted to Christianity.

So Lee set out to prove her wrong about Jesus claiming to be the Son of God. He spent 18 months cross-examining a dozen experts who are recognised authorities in their fields of history, archaeology and manuscript studies.

As a result of his research, he quit his job and now serves as Professor of Christian Thought at Houston Baptist University.

Joseph BUTTIGIEG



Our Lady of Fatima

Taghrif dwar il-kitba bil-Malti

Minhabba nuqqas ta' spazju, il-pagna ta' Taghrif dwar il-kitba bil-Malti din id-darba kellna nhalluha barra. Tirritorna fil-harga tas-26 ta' Ottubru

Daylight saving time

This year, Daylight Saving Time in New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia, Tasmania and the ACT start-ed on Sunday October 3 when clocks were set forward one hour at 2am local time. They will roll back an hour at 3am on Sunday, April 3, 2022.

Queensland, Western Australia and the Northern Territory do not observe daylight saving time.

Along with most European countries, particularly EU member states, Daylight Saving Time in Malta ends on October 31, that is when clocks are turned backward one hour to 02:00:00 local standard time, to be rolled back on Sunday March 27, 2022.

In the United States, DST ends a week after Europe, on November 7, 2021.



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In conjunction with Hills Family Funerals




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Community News



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PROGRAM FOR THE MALTESE

SUNDAYS AT 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM
AN HOUR FILLED WITH NEWS AND INFORMATION




MALTESE LANGUAGE SCHOOL OF NSW

A division of the Maltese Community Council of NSW Inc. Established in 1999

Learn Maltese Due to the covid restrictions,
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La Valette Social Centre

La Valette Social Centre Inc. 175 Walters Road, Blacktown Tel. 96225847

NOTICE: La Valette Social Centre will start operating again on Thursdays and Saturdays as from 14th October. Patrons will need to prove upon entry that they have received a double dose COVID-19 vaccination approved in Australia. Until further notice, no masses will currently be held, while rosary will be recited on Thursdays from 10:15am. Mask wearing is mandatory indoors.





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Events for 2021

Sunday October 17: Fete
Sat. November 14: Dinner Dance
Sun. December 5: Festa San Nikola

Tune in to Radio and Television

MELBOURNE: on 3ZZZ 92.3FM or on www.3zzz.com.au. Mondays 5-6 pm, Fridays 5-6 pm and Saturdays 10-11am.

MELBOURNE: on 98.9 North West FM, every Friday 6.00 - 7.00p.m. and Mondays 7.00 to 8.00pm. Presenter: Emmanuel Brincat.

On SBS Radio
Day Time Analogue and Digital
Tuesdays and Fridays: 12:00-13:00 97.7fm SBS 2.
(To tune into digital radio you need a receiver or device with a DAB+ chip. Tuning in is by station name not frequency. Digital radio can also be heard via digital TV..)

SYDNEY: listen to the MCC radio programmes on 2GLF FM 89.3.
Isma' l-programm tar-radju bil-Malti



mill-Kunsill Malti ta' NSW minn fuq l-is-tazzjon 2GLF 89.3FM. Also On Demand on I-Internet: www.893fm.com.au)
On Demand: Ethnic Maltese Council 11am)
Il-Ħadd 11.00 am: l-aħħar aħbarijiet minn Malta, mużika, tagħrif, kultura, avvizi u suġġetti ta' interess.

SBS Radio 2 on Channel 38. Programmes can be accessed online (live/catch up) at: sbs.com.au/maltese (mobile), using the SBS Radio app.

For television news from Malta - **SBS2 TV 32** (Viceland) on Thursdays and Sundays at 8am.

SBS MALTESE NEWS: L-Aħbarijiet are now on SBSTV Viceland HD Chan-

nel 32 every Sunday at 8.00 a.m. and on Thursday at 8.00 a.m.

BRISBANE listen to the Maltese Programme on 4EB on Tuesdays 6.00 - 8.15am; Sundays 4.15pm to 5.15pm.

Maltese Community Radio Adelaide: Maltese Programmes on 5EBI 103.1fm: **Sunday:** 7.30am; **Monday:** 8.00 am; **Monday:** 6.00pm.

Contact: Bernadette Buhagiar: 0420 944 205. Email bernadettebuhagiar@gmail.com Ron Borg: 0418 843 850. Email ronborg@mac.com

97.9 FM Melton Tuesday Maltese Programme: 6.00 To 8.00 pm
Presenter Miriam Vella

Programmes on 89.3 Fm 2GLF
Maltese voices: One hour of Maltese talent, songs from Maltese artists. Sundays @ 10.00 am to 11.00 am. Marthese Caruana: 11.00 a.m.: MCC programme

These programmes are also on Demand for 4 weeks from the website of 2GLF 89.3 FM - follow - Ethnic - Sunday 10.00am and 11.00 am

Sports on 2 pages

George Cross hard done by Football Victoria

Following its decision to cancel Season 2021 without promotion and relegation, Football Victoria's is facing a considerable challenge from over 40 Victorian clubs formed under the banner of United Football to challenge its decision to suspend promotion and relegation in men's and women's competitions in the state.

Most of the clubs in the United Football Group of Clubs had a good chance of being promoted and come from the top-tier of National Premier Leagues Victoria, right down to State League Five. They include Caroline Springs George Cross FC the Melbourne 'Maltese' club that plays in State League Division 1.

George Cross are among those that have been mostly affected, and certainly disappointed as after 14 rounds played they were sitting on top of the league table in a good position to win promotion. Now it looks like they will be playing in the State League for another season.

Club President Mark Sultana was most upset by this decision, as the Federation seems to have failed to learn from the previous season of not having rules and regulations in place should the season be stopped after a certain number of matches were played.

United Football is advocating that clubs who worked hard to put themselves into promotion contention across men's and women's divisions deserve to be rewarded.

Football Victoria announced the cancellation of the remainder of the season in Metropolitan Melbourne on September 3, and also revealed that promotion and relegation would not proceed. It stirred controversy in the Victorian football community, with a number of clubs who were in the mix for promotion now believing that their efforts have ultimately been wasted.

United Football Chairperson Zak Gruovski believes that the clubs are disappointed that promotion has been taken off the table. "We invest money into our clubs, we work hard to create an environment that leads to success and in the context of a

completely lost 2020, to not reward the clubs that have been ambitious in 2021 is not acceptable.

"Our own governing bodies want us to improve as clubs. Football Australia and Football Victoria have set out plans for the growth of their top-flight competitions, so clubs that have invested and improved themselves should be rewarded for that effort, especially with almost two-thirds of the season played.

"The Football Australia Performance Gap recommends expanded NPL competitions that allow for 30 games per season, so this isn't just us making things up as we go along to suit a few vocal clubs. Promotion is an important part of the game achieving its competitive and developmental aims."

Clubs have been misled

United Football has held several meetings with concerned clubs, and recently delivered a written submission to the Football Victoria board that argues clubs have been misled and that Football Victoria did not adequately prepare for a range of COVID-19 related scenarios, particularly given the cancellation of the 2020 season.

Whilst the clubs acknowledge the cancellation of the season is in light of prolonged, ongoing lockdowns in Victoria, they strongly believe that promotion and relegation was consistently communicated as going ahead, even as late as August 9, 2021 and that promotion – at the very least – should still be honoured.

Gruevski said everyone experienced the effects of COVID in 2020. "We lost a whole season and we came into this one with written commitments that promotion and relegation would exist for 2021. Even as late as August 2021, when clubs were provided the roadmap out of lockdown, promotion and relegation was still a live issue.

He added: "The scene was set by Football Victoria as early as May 2020 with the release of their 'Guiding Principles',



where the commitment was that as long as each team played each other once, that would constitute a season for promotion, relegation and prize money.

"That didn't happen, but it didn't happen because Football Victoria did not incorporate it into the rules of competition and then decided in between lockdowns to play the fixtures based on the calendar instead of the unfulfilled rounds, meaning some teams played each other twice and some didn't play at all.

"Why, as clubs, should we have to pay for these mistakes? Why should we now have to recomplete an entire season?"

"Football Victoria has confirmed that it wants to revise the rules of competition to avoid this happening in 2022, which we're happy to work with them on, but it doesn't solve the issue we face right now."

Capital Football decided to honour promotion and relegation despite the early cancellation of the season, whilst Football New South Wales decided to opt for a restructuring of its leagues in light of the cancellation of its competitions.

In addition to reviewing written material issued by Football Victoria, United Football's legal team worked on a written submission that was delivered to Football Victoria on behalf of the clubs on Monday September 20.

The submission notes the group's commitment to try and amicably resolve the issue with Football Victoria and presents three options for the state governing body to consider: Promotion and Recognition of Champions based on current standings or points per matches played method, with or without relegation.

Restructure of the leagues to achieve the desired effect of promotion/relegation, completed in line with the 2021 Football Australia Performance Gap Report.

Align with Football Victoria principles and fixture the outstanding games between teams who have not played against each other to complete the season and award promotion and relegation. Given the current COVID situation, it is recognised that this may be the least likely scenario.

Gruevski who has had confirmation that the submission had been received and was discussed at Football Victoria's most recent board meeting and is being reconsidered at an extraordinary meeting being held this week, said that "One thing is clear; this issue is not going to go away."

Perth Glory sign former England striker

A-League side Perth Glory have signed English footballer Daniel Sturridge. The striker is a former Premier League, FA Cup and Champions League winner with Chelsea and Liverpool, and represented England at a World Cup and European Championship.

In the 2013–14 season at Anfield, he finished second in the Golden Boot to Uruguayan team-mate Luis Suárez. He has scored 76 Premier League goals.

Sturridge hasn't played football since leaving Turkish side Trabzonspor in March 2020 after receiving a four-month worldwide ban for breaching betting rules. He cannot play football until June as the betting ban is extended.

His arrival at HBF Park has already been labelled the second biggest signing in the history of the competition, behind only Italian legend Alessandro Del Piero's arrival at Sydney FC in its noteworthiness.

Sports on 2 pages

A deserved draw

Over three days, Malta's national football team played back-to-back return matches in the FIFA World Cup 2022 Qualifying Round Group H, collecting an away point in a 2-2 draw in Cyprus and disappointingly losing 0-4 in Malta against Slovenia.

On Monday at Larnaca against Cyprus the team sharing the placing in the league ladder Malta managed a draw thanks to a goal at the death, scored seven minutes into stoppage time by substitute Jurgen Degabriele. It was a deserved point as earlier the team had wasted a number of scoring opportunities.

Loose marking in defence on seven minutes, led to Cyprus taking the lead through Fotis Papoulis. Malta levelled through Zach Muscat (53rd min), but Cyprus regained the lead against the run of play through Pieros Sotirio (80th), only for Degabriele to qualify.

Disappointing heavy loss against Slovenia

In the first match on Friday at Ta' Qali, Malta were a disappointment. The players failed to live up to expectations against Slovenia after previous performances and were defeated 4-0.

The Maltese struggled

against an efficient outfit that ran out easy victors. They were found wanting in defence and equally so up front where they even missed glaring scoring opportunities.

Against the same opponents away from

home a few weeks earlier Malta were unfortunate to lose to a disputed penalty goal. This time they were found wanting, conceding the first goal on 20 minutes through Josip Ilcic, who also got a second on the hour. Andraz Sporar (50th minute) and Benjamin Sesko (68) scored the others

Malta to have its own professional race track

The government has announced it is to build the long-awaited professional racetrack in Hal Far, a top-level investment that is estimated to cost around €20 million that could be completed within 18 months.

Making the announcement, Prime Minister Robert Abela revealed that the track that has been designed by German professionals and is a project that the motorsport community has waited long enough for. "It's time to go for the big investment," he said.

An emotional Malta Motorsport Federation president Duncan Micallef welcomed the news and said that it was like a dream come true.

Dr Abela said that from the moment he became Prime Minister, he gave direction to Parliamentary Secretary responsible for sport Clifton Grima to prioritise this project. "We now have the plans in hand, as well as the funding model, which will include the National Development and Social Fund," he said.

The current plans for the track, to be built away from residential areas on surrounding land already used for similar activity will take up much less land than the ones previously under consideration. The project is expected to meet international standards, turning the area into a quality attraction.

Talking generally about sports, the Prime Minister said that sports is a top priority for his government, but as much as infrastructure and investment are important in this field, it is equally important for Maltese people to believe in their abilities. "I want Maltese youths and young children to dream of gold, and no other colour," he said.

Socceroos on course for World Cup qualification

Last Friday the socceroos made it 11 wins on the bounce when they defeated Oman 3-1 at the Khalifa International Stadium in Qatar – setting a new world record for the most over consecutive wins in a single World Cup campaign.

They shook off a shaky opening to emerge victors thanks to goals from Awer Mabil, and second half strikes from Martin Boyle and Mitch Duke. The three points earned ensure they remain top of their group and, thanks to Japan's 1-0 loss to Saudi Arabia, now enjoy a six-point safety buffer above the non-automatic qualifications slots.

Now a win over Japan in Saitama on Tuesday places them in the seat for automatic qualification to a fifth appearance in a row.

It would also deal a hammer blow to their Japan's hopes of automatic qualification to a seventh-straight World Cup



The design of the proposed professional 2km race track at Hal Far

Entry list augurs for fascinating 2021 Rolex Middle Sea Race

With 11 days to go to the start of the 2021 Rolex Middle Sea Race, 125 yachts are currently entered, just shy of the 130-boat record set in 2018. Not bad, given the circumstances surrounding this year's event and proof positive of the enduring popularity of offshore racing and this classic of the Mediterranean in particular.

The entry list therefore augurs the possibility of a fabulous and fascinating race, and the start from Grand Harbour, Valetta, on Saturday 23 October promises to be a spectacular occasion.

The fleet assembling ranges in scope from mighty Maxi Monohulls and Maxi Multi-

hulls to plucky double-handed crews, with the largest yacht registered being the Monégasque flagged 42.56m/140ft Skorpis. The smallest is the 9.45m/31ft Hanse 311, Gabriele Spaggiari's Catina 4 from Italy.

Given the right conditions, the race record of 47 hours, 55 minutes and 3 seconds will be under serious threat with the likes of Skorpis, Rambler (USA) on the line, and not forgetting the multihulls, whose own record is nearly nine hours slower than the race/monohull time.

The current benchmark time has stood since 2007, (13 editions), itself a record with the previous longest run being eight races.

All eyes, though, will be on the main prize: the overall win under IRC time correction and the magnificent Rolex Middle Sea Race Trophy commissioned in 1968 by the Royal Malta Yacht Club and the Malta Tourism Authority (then, the Malta Government Tourist Board) and created by noted local artist Emanuel Vincent "Emvin" Cremona.

Host nation, Malta, has been the most successful in recent years, winning the trophy on four occasions since 2010. For the past two editions, the Podesta family, racing the First 45 Elusive 2, has won the ultimate prize.