



The Voice of the Maltese

(We are for the Greater Malta)

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Issue
268

A fortnightly print
and digital magazine

The feast of the Shipwreck of St Paul, Malta's Patron Saint was celebrated in Valletta and throughout Malta. Although not in its usual pomp, it somehow also marked the releasing of some Covid restrictions and the hope that after April the enthusiasts could look forward to the feasts around Malta that they long for.

(See page 14)



As we reported two issues ago, Malta became one of the first countries to ban the sale, distribution and use of certain single-use plastic products aimed at reducing them from ending up in the environment, both on land and at sea. But worryingly, few in the world are conforming to this plastic directive ...

Plastic posing great threat to food security, health and environment

A December 2021 new report by FAO suggests that the land human beings use to grow food is contaminated with “far larger quantities of plastic pollution,” posing an even greater threat to food security, people’s health, and the environment.

The report – “Assessment of agricultural plastics and their sustainability: a call for action” – is the first global report of its kind by FAO and contains some startling numbers.

According to data collated by the UN agency’s experts:

- Agricultural value chains each year use 12.5 million tonnes of plastic products.
- A further 37.3 million tonnes are used in food packaging. The crop production and livestock sectors were found to be the largest users, accounting for 10.2 million tonnes per year collectively, followed by fisheries and aquaculture with 2.1 million tonnes, and forestry with 0.2 million tonnes.
- Asia was estimated to be the largest user of plastics in agricultural production, accounting for almost half of global usage. In the absence of viable alternatives, demand for plastic in agriculture is only set to increase.
- According to industry experts, for instance, global demand for greenhouse, mulching and silage films will increase by 50 percent, from 6.1 million tonnes in 2018 to 9.5 million tonnes in 2030.
- Such trends make it essential to balance the costs and benefits of plastic. Of increasing concern are microplastics, which have the potential of adversely affecting human health. While there are gaps in the data, they shouldn’t be used as an excuse not to act, FAO warned.

“This report serves as a loud call to coordinated and decisive action to facilitate good management practices and curb the disastrous use of plastics across the agricultural sectors,” FAO Deputy Director-General Maria Helena Semedo said in the report’s foreword.

The report was presented at a virtual event in conjunction with World Soil Day marked each year in December.

Ubiquitous

“Plastics have become ubiquitous since their widespread introduction in the 1950s, and it is difficult today to envisage life without them.

In agriculture, plastic products greatly help productivity, according to the report.

“Mulch films, for instance, are used to cover the soil to reduce weed growth, the need for pesticides, fertiliser and irrigation; tunnel and greenhouse films and nets protect and boost plant growth, and extend cropping seasons and increase yields.”

This is also the case of “coatings on fertilisers, pesticides and seeds control the rate of release of chemicals or improve germination; tree guards protect young seedlings and saplings against damage by animals and provide a microclimate that enhances growth.”

Meanwhile, plastic products help reduce food losses and waste, and maintain its nutritional qualities throughout a myriad of value chains, thereby improving food security and reducing greenhouse gas emissions, the report explains.

Billions of tonnes of plastic not properly disposed

Of the estimated 6.3 billion tonnes of plastics produced up to 2015, almost 80% has not been disposed of properly, says FAO.

Once in the natural environment, plastics can cause harm in several ways. The effects of large plastic items on marine fauna have been well documented.

However, as these plastics begin to disintegrate and degrade, their impacts begin to be exerted at the cellular level, affecting not only individual organisms but also, potentially, entire ecosystems.

Microplastics (plastics less than 5 mm in size) are thought to present specific risks to animal health, but recent studies have detected traces of microplastic particles in human faeces and placentas. There is also evidence of mother-to-foetus transmission of much smaller nanoplastics in rats.

While most scientific research on plastics pollution has been directed at aquatic ecosystems, especially oceans, FAO experts found that agricultural soils are thought to receive far greater quantities of microplastics.

Since 93% of global agricultural activities take place on land, there is an obvious need for further investigation in this area, concludes the report.

Need to know more?

Very little of the plastic we discard every day is recycled or incinerated in waste-to-energy facilities. Much of it ends up in landfills, where it may take up to 1,000 years to decompose, leaching potentially toxic substances into the soil and water, according to the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), which warns that one third of all plastic waste ends up in soils or freshwater.

Furthermore: over 400 million tonnes of plastic are produced globally each year. It is estimated that one third of all plastic waste ends up in soils or freshwaters, according to Researchers from the Leibniz-Institute of Freshwater Ecology and Inland Fisheries (IGB).

More than marine pollution

Most of this plastic disintegrates into particles smaller than five millimetres, referred to as microplastics, and breaks down further into nanoparticles, which are less than 0.1 micrometre in size.

“In fact, terrestrial microplastic pollution is much higher than marine microplastic pollution – an estimate of four to 23 times more, depending on the environment. Sewage, for example, is an important factor in the distribution of microplastics.”

Also that “80% to 90% of the particles contained in sewage, such as from garment fibres, persist in the sludge. Sewage sludge is then often applied to fields as fertiliser, meaning that several thousand tonnes of microplastics end up in our soils each year.”



Q. My husband of eight years passed away last month. He has two sons, both in their 30s and he left the house we were living in to them but allowing me to continue to live in it indefinitely. I still have my old house, which I am currently renting for \$400 p.w. Will I continue to qualify for a part age pension if I continue to live in his house?

A. As you do not own the house you live in, Centrelink will treat you as a single non-homeowner pensioner and your own home will be treated as an investment property. Unless you have a great deal of other assets, you should qualify for a part pension depending of course on the value of your property.

If your property is worth a great deal of money as property is these days, then you may be better off living in your house rather than renting it out and qualifying for the full age pension.

As I do not know your situation you should visit a FIS officer at Centrelink who will do the calculations for you and will provide you with a solution of what your best option would be. You could also visit a financial planner and he/she will provide you with the options available.

Q. My mother is 83 years old self-funded retiree and is moving into an aged care facility. She will need to pay a refundable accommodation deposit (RAD) of \$650,000. She would like to hold onto her house just in case she wishes to return to it. She plans to use her financial assets to pay the RAD in full and will still have around \$90,000 in the bank. Will she qualify for a part age pension if she does this?

A. If your mother uses her financial assets to pay for the RAD and does not rent out her home, then she should qualify for the full age pension. For the first two years Centrelink will not treat her home as an asset and the RAD is not treated as an asset either.

If she was to rent out the house during the two years, the house will still not be treated as an asset but a good portion of the rental income will be counted towards the Centrelink income test. She will then qualify for only a part pension depending on the amount of rent she receives.

Q. My brother is 60 years old and is disabled. He lives in a home where he is well looked after, as he is unable to care for himself. Our father passed away last December and he left my brother his account-based pension, which is currently valued around \$400,000. This inheritance will reduce

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.



his disability pension. Is there anything that we can do to ensure his age pension is not affected?

A. As your brother is only 60 years old, he could invest up to \$330,000 of this money in superannuation and leave it in an accumulation phase. This will continue to grow and while it is in accumulation Centrelink does not treat it as an asset until he turns 67.

The rest of the funds he could leave in his bank account or continue to use it as an account based pension and take a small amount as a monthly payment that will not affect his disability pension at all.

Q. We have two children. Our eldest son is now 16 years old and still studying. He has found a part-time job of 10 hours a week over the weekend and will be earning around \$180 gross. He wants to start a savings plan in a managed fund so that he will make good use of his earnings. Is he able to do this, as he is only 16 years old?

A. Although he is only 16 years old, he will have his own tax file number and able to commence to invest in a managed fund. While he is under 18, his investment income will trigger higher tax rates.

However, the amount that would accumulate by the time he reaches 18 would not be high enough for him to pay the high tax rates. Therefore this could be a very worthwhile thing for him to do, as it will teach him the value of making his money work hard for him from the start.

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Australia's 7th Prime Minister: William Morris Hughes (1915 – 1923)

Australia's seventh Prime Minister, wasn't a very "well loved person" by a group of 214 Maltese men who were also Gallipoli veterans of World War I, as in 1916 the ships that brought them to Sydney in the hope of set-

tling in Australia were blockaded in the harbour because of Prime Minister Billy Hughes' racist policies. They are remembered in Maltese communities as *it-tfal ta' Billy Hughes*, 'Billy Hughes' children'.

The PM who blocked Maltese men from entering Australia

William Morris Hughes was born to Welsh parents in London on the 25th September 1852. He lost his mother who died when he was only seven and lived with her family while he continued his education until he was 19. That is when he migrated to Brisbane in 1884.

He worked as a, labourer, boundary rider swagman, rock breaker and as a ship's cook. He arrived in Sydney in 1886 and married Elizabeth Cuts. They had seven children. Together they ran a small mixed business in Balmain selling books, and Billy supplemented their income with a door-to-door umbrella repair service.

As an avid political follower, he joined the Socialist League where he became a passionate public speaker in the streets, and an Australian Workers Union organiser recruiting membership to initiate the Labour Electoral Leagues.

During the Maritime strike of the Wharf Labourers Union, as their secretary, he established and became president of the Trolley, Draymenn and Carters Union where he brought in several advancements that in 1902 led him to become leader of the Waterside Workers Federation of Australia.

Hughes gained the reputation of being a

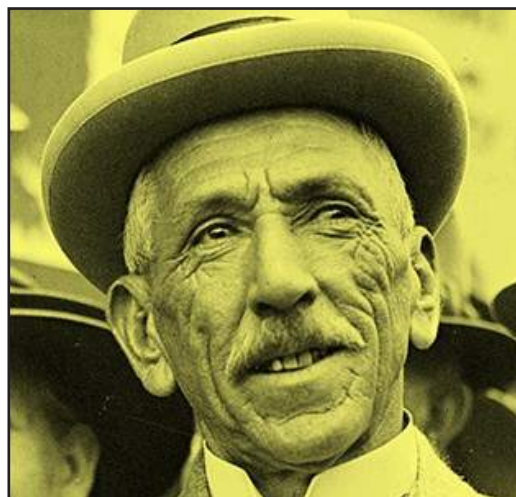
Researched by RONBorg

very capable political leader, and was consequently elected as the Labour Party candidate for West Sydney. He held the seat for five years after the first election in 1901, while he continued with his legal studies to become a qualified barrister. He was able to represent his Union clientele.

In 1911, five years after the death of his first wife in 1906, Billy married Mary Campbell and they had one child.

In October 1915, Hughes succeeded Andrew Fisher to become a determined wartime Prime Minister. He was nicknamed "The Little Digger" by the Australian troops serving in Europe. He was dogmatic about introducing conscription legislation in September 1916 and although he managed to pass this legislation, it probably led to his demise of his leadership of the Labour Party.

It was during this period that the incident of the blockade of the *Gange*, when unfortunately for them, the French ship carrying the Maltese migrants that was due



to arrive in Melbourne on the day of the plebiscite around 28th October 1916, was not allowed to disembark them occurred.

These men, who also happened to be Gallipoli veterans, arrived during Australia's conscription plebiscite campaign and were deemed to be prohibited immigrants under the *Immigration (Restriction) Act*.

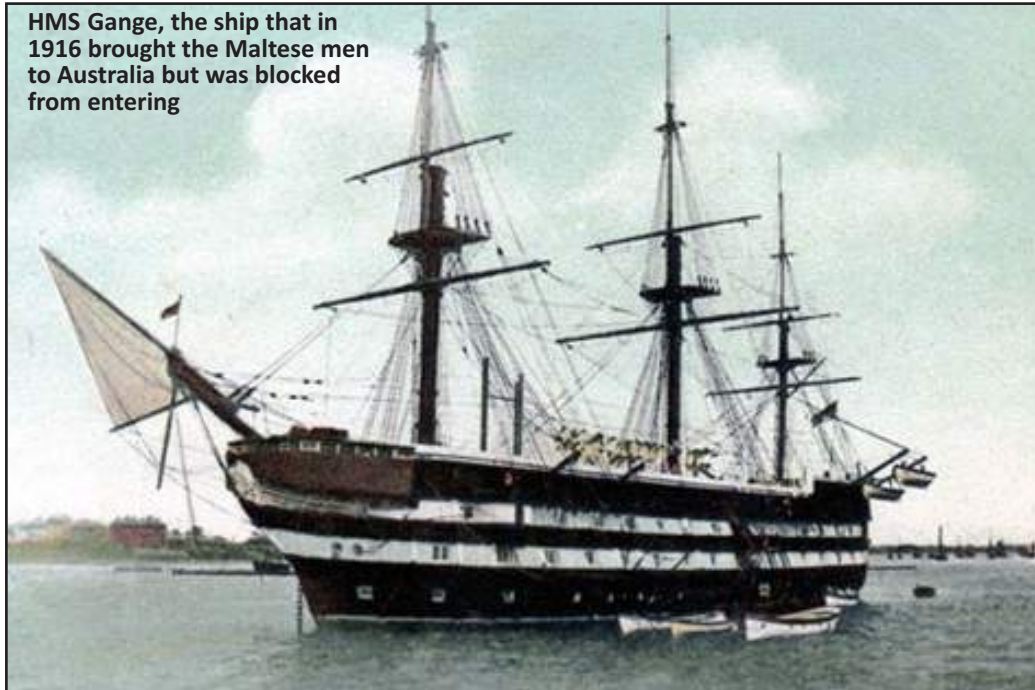
They were portrayed as an 'invasion' and 'cheap labour' who would be stealing the jobs of Australians who were being pressured into going to war as Prime Minister Hughes pushed for a Military Service Referendum Act.

These Maltese men, who being Maltese were British subjects by birth, and most of them had served at Lemnos, Mudros and Gallipoli, were denied entry into the country after failing a dictation test that, funnily enough, was in the Dutch language.

Not only that, but they were also not considered to be from a 'White Race' with the Australian Workers Union even describing them as a "black menace". They were also called "coloured job jumpers".

As a result, they were given an armed escort and sent to the pacific islands of New Caledonia where they were kept in a city hall for three months.

HMS Gange, the ship that in 1916 brought the Maltese men to Australia but was blocked from entering



*Continued on page 5

A PM that earned the nickname of William 'Maltese'

**Continued from page 5*

The shoddy treatment of these men sparked a public outcry among churches led by a Maltese Catholic priest Father William Bonett. Even the media criticised the incident, with the *Sydney Morning Herald* writing: "To exclude such men seems to be a most ungrateful return for the great love and kindness that was shown by the Maltese to our Australian sick and wounded men".

During the First World War, Malta was 'the nurse of the Mediterranean'. It cared for about 80,000 wounded, many of them Anzacs, and there was a favourable feeling toward them on the part of returned servicemen.

Thereafter, to his opponents, William Morris Hughes became William 'Maltese' Hughes. In March 1917, he finally let the Maltese go. Many of them eventually returned to Malta, while some stayed, married and eventually formed their families in Australia.

That same year Hughes headed the new Nationalist party as Prime Minister, but in December 1919 he lost the election. Then a year later his political stature declined and in February 1923 he was forced to resign to be succeeded by his treasurer Stanley Bruce. Hughes was the longest-serving Prime Minister, until



Robert Menzies surpassed his term in 1957.

In October 1930 Hughes launched a new party, the Australia Party, which soon withered away after polling poorly in the New South Wales state elections later that month. He held many portfolios as, Vice President of the Executive Council, Minister for External Affairs, Attorney General, Minister for Industry and Navy, and Member of the War Cabinet.

In 1944, he joined the newly formed Liberal Party as backbencher until 1951. He is said to have been the only Prime Minister on both sides of politics, Labour

Australian Prime Minister W.M. "Billy" Hughes in London, possibly on Armistice Day on 11th November 1918.

(Photo: National Library of Australia)

and Non-Labour!

William Morris Hughes died in Linfield, New South Wales on the 28th of October 1952, one month and three days after his 90th birthday.

Priminister Hughes' state funeral was held at St Andrew's Cathedral, Sydney. It was one of the largest Australia has ever seen as some 450,000 spectators lined the streets.

**Next in the series will be Sir Robert Menzies, the longest-serving Prime Minister of Australia. He served for 16 years, one month and eight days.*

Editorial comment

PM Gough Whitlam's dismissal

The first in our series about Australian Prime Ministers (VOM No. 267) that focussed on Mr. Gough Whitlam produced quite a reaction from our readers. The heading: "Removed as Prime Minister by the Queen" was challenged by a number of our readers. We respect that.

By way of an explanation, it is fair to point out that recently released archive letters by Buckingham Palace produced no evidence that the Queen played any direct part in that dismissal.

However, this 1975 episode has proven to be the most dramatic political and controversial event in Australian Federation's constitutional and political history. It will remain debatable until the end of time.

The ex-Governor-General Sir John Kerr's recently released papers show that before dismissing Mr Whitlam, he sought the advice of Chief Justice Garfield Barwick for using the "reserve powers" long before it was previously revealed and that Barwick furnished him with written advice

Kerr's consultations included those with Prince Charles, and the Queen's private secretary, Martin Charteris.



Sir John Kerr

The Voice of the Maltese features the lives of the Prime Ministers, knowing very well that many of the decisions taken were in the interest of the country, but not always the correct ones; many were controversial. History will judge them accordingly.

Researching the interest of Maltese expats in learning about their Maltese Heritage

Mr Jonathan Micallef, a lecturer at the Institute of Tourism Studies in Malta, is researching the interest of Maltese Expats and the kids of Maltese expats in learning more about their Maltese Heritage.

Therefore he has compiled a short online survey in the hope and is seeking the help of anybody who would be willing to help him in sharing it.

The survey can be found here: <https://forms.office.com/r/7ucdF9th9Y> it literally takes people only fove minutes to complete.

This is the link to his Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/researchingmalta> - where there is also a link to the survey.

Legend of the Nepean - an administrator par excellence

From a humble beginning as a young migrant to a businessman: Emmanuel Borg, a respected family man is our Personality for February. He excelled as administrator for a junior rugby league club serving continuously for 32 years. Regarded as a legend in the Nepean area, he was highly awarded by having a playing field named after him.

Bill Borg

Emmanuel Borg, better known as Bill, is the son of George Borg of Rabat and Rita Grima of San Lawrenz, in Gozo. He was 13 when he arrived with his parents and the rest of the family that was made up of eight brothers and sisters in Sydney, Australia and settled in Greystanes.

His parents had one more child that was born in Australia.

Like so many Maltese who made the suburbs of Pendle Hill/Wentworthville/Greystanes their home the family had to struggle with new and difficult challenges as the result of a cultural shock.

Bill attended St Simon Stock Catholic School and later Marist at Westmead. Together with two of his brothers Tony and Joe, they opened their own packing manufacturing business that was called United Box Company at Guildford. Then a few years later, in 1996, they changed their company's name to UBEECO Packing Solutions and moved to Erskine Park.

UBEECO's first assignment was manufacturing lettuce boxes for Sydney markets. A little later the company grew into manufacturing industrial packaging.

Five years ago Bill and his brothers sold their business.

Bill met his wife Karyn at a Good Friday's function when he was the President of the Greystanes Catholic Youth Organisation (CYO). They were married in 1975 at Glenbrook and became parents to four children, Joshua, Katryna, Sarah, and Jacintha. They are also grandparents to 10 grandchildren, and also have one great-grandchild.

It was Karyn who first got involved in junior rugby when their children became interested in the game. She became the Vice President of the Penrith District RL and



Bill with his wife Karyn

district registrar for six years while Bill formed part of the committee.

For 32 years Bill Borg served the St Clair Comets Junior Rugby League Club as secretary. Under his guidance, the club saw an astonishing growth. From a modest beginning with one playing field, 13 teams, and 170 players, after five years the numbers had grown to 43 teams and 620 players.

But all good things come to an end, and after 32 years Bill has just given his beloved club notice of retirement from the position of secretary. The club currently has three playing fields, 58 teams (including eight female teams), and 870 players – the largest rugby league club in the world.

The Penrith Junior Rugby League presented St Clair Comets JRLC with the Best Managed Club Award in 1990, 1993, 1995, 2000, 2002, 2008, and 2018, and in 2001 Bill was awarded life membership of the St Clair JRLC, Life membership of the Penrith Junior Rugby League in 2007, the Penrith City Council Australia Day Sports Achievement Award in 2008, the Centenary medal of Rugby League in 2009, and the Penrith Valley Sports Foundation Administration Award in 2011.

**Continued on page 7*

PERSONALITY OF THE MONTH OF THE MONTH



Bill (marked) with his mum Rita and the other syblings after arriving in Sydney



The Personality of the Month: Bill Borg

Above: Bill at the Mini Field named after him with sisters Margaret (left) and Mary

**Continued from page 6*

In 2015 Bill Borg was also awarded with the NSW Government Community Service Award, and three years later, in 2018 he was also presented with two more awards, the Local hero Award and the Jim Anderson Memorial Award by the Penrith Sports Foundation in 2018.

Bill's most rewarding and humbling experience however was the naming of the Bill Borg Mini Field at Peppertree Reserve in 2010.

He and his beloved St Clair Comets are very proud of the many young players that have managed to make it to higher grades and honours, and says he is grateful for the many sponsors and assistance his club managed to attract through the years, including St Mary's RSL, the Blue Cattle Dog, Penrith City Council, and Tanya Davies MP.

Bill told The Voice of the Maltese, "It's been a good journey but all things come to an end. Sadly I am going to miss the club more than it will miss me down the track.



Bill with his mum Rita

"We are all very proud of our facilities and achievement. You cannot do the job unless you love the sport"

Bill deserves our thanks for all he has done for the junior rugby league and wishes him well in his retirement. He is a living example of a migrant who integrated well and gave back much to his country of adoption.

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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.

The magazine can be read in flip-book or PDF format online. A pdf copy is sent via email on request.

Hard copy subscription is also available at a cost.

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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.



Now you can also
join us on facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/thevoice-ofthemaltese>

Your letters/ L-ittri tagħkom ...

Malta Election fast approaching

Paul O'Farrell from Rockingham WA writes:

By following the Maltese news media, and especially the news portals, one would know that the next General Election is fast approaching and hotting up. I would also say that hopefully, by June it would be over.

Although one should enjoy (perhaps that is not the right word) such an event as it shows that Malta is a democratic country,

Thank you for the digital and print version

Joseph Camilleri from Wollongong writes:

I must be one of the first in Australia to have subscribed to *The Voice of the Maltese*. I have never regretted it as the magazine keeps getting better all the time.

About two years ago I also decided to subscribe to receive a hard copy of the magazine. That must have been one of the best decisions I ever made.

So now when I need to discuss any of its contents with my friends, who, I am happy to say, all receive the digital version, and a few also the printed copy, I produce the magazine to state my case. That way we find it much easier to discuss, and sometimes also argue.

I feel indebted to *The Voice* and to whoever came up with the idea. I was an avid reader of *The Maltese Herald* when that was the only publication that the Maltese community could call its own. Now we have *The Voice*, which is living up to its name and is the only printed publication of its kind that I know of, in Australia.

Thank you!

from afar, it feels me with great trepidation for one could be in store in the coming days during the electoral campaigns.

Perhaps I remember even worse election times, which was one of the reasons that made me happy to accept my father's decided to emigrate in the late sixties.

Some politicians always seemed to have it in them to fight dirty in order to get to power and govern; when they failed they found it very difficult and rarely resigned themselves to be governed by another party but their own. Therefore they resort to the Maltese saying of "jekk ma nil-ghabx inhassar" (if I don't win I will disrupt the waters).

I don't know what kind of maturity this is. If won fair and square, whatever the outcome of an election, everybody should accept the people's verdict, as that's what an election is supposed to be.

Will they do a Trump?

Josie Mizzi from Sunshine Victoria writes:

With general elections in Malta on the horizon, would the losers accept the result, or would they do a Donald Trump and storm the Place?

You never know, we have enough hot-heads that can easily be led to do more harm to Malta.

Elections in Malta are run democratically and I have no reason to believe that the 2022 would not likewise be the same.

Good luck to the winner, whoever might be.

Started with a bang!

Joseph Calleja from Newport Victoria writes:

You certainly started the new series about Australian Prime Ministers with a bang. Indeed Gough Whitlam was a breath of fresh air and uprooted tradition.

However, as you move to other Prime Ministers, I am sure we will agree or disagree with the way your writers will dissect certain events.

For example, was John Howard correct in following George Bush blindly? Why did he and Tony Abbot lose their Parliamentary seats? And how about Kevin Rudd and Julia Gillard?

So many questions need answering. Well done to *The Voice* for reminding us about our political history, and *prosit* for putting Gough first.

Errata: Please note that we got the front page caption wrong in the last issue. The church in the background was not Sen-blea's but Birgu's San Lawrenz Church



Dr Hugh McDermott MP State Member for Prospect

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27 sena mit-tragedja ta' Um El Faroud li ħalliet disa' vittmi

Kmieni dan ix-xahar, eżattament fit-3 ta' Frar li għadda Malta fakkret is-27 sena mit-tragedja tal-Um El Faroud, it-tanker Libjan mimli fjuwil li kien sorgut għat-tiswijiet fil-Baċir Numru 3 fit-Tarzna ta' Malta li sploda u hasad il-ħajja ta' disa' haddiema li kienu għadhom kif bdew jaħdmu fuqu.

L-isplużjoni li seħħet fl-10.25pm fl-1995, heżżet u hasdet bil-kbir lil Malta, il-gżira l-ewwel bkiet it-telfa ta' seba' haddiema li mietu mill-ewwel, imbagħad ta' żewġ haddiema ohra li mietu ftit tal-jiem wara.

Is-seba' li mietu mill-ewwel kienu, George Aquilina (24 sena), Charles Callus (46), Mario Hales (39), Simon Mifsud (26), Simon Pisani (22), Angelo Sciberras (51), u Anthony Vassallo (29). Imbagħad mietu wkoll ftit tal-jiem wara fl-isptar San Luqa fejn kienu qed jiddewwew, Paul Seguna (37) u George Xuereb (58).

Il-jum tal-funeral tal-vittmi li kien sar fis-7 ta' Frar fil-knisja ta' Kristu Re f'Rahal Ġdidu gie meqjus bhala Jum ta' Luttu Nazżjonali. Wara t-tragedja, l-Um El Faroud



It-tifrik li ħalliet l-isplużjoni fuq it-tanker Um El Faroud

kien dam tliet snin fil-Port il-Kbir sakemm jiġi deċiż x'se jsir minnu.

Tliet snin wara t-tragedja, fl-1998 il-bas-

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Perspettiva

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

kitba ta'
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Id-dritt religjuż li tiddiskrimina

F'dawn il-jiem kienet ghaddejja diskusjoni mqanqla fil-parlament federali Australjan dwar il-liġi oriġinali li tagħmel proposta dwar id-diskriminazzjoni religjuża.¹

L-iskop ta' din il-liġi, fi kliemha stess, huwa li telimina diskriminazzjoni kontra persuni abbażi tat-twelmin religjuż tagħhom, li kulhadd ikollu ugwaljanza ikun x'ikun it-twelmin tagħhom, li dawk li għandhom u dawk li m'għandhomx twelmin ikollhom l-istess drittijiet, u li kulhadd ikun jista' jistqarr it-twelmin tiegħu.

X'hemm li ma tistax taqbel miegħu?

Hemm mhux hażin, għax fil-fatt il-liġi oriġinali tagħmel hafna iktar minn hekk.

Il-liġi tippermetti li organizzazzjoni nistranija, bħal skola nistranija tista' tesigi li l-għalliema u studenti ma jistgħux ikunu omosesswali, jew ikunu qed jgħixu ma' persuna tal-istess sess, jew jiddikjaraw li huma favur iż-żwieġ bejn persuni tal-istess sess². Din l-iskola tista' tkeċċi lil, jew tiddiskrimina kontra, dan l-għalliem jew student.

Forsi tgħiduli, din tagħmel sens, għax dik l-iskola qed timxi fuq it-twelmin nistrani tagħha.

Ikkunsidraw madankollu l-każ ta' skola mhix religjuża, wahda li għandha l-politika tagħha li tippermetti persuni omosesswali li jgħixu skont il-għibda naturali tagħhom, u mhux bil-mohbi. Jista' jkollu għalliem ieħor li jagħmel stqarrija ta' fidi, fejn jgħid li huwa kontra t-tip ta' haġja tal-ewwel għalliem, li dan imur kontra l-pjan ta' Alla eċċ eċċ.

Din l-iskola mhix religjuża ma' tkun tista' tagħmel xejn kontra dan it-tieni għalliem, għax il-protezzjoni li semmejt fil-paragrafu ta' qabel japplika biss għal organizzazzjoni religjuża.

L-istess kunsiderazzjoni tista' ssir f'każ ta' persuni li għandhom *gender dysphoria*, jiġifieri dawk li ma jhossuhomx li għandhom il-ġens li jikkorrispondi mas-sess li twieldu bih.

Dawn huma eżempji fejn din il-liġi oriġinali qed tintuża biex mhux biss biex tipproteġi lil persuni religjużi mid-diskriminazzjoni kontrihom, imma wkoll li tagħti id-dritt u tipproteġi lil dawn il-persuni u organizzazzjonijiet religjużi biex jiddiskriminaw kontra haddieħor.

Issa dawn l-eżenzjonijiet tneħħew b'emendi tal-oppożizzjoni u xi membri tal-gvern stess, u issa l-gvern irtira indefinittivament il-liġi. Fi kliem l-Australian Christian Lobby, jekk dawn l-iskejjel ma jistgħux jiddiskriminaw kontra studenti transgender, xi skop hemm għall-liġi?³

Ara kemm kont bahnar, kont nahseb li l-insara mohhom li jim-itaw lil Ġesù, li kien ifittex, ihaddan u jaqbeż għall-batut, id-



Protesti kontra l-abbozz ta' liġi kontra d-diskriminazzjoni Religjuża fi Brisbane fejn il-Kulleġġ Kattoliku Citipointe talab lill-ġenituri jiffirmaw kuntratt jiċhdu lill-omosesswali. Dan wassal biex il-prinċipal tal-iskola jirtira d-deċiżjoni, jiskuża ruħu u jiġi mitlub iwarrab

dghajjef u membri tal-minoranzi.

Dan ifisser li persuni, inkluzi sidien ta' impriżi, jistgħu jagħmlu stqarrijiet ta' fidi li jkunu offensivi u derogatorji, u r-rimedju li kien hemm għalihom issa jinstab li ma jistax japplika.

Issa jien membru tal-knisja Kattolika, suppost li kont qed nogħrok idejja, għax il-liġi tiffavorixxi l-organizzazzjoni tiegħi, u nies oħra bħali li huma religjużi.

Iktar ma jgħaddi ż-żmien, inqas u inqas inħoss li għandi komuni ma' din il-komunità nistranija bla qalb.

Din il-liġi ma tinkoraġġix l-għaqda u l-inkluzjoni. hija intenzjonata li ddaħhal id-dritt sagrosant ta' organizzazzjonijiet u persuni religjużi li jiddiskriminaw u/jew jagixxu b'mod ingurjuż a skapitu ta' haddieħor.

B'din il-liġi, pass 'il quddiem, u tnejn lura.

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Il-pirografu Ghawdex Saviour Grech

Fir-ral tal-Fontana f'Ghawdex hemm jghix Saviour Grech, ta' 60 sena, artist fis-sena tal-pirografija, li f'it issib b'halhom fil-gzejjer Maltin. Imwield is-Sannat, dan l-artist ta' 60 sena jispeċjalizza f'dik li wiehed jista' jsejhlha wkoll speċi ta' pittura, imma differenti hafna minn kif nafuha generalment. L-arti ta' Saviour tikkonsisti f'inkwadri magħmula b'sengħa kbira, mahluqa billi taħraq 'pittura fuq l-injam, xi haġa li ilu jagħmilha għal dawn l-aħħar 15 il-sena wara kors li kien għamel fl-iskola tal-arti f'Ghawdex stess.

Din it-tip ta' arti li jinhtigilha mhux biss hila imma wkoll paċenzja, ssir billi l-artist juża saldatur professjonali biex jahraq dak li jrid "ipitter" fuq injam speċjali. L-ewwel ma jinhtieglu jagħmel hu li jpingi l-pittura bil-lapes, imbagħad ipogġiha fuq l-injam u jahraqha l-istess fuq l-injam. Meta jkun qed jahraq it-tpingija trid toqghod attent hafna għax ma tistax tagħmel żbalji.

Wara li jlesti t-tpingija jibda proċess ieħor ferm importanti, li jagħti sitt passati verniċ u wara kull żewġ passati jkun jinhtieglu li jobrox. Minhabba d-dhahen li jhalli s-saldatur, f'dan ix-xogħol ma tistax iddum wisq taħraq l-injam.

Din hi arti li titgħaxxaq tara r-riżultati tagħha, u hi ta' sodsfazzjon kbir għal Saviour li għandu hafna kuntatti ma' professjonisti barranin ohra bħalu li jikkomunika magħhom permezz tal-Internet.

Wahda mill-holmiet bikrin ta' Saviour kienet li johloq arloġġ tipiku bil-pijografija. Għandu sodsfazzjon jghid li wara sentejn irnexxielu. Jispjega: "Użajt il-wieċ tal-arloġġ fuq l-istil tal-arloġġ Malti, iżda taht pingejt dejjem xi haġa originali"

Kif wiehed jista' jara mir-ritratti, il-kapolavuri ta' Saviour mhumieq biss l-arloġġ imma wkoll arti sagra u għadd ta' nkwadri ohrajn. Il-holma tiegħu bħalissa hi li jirnexxielu jtella' wirja tax-xogħol kollu tiegħu.

Charles Spiteri





Roundup of News About Malta



Pope Francis visit to Malta April 2, 3

It is now official: Pope Francis is to visit Malta April 2 and 3. The Apostolic Nuncio, Archbishop Alessandro D'Errico made the announcement of the Pope's visit to Malta during the Pontifical Mass celebrating the feast of Malta's Patron Saint St Paul's Shipwreck on February 10. The trip was originally to have taken place in 2020 but was postponed because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The announcement, made simultaneously in Malta and at the Vatican, said: "Accepting the invitation of the President of the republic of Malta, the authorities and Catholic Church in the country, Pope Francis will carry out an Apostolic Journey to Malta on April 2 and 2."

The Vatican said he would visit the capital, Valletta, as well as Rabat, Floriana, Hal-Far (the migrant open centre) and the island of Gozo.

As Migration was a central topic of Francis' trip to Cyprus and Greece in December, and because the Mediterranean countries are hit by the migrant crisis, the main theme of the trip will be migration because of the many migrants who have died in the Mediterranean trying to reach Europe from North Africa.

The government welcomed the news and said the visit will follow the one Prime Minister Robert Abela made to the Holy See in October.

The Prime Minister said this would be an opportunity for the country to unite and that it means that the Holy See looked at Malta in a positive manner. He added that it was emotional news and that he looked forward to welcoming the Pope "among us".

Pope Francis will be the third pontiff to visit Malta after St John Paul II and Pope Benedict XVI.

Robert Abela tells Brest Summit small islands cannot be ignored

At the goal of the One Ocean Summit held in Brest, France 9-11 February, Prime Minister Robert Abela pointed out small islands' dependency on oceans and seas and warned that while the oceans must be protected. He said that the realities faced by small island states couldn't be ignored.

The summit was organised to raise the collective level of ambition of the international community on marine issues and to translate the shared responsibility to the ocean into tangible commitments.

The Prime Minister, who was invited by the French President Emmanuel Macron, was accompanied by the Minister for Transport, Infrastructure and Capital Projects Ian Borg said, that although one needs to improve the quality of our seas and our environment, "we have to look at each initiative in its entirety, and we cannot ignore the realities of small islands where the sea plays an important role for their economies and people."

The summit was attended by leaders of countries from around the world and European institutions. Among others, the also included European Commission President Ursula Von Der Leyen and European Council President Charles Michel.

In a panel discussion focusing on the maritime industry that included the French President Emmanuel Macron, the President of Cyprus, the Prime Minister of the Republic of Ireland and the President of Egypt, among others, the Maltese Prime Min-

ister outlined the realities faced by Malta. He said that the country is heavily dependent on the sea for various sectors including the import and export of goods, tourism, cruise liners, fishing, fish farms and the commercial maritime sector.

He also listed a number of initiatives taken by Malta, including the shore-to-ship facilities to reduce the impact of offshore activity that will allow cruise liners and ships to shut down their engines while they are in port to reduce emissions.

He pointed out the irony that while Malta was investing in such facilities, these same ships are still sailing around the Mediterranean using heavy fuel oil. "This is the reality that we have to face. We have solutions that we are not using," Abela said.

He stressed on the need to use cleaner energy sources, urged the participants in the summit, including those pertaining to the marine industry to put these solutions in place and said that Malta has taken other steps including a ban on the import and sale of single use plastic, a change that will make a big difference.

"This is a change that will make a great difference," he said. He also pointed out that all this means that these are changed that we should do out utmost to achieve.

"We have to improve the quality of our seas and our environment and not ignore the realities of the small island states that the seas mean so much for their economies and their people," Roberet Abela said.



Malta's Prime Minister Robert Abela (extreme right) addressing the Summit



Roundup of News About



First Malta-based company is now listed on NASDAQ



Trust Stamp, the global provider of AI-powered identity services for use in multiple sectors including banking and finance has become the first tech start-up based in Malta to be quoted on NASDAQ, the largest electronic stock exchange in the world.

Trust Stamp, that has been in Malta since 2020, would never have considered setting up base in Malta were it not for Malta Enterprise. With its co-founder Gareth Genner outlining how the company came to the decision to set up its European base in the

country by saying, "We would not be in Malta without Malta Enterprise."

During a visit at the company by the Minister for Energy, Enterprise and Sustainable Development Miriam Dalli, Mr Genner thanked the Maltese government and Malta Enterprise, which he credited as a factor in the success of the company.

He said that this support was critical for the tech company to be the first Maltese company to be listed on NASDAQ. A company must have a capital of more than \$2 million, with more than 100,000 shares

held by the public and an asset value of more than \$4 million, amongst other requirements to be listed.

Trust Stamp provides biometric-based security systems based on their patented technology across the US, Europe, Asia and Africa.

The product range offered by Trust Stamp uses technology and artificial intelligence to enable banks and other institutions to verify customer credentials. Highly regulated industries and international financial institutions such as MasterCard use the technology that is being researched and developed in Malta.

In her address, Minister Dalli said that, Trust Stamp's story is a prime example of Malta's commitment to creating and developing new economic niches

in modern sectors so that its economy can continue to diversify and strengthen, and in turn create and provide more new opportunities for Malta's young people and workers.

She pointed out that despite its small size, Malta has the potential to attract investment in the development of highly innovative start-ups such as Trust Stamp.

Malta Enterprise's financial support, schemes and incentives were crucial for the company's growth and its eventual investment of around €3.5 million in the Maltese economy in the last year and a half.

In the next three years, the company would be investing a further €6 million and in the process employ a further 50 people in its offices in Malta.

About \$4 billion is traded on NASDAQ daily, with an average value of more than \$300 billion.

New CG for Canada

The Consul General for Malta in Canada, Dr Ray Xerri has announced the end of his tenure at that location as from March. Such announcements normally emanate officially from the Ministry. We expect the official confirmation soon. His replacement will be the former Deputy High Commissioner of Malta in Canberra, Australia, Ms Denise Demicoli.

63% of Maltese strongly in favour of neutrality

A survey commissioned by the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs found that 63% of Maltese are strongly in favour of Malta's position of international neutrality as tabled in Malta's constitution, that is, adhering to a policy of non-alignment.

The survey, carried out by University of Malta statistician Vincent Marmara, found that a further 18% of respondents feel Malta's neutrality is important while 14% are on the fence. Just 6% of Maltese are against the idea.

The main reasons given for supporting neutrality were, that it is viewed as essential if Malta is to avoid involvement in conflict and wars.

Respondents also felt that Malta is far too dependent on different members of the international community to take sides. Those against neutrality said it was difficult not to take sides now that Malta is a member of the European Union. The survey was intended to look at the public's views on these subjects to better understand what they feel the island should be doing on the international stage.

When it comes to Malta's role in the world, the survey also found that 18% believe Malta has no role at all, while 15% feel the island plays a very important role.

The main reason why Malta has no role is the island's small size; others said it was because Malta is not that well known overseas.

The survey was published as part of the launch of Malta's new foreign policy strategy, with Foreign Affairs Minister Evarist Bartolo saying it is about "Malta's social, economic, and cultural ties with the rest of the world".

European Commission forecasts Malta to register highest economic growth in EU

The European Commission is forecasting Malta will register a growth of 6% this year, which will be the highest among the 27 European Union states. The overall forecast for the Union is expected to be 4%.

This growth would lead to the Maltese economy recovering by mid-year to pre-pandemic levels.

The next growth after Malta, is forecast to be that of Spain and Poland who would register 5.6% and 5.5% respectively.

The European Commission is basing its forecast at this level of growth because following the removal of various measures against Covid, the rhythm is once again picking up.

The Commission's economists are forecasting that the rate of inflation this year, is expected to reach 2.1%.

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Mix-xena tal-ħajja Maltija

minn Ġużè Camilleri

Festi: Uħud jifirħu, imma...

Fi stqarrija li nharġet wara laqgħa bejn il-Prim Ministru Robert Abela, id-Deputat Prim Ministru Chris Fenech u s-Supretendent tas-Saħħa l-Prof. Charmaine Gauci, flimkien ma' rappreżentanza mill-Kurja tal-Arċisqof u l-Għaqda Nazzjonali Każini tal-Banda, ingħad li minn April, il-festi esterni jaf jistgħu jibdwu isiru b'mod normali u li dawk ta' Frar u Marzu jsiru biss skont il-protokoll.

Il-maġġoranza tad-dilettanti tal-festi, l-aktar ta' dawk li jsiru fil-bliet u l-irħula Maltin u Għawdxin matul ix-xhur tas-sajf laqgħu l-aħbar tajjeb hafna.

Għedt il-maġġoranza minhabba li dilettanti oħra ma kienux daqshekk kuntenti billi l-festa tagħhom tahnat fi Frar u Marzu, meta minhabba l-protokoll tas-saħħa l-festi esterni ma jistgħux isiru. Allura hawn jispikkaw il-festi ta' San Pawl, li għad kif saret nhar il-Ħamis 10 ta' Frar, u a' San Ġużèpp, li tahnat fid-19 ta' Marzu.

Filwaqt li l-kwestjoni tal-Festa ta' San Ġużèpp se tiġi solvuta billi ssir festa ridotta f'Marzu imbagħad tiġi ċelebrata bi kbir fis-sajf, fil-każ ta' San Pawl ma sehħx hekk. L-organizzaturi naqsu li jikkonvinċu lill-Awtoritajiet biex forsi ssir purċissjoni b'mod ridott u l-akkompanjament tal-baned fejn jitharsu l-protokoll tas-Saħħa kollha, imma l-Awtoritajiet żammew iebes, li wassal għall-diżappunt fost l-partitarji, bl-Arċipriet tal-parroċċa jistqarr dan pubblikament.

Finalment, fl-aħħar l-Awtoritajiet aċċettaw li tal-inqas l-Istatwa ta' San Pawl (*stampa fuq*) tinhareġ fil-Bieb tal-Knisja bil-banda takkumpanjaha, imma bil-ban-distanti kif ukoll l-udjenza tkun bil-qegħda.

Il-President Onorarju tal-Għaqda tal-Pawlini stqarr li ntwerxa xaqqa ta' daww "għalkemm xtaqu li San Pawl hareġ b'mod normali u jdur mat-toroq tal-belt f'purċissjoni bħas-soltu. Imma fl-aħħar kellhom l-isvog li l-vara nharġet xorta wahda.



Ftit tan-nifs ...

L-aħħar sħarriġ tal-fehma mill-*Maltatoday*, fis-6 ta' Frar, donnu li ta ffit tan-nifs lill-Partit Nazzjonalista u l-mexxej tiegħu, skontu l-PN mar aħjar mix-xahar ta' qabel u naqqas id-differenza bejn iż-żewġ partiti b'madwar 10,000 vot. Imma xorta jfisser, li jekk in-nies tivvota skont l-istħarriġ, il-Partit Laburista jirbah, b'maġġoranza ta' madwar 36,000 vot, l-istess differenza tal-elezzjoni tal-2013, għalkemm ikun aħjar mill-elezzjoni 2017 u d-differenza ta' madwar 40,000.

Fl-istess jum sħarriġ iehor, minn *It-Torċa*, mmexxi mill-magħruf Dr Vincent Marama kważi jagħti l-istess riżultat. Filwaqt li f'tal-*Maltatoday* f'każ ta' elezzjoni illum, ir-riżultat ikun ta' 55.9% għall-PL u 43.1% għall-PN, ta' *It-Torċa* ta' maġġoranza ta' 56% favur lill-PL 42.4% lill-PN.

Sintendi l-Partit Nazzjonalista laqa' tajjeb hafna l-istħarriġ tal-*Maltatoday* bil-midja tiegħu toħroġ bit-titlu "*STHARRIĠ: Il-PN ikompli jżid l-appoġġ fost il-votanti*", fejn

intqal li l-appoġġ għall-PN żdied b'madwar 6% f'inqas minn xahar għal 32.4%.... "*Dan ifisser li f'temp ta' tliet ġimgħat il-PN irkupra 10,000 vot, bil-fiduċja fil-Partit tal-Labour u fil-Prim Ministru Robert Abela tkompli titnawwar ffit ffit...bid-distakk issa jonqos għal 35,700*"

Xejn inqas ferhana bir-riżultat il-midja tal-Partit Laburista li bit-titlu: "*Sħarriġ ta' It-Torċa u tal-MaltaToday juru fiduċja b'saħħitha fil-PM u L-PL*"

Sostniet li l-istħarriġ tal-fehma pubblika ta' Marmarà fuq it-Torċa u tal-*Maltatoday* taw riżultat ta' fiduċja b'saħħitha fil-Prim Ministru Robert Abela u l-Partit Laburista.

Jidher li iż-żewġ partiti hareġ kuntenti bir-riżultati għalkemm il-midja Nazzjonalista sostniet li "...*madanakollu l-ħidma ċertament għad trid tkompli...bit-tigrija għadha biss fil-bidu*"

Bir-raġun! L-ewwelnett għax dan l-ewwel f'għadd ta' xhur li sħarriġ wera ffit tax-xaqlib lejn il-PN... u wiehed ffit li xejn jista' joqgħod fuq sħarriġ ta' darba. Aktar minn hekk, ma jistax ikun li partit ikun għal kol-lox kuntent għax naqqas id-distakk, imma meta dan id-distakk xorta se jhalli bħala tellief, u tellief b'għadd ta' voti hekk kbir.

Attwalment dawn kienu l-kummenti ta' diversi osservaturi politiċi.

Min-naha l-oħra kien hemm min staqsa kemm kien għaqli l-Prim Ministru li ma sejjahx elezzjoni f'Novembru meta kull sħarriġ kien juri maġġoranza ta' 40,000 jew aktar għall-Partit Laburista? Dan billi whud isostnu li aktar ma ddu ma ssir l-elezzjoni dejjem hemm il-periklu li l-maġġoranza tal-PL tonqos.

Imma x'jinghamd ma jghoddx għax il-kelma aħħarija hija tal-Prim Ministru u hadd minna ma jaf għaliex għadu ma sejjahx l-elezzjoni.

CHRIS BOWEN MP

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Mix-xena tal-ħajja Maltija

minn Ġużè Camilleri

Wiehed mill-ef-fetti tal-Covid-19 huwa bla dubju l-gholi tal-ħajja madwar id-dinja li jingħad li ġej miż-żieda fin-nollijiet tal-garr ta' kull kwalità ta' prodott... xi haġa li, sa ċertu punt, tolqot lil Malta aktar minn pajjiżi oħra, mhux biss għax timporta hafna affarijiet u għax dawn irid jiġu bl-ajru jew bil-baħar.

Kif jaf kulhadd, l-akbar żidiet fit-trasport sar fuq dak li jingħad fuq il-baħar, u jingħad li l-prezzijiet fuq ċerti prodotti żdiedu wkoll minhabba li bl-effetti tal-Covid, il-produzzjoni naqset u allura skarsaw xi affarijiet.

Inghataw diversi raġunijiet oħra.... u ma jistax jonqos li xi prezzijiet jiżdiedu wkoll minhabba l-abbużi ta' whud li jipprovdu jew ibiegħu dawn il-prodotti u jinqed bis-sitwazzjoni biex iħaxxnu bwiethom.

Sintendi, dawn iż-żidiet qed jolqtu fid-demmi il-ħaj l-aktar li daww li d-dhul tagħhom hu baxx, u ma jistax jonqos li dan qed johloq ċerta skuntentizza u tbatija.

L-gholi tal-ħajja

Fortunatament kontra dak li qed isehh f'diversi pajjiżi Ewropej, f'Malta l-prezz tal-enerġija – petrol, diesel, gass u elettriku – baqa' stabbli, l-ewwelnett għax fejn jidhol l-elettriku l-Gvern kien għamel ftehim fuq prezz fiss fejn jidhol il-gass li jintuża fil-produzzjoni tal-elettriku, u t-tieni għax il-Gvern qed jagħmel tajjeb għal kull żieda li hemm fix-xiri ta' dawn il-prodotti.

Ma jistax jonqos, u issa aktar minn qabel billi qed toqrob l-elezzjoni, li dan l-gholi tal-ħajja ma jispiċċax f'ballun politiku b'naha tikkritika u takkuża l-Gvern li baqa' ċass quddiem din iż-żieda fil-prezzijiet.

Il-Gvern qed jirreagixxi billi jgħid li bis-saħħa tal-miżuri li qed jiehu, il-Gvern qed iżomm il-prezz tal-enerġija stabbli meta f'diversi pajjiżi saħansitra għola bin-nofs. U l-familji qed igawdu minn din l-istabbilita' darbtejn, l-ewwel għax il-prezzijiet qed

jinzammu stabbli anke għall-industrija, il-hwienet, etc għax kieku dawn żdiedu, il-prezzijiet mhux biss tal-

prodotti, imma wkoll tas-servizzi kienu joghlew aktar, u dawn sintendi kienu jghaddu fuq min jixtri u l-kljenti.

Il-Gvern habbar ukoll li kien se jgħin billi se jagħmel xi għotjiet ta' flus li se jiswewh €70 miljun.

Fost l-ghotjiet, hemm daww li jistgħu jfissru sa €510 għal familja miżżweġa b'tifel jew tifla li hija student. Koppja pensjonanti se jkun qed jirċievu €400, filwaqt li persuna bħal single mother se tkun qed tiċievi €225.

Dawn jinkludu kemm ir-rifużjoni tat-taxxa, kif ukoll ċekk ta' darba ta' €100 għal haddiema u studenti u €200 għal pensjonanti kollha u daww fuq benefiċċji soċjali.

Il-Partit Nazzjonalista laqgħa l-ghoti ta' dawn il-flus b'xetticiżmu, u fi stqarrija saħaq li l-Gvern Laburista, "irid jagħmina biċ-ċekk ta' €100 u cioe €8 fix-xahar meta l-prezz tal-ikel sploda u meta jinsisti li ma jagħtix lura s-serq fuq il-kontijiet tad-dawl u l-ilma. Mossa tal-elezzjoni b'miżuri li fil-gran parti tagħhom diġà ġew imhabbra b'pompa kbira fil-baġit." Saħnsitra intqal li li dan huwa eżerċizzju ta' xiri ta' voti.

Fit-tweġiba tiegħu l-Partit Laburista qal li PN kien qed jattakka pakkett ta' stimolu ekonomiku għall-familji, u qal, "Il-problema li għandu l-Partit Nazzjonalista hi li minbarra li hu negattiv, mhux kredibbli.

"L-ironija hi li dawn huma kollha inizzjattivi li l-Kap tal-Oppożizzjoni se jgħidhom tberbiq ta' flus. Ironija kbira hi li meta l-PN għolla l-kontijiet tad-dawl u l-ilma, ta biss hames bozoz," temm jgħid il-PL.

Issa naraw x'se jgħidu ż-żewġ partiti wara li propju kif qed nikteb rapport tal-UE qed jgħid li Malta kellha l-iżgħar żieda tal-inflazzjoni fost il-membri tal-organizzazzjoni, u li hemm stennija li ż-żieda medja fl-Unjoni Ewropeja se tkun kważi d-doppju dik ta' Malta.

L-Elezzjoni: qatgħu qalbhom

Jidher, li wara li xebgħu jippruvaw ibassru meta ġeja l-elezzjoni ġenerali, b'xi ġurnalisti jiktbu kważi b'ċertezza saħansitra d-data tal-elezzjoni... b l-aktar msemmiha tkun dik tat-12 ta' Marzu, din issa ġiet skaratha wkoll, għalhekk jidher li l-midja qatgħet qalba tissokta tbassar.

Tant hu dan li fil-gazetta tal-Hadd illum taht it-titlu Elezzjoni fit-12 ta' Marzu barra mit-tieqa! X'dati oħra qed jissemmev? (7 ta' Frar 2022) il-korrispondent temm l-artiklu tiegħu hekk: "Inutli noqogodu nkissru rasna u nippruvaw naqtgħu d-dati qisna qed intellgħu t-tombola."

Kif qal tajjeb il-korrispondent fl-istess artiklu, u xi haġa li jaf kulhadd, huwa fatt li "l-ghażla hija f'idejn il-Prim Ministru."

U jidher li l-Prim Ministru qed donnu jilgħab loġħa mal-midja. Mistoqsi dwar d-data, kulma jgħidilhom hu li sa Ġunju l-elezzjoni se ssir, u bl-aħħar verżjoni tkun... li fi żmien erba' xhur l-elezzjoni tkun għaddiet.

Sintendi din il-loġħa ma toghgħobx lill-Partit Nazzjonalista li jaf li l-Prim Ministru mhux se jimxi ma dak li gara qabel l-elezzjoni tal-2013 meta bejn it-thabbir tad-data tal-elezzjoni u l-jum li fih saret l-elezzjoni kienu għaddew tliet xhur b'kampanja elettorali twila.

Abela mistenni jmur għal kampanja elettorali ta' xahar u ftit jiem, ta' 33 jum kif tippermetti l-liġi elettorali, li sintendi jivvantagġja lill-Partit Laburista għax ikun jaf meta jibda l-kampanja, filwaqt li l-Partit Nazzjonalista jista' jibda l-kampanja kmieni hafna jew inkella tard.

Is-sitwazzjoni tista' ma tingħogħobx min kulhadd, imma hekk tghid il-proċedura u kull Gvern, kemm jekk Laburista jew Nazzjonalista dejjem kien fl-istess sitwazzjoni

meta tasal l-elezzjoni ġenerali. Hu l-Prim Ministru (għax lanqas il-bqija tal-Gvern, tal-inqas uffijjalment, ma jkun jafu) jkun jaf meta ġeja l-elezzjoni, Kulhadd jistenna s-suffara tiegħu.

Li s'issa nafu żgur huwa li kważi impossibbli li l-elezzjoni ssir f'Marzu għax l-uniċi dati li fadal id-19 – (festa ta' San Ġużep) u ma naħsibx li min għandu rasu fuq għonqu mhux se johlom li jagħmel elezzjoni f'festa pubblika – u s-26 ta' Marzu. Imma din id-data hija qrib wisq tal-migja fostna tal-Papa u ma naħsibx li jkun xieraq li l-Papa jkun fostna waqt li jkun għadu kif thabbar ir-riżultat tal-elezzjoni... għalkemm ngħiduha, xejn ma jista' jiġi eskluż.

Attwalment għadu kif thabbar uffijjalment li l-Papa se jiġi Malta fit-2 u 3 ta' April. (Ara t-thabbira uffijjali f'pagna 12).



Maltese Funerals

In conjunction with Hills Family Funerals.



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A quick glimpse at Australia

Welcoming the world back



Prime Minister Scott Morrison

Coalition takes another hit

When addressing the National Press Club in Canberra Prime Minister Scott Morrison admitted his government has made mistakes throughout the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

He recognised the government was “too optimistic” about looking forward to a summer of freedom and should have better-managed expectations. “It’s fair that this disappointment leads you to ask ‘couldn’t you have done more? Couldn’t this have been avoided? After all, aren’t you responsible?’ I get that,” he said.

“I haven’t got everything right. And I’ll take my fair share of the criticism and the blame. It goes with the job. I haven’t got everything right,” he conceded in his first major speech of the year. The speech comes after a recent News poll showed support for the Coalition had taken another hit as the government prepares for an election in less than four months’ time.

Australia’s international borders will be reopened to all fully vaccinated visa holders from the 21st February.

Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison announced all international visitors, including tourists, would be allowed to return to the country. “Welcoming the world back. I think that’s another important milestone that Australia is achieving,” Mr Morrison told reporters.

The decision marks another relaxation of COVID-19 travel restrictions, initially im-

posed almost two years ago on 20 March 2020. Travel restrictions had already been eased for international students, working holidaymaker visa holders and skilled migrants since December last year. International arrivals will be required to show proof of two vaccine doses or a valid medical reason why they cannot be vaccinated.

State-based quarantine rules will continue to be enforced according to each jurisdiction. Most states and territories allow quarantine free travel from overseas, apart from Western Australia, which maintains a two-week requirement.

Budget must address growing inequity

In its submission ahead of this year’s federal Budget, the St Vincent de Paul Society National Council has listed key policy issues which, if addressed, would stimulate economic growth and significantly improve many people’s lives.

The National Council is calling on the Morrison Government to reinstate the pandemic leave disaster payment to \$750 a week (up from \$450) and increase the base rate of working age payments from \$44 to \$67 a day.

The National Council also calls on the Government to implement all 35 recommendations in the final Parliamentary Inquiry into Homelessness in Australia report (July 2021) and to review Commonwealth Rent Assistance and increase the maximum rate by 50 per cent.

“The impact of poverty in Australia is largely borne by people on social security payments, people who rent, single parents and people who cannot find enough work to make ends meet,” Ms Claire Victory the National President said.

The St Vincent de Paul Society, was founded by a 20-year-old student named Frederic Ozanam in 1833.

The members of the organisation are called



Ms Claire Victory,

Vincentians. Their aim is to feed, clothe, house and assist those who are forced onto the margins of society.

Stronger hate crime laws urged

A parliamentary report has recommended Queensland’s hate crime laws be strengthened to curb “the devastating effects of vilification”.

Labor MP Peter Russo, who chaired the inquiry, noted that Queensland does not have legislation dedicated to serious vilification and hate crimes and as a result, “people are still experiencing the devastating effects of vilification and hate crimes.”

The report said only eight offences were recorded by Queensland Police from 2015 to 2020 under the state’s Anti-Discrimination Act. Queensland Police told the inquiry 1,386 hate or vilification offences were reported from 2015 to 2020 but only five people had been charged and three were convicted.

As part of the report, the Queensland Parliament’s Legal Affairs and Safety Committee made 17 recommendations to strengthen the state’s response to hate crime and vilification.

Religious discrimination bill – all-night debate

An amended version of the federal government’s religious discrimination bill has passed the lower house with Labor’s backing after an all-night debate. Labor agreed to back them in the lower house while securing changes.

There were objections from Liberal moderates and independent MPs as they sought amendments. Five Liberal MPs crossed the floor. The final vote was 90-6.

But in a blow to the government, the opposition and crossbench was successful in amending a controversial clause of the Sex Discrimination Act allowing religious schools to discriminate on grounds including sexuality and gender identity.

The amendments will prohibit vilification of and discrimination against children based on sexuality and gender identity. Labor leader Anthony Albanese vowed his party would insist on its amendments to the religious discrimination bill in the Senate.



A quick glimpse at Australia



The judiciary on their way to attending the Red Mass

Is the PM a “horrible, horrible person”?

Mr Bob Carr, a former Labor NSW premier, and former foreign minister alleged in a tweet that it was the defence minister Peter Dutton who shared the text exchange with then NSW premier Gladys Berejiklian during the 2019-20 bushfire crises.

According to Ten, Ms Berejiklian, who has now left State politics labelled the prime minister a "horrible, horrible person" who was "actively spreading lies" during the text exchange with an unnamed cabinet minister. "Lives are at stake today and he's just obsessed with petty political point scoring," she reportedly said.

Political reporter for the Ten TV network Peter van Onselen made the allegation at the Press Club in Canberra. Leading Nationals like Dutton and Freydenberg strongly rejected Bob Carr's claim.

Opposition Leader Anthony Albanese urged whoever sent the text messages about the prime minister to come forward, but said the issue was overshadowing other important issues. "This is such a distraction, the dysfunction, and the dishonesty and disunity is meaning this government is paralysed in taking the action that really does concern Australia," he told the Seven Network.

Red Mass in Melbourne

About 100 legal representatives attended the Red Mass, including judges of the High, Federal, Supreme, County and Magistrate's Courts, Queen's Counsel, solicitors, and barristers from metropolitan and suburban legal firms to mark the official opening of the legal year.

In welcoming those gathered, Melbourne Archbishop Peter A Comensoli expressed his thanks

for their "work for justice throughout the city of Melbourne and surrounds".

The Red Mass celebration dates to the Middle Ages when English judges processed from the Temple Bar to Westminster Abbey for Mass.

Its name derives from the traditional red colour of the vestments worn by clergy during the Mass, representing the tongues of fire symbolising the presence of the Holy Spirit.

How to use the Rapid Antigen

Special Broadcasting Service (SBS) is continuing to support Australia's multicultural communities through the COVID-19 pandemic, publishing a series of infographics explaining how to correctly use a Rapid Antigen Test (RAT), which will be made available in more than 50 languages.

Four separate infographics have been produced clearly outlining the steps involved to correctly undertake a RAT, including guides to taking a sample, extracting that sample, testing the sample, and reading the results. They have been shared and continue to be available on SBS's social media channels for each language.

These latest resources are part of SBS's ongoing work in serving Australia's diverse multicultural communities during the pandemic, ensuring vital information that they may not otherwise be able to access in their language of choice, is easily available and tailored to their needs.

This includes the SBS Multilingual Coronavirus Portal, which curates SBS's COVID-19 news and information in more than 50 languages in one, easily shareable destination: [SBS.com.au/coronavirus](https://www.sbs.com.au/coronavirus). Since its launch in March 2020, over 11 million unique visitors in Australia have accessed the website and its resources.



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The Shelter of Peace – Malta War Memorial



In the last issue of *The Voice*, we mentioned The Shelter of Peace, a Malta War Memorial that is situated in Birdwood Avenue, Kings Domain Melbourne.

The memorial commemorates the awarding to the Mediterranean island of Malta the George Cross during World War II.

The Shelter of Peace, which was a great dream of Benedict Soler, the former President of the Friends of Malta committee who was awarded the OAM in this year's Australia Day honours, was erected in 1994 by the governments of Australia and Malta, the City of Melbourne and the Maltese community of Melbourne.

The Shelter features several plaques paying tribute to Malta's heroism. Eight values are listed on the memorial: faith, hope, charity, peace, fortitude, temperance, justice and prudence.

Malta was the first British Common-



The Shelter of Peace in Melbourne

wealth country to receive the bravery award - second only in ranking to the Victoria Cross - which is normally only awarded to individuals. The George Cross was awarded to the people of Malta by King George VI almost 80 years ago, on 15th April 1942 in appreciation of their heroism and in recognition of their continuing heroic struggle against enemy attack.

In his message to the island's governor, King George VI said: "To honour her brave people I award the George Cross to the Island Fortress of Malta, to bear witness to a heroism and a devotion that will long be famous in history."

From 1st January to 24th July 1942 there was only one 24-hour period when no bombs fell on Malta. The population spent so much time in their underground shelters that health standards declined, malnutrition spread and scabies was rife.

At the time of the George Cross award, military resources and food rations in Malta were practically depleted. Fuel was restricted to military action and heavily rationed, the population was on the brink of starvation, and even ammunition was running out, so much that Anti-Aircraft (AA) guns could only fire a few rounds per day.

Malta depended on the convoy ships for supplies but many of the boats sent to the island between August 1940 and August 1942, were sunk and others damaged. In May 1942 the Germans prematurely declared Malta had been "neutralised". The Luftwaffe were diverted to other areas of the war.

In the brief lull that followed 61 RAF Spitfires arrived on the island together with other reinforcements. The Germans launched another all-out offensive to take the island in October 1942 but failed.

The George Cross was awarded during the worst period for the Allies during the Second World War, as the Axis-force clearly appeared to have the upper hand.

From November 1942 conditions began to steadily improve as supplies began to get through. The siege of Malta was finally lifted in May 1943 when the Axis forces capitulated in North Africa.

The George Cross was incorporated into the flag of Malta beginning in 1943 and remains on the current design of the national flag.



MALESE COMMUNITY COUNCIL
COMMUNITY VISITS PROGRAM



Do you have 1 hour a week to spare?
Create friendship and companionship
Cheer up the life of an elderly person from the Maltese community in your area

We are seeking volunteers from the Maltese community to visit Aged Care homes

VOLUNTEER REQUIREMENTS:

Enjoy spending time with older people
 Be a good listener
 Show care and empathy towards people with chronic health conditions
 One hour of your time per week

For more information please contact Marisa Previtera
0414 863 123
marisaprevitera@gmail.com

Do you know someone who may benefit from being connected with a visitor? Contact Marisa

Danica Muscat tirbaħ Kantamaghna

Mill-Gżira Għawdxija

Charles Spiteri



Danica Muscat rebbet it-tielet edizzjoni ta' *Kantamaghna* minn fost 24 parteċipanti li ttellgħet fit-Teatru Astra u giet organizzata minn DCapitals Big Band taħt id-direzzjoni ta' Mro. George Apap, bl-appoġġ tad-Direttorat Kulturali fi hdn il-Ministeru għal Għawdex, il-Kunsill Lokali tal-Belt Victoria u Distinct Homes Ltd.

Danica giet magħżula mill-gurija magħmula minn Sylvana Attard, Ludwig Galea u Antonella Vassallo bħala r-rebbieħa ta' Sezzjoni Ċ, kif ukoll tal-festival wara li interpretat il-kanzunetta ikonika The Best.

Il-premju huwa sena kuntratt ma' DCapitals Big Band biex tingħaqad mal-kantanti residenti, Jolene Sahman, Fabian Galea u Francesca Sciberras fl-ispettakli ta' matul is-sena, sa Jannar 2023.

Rebbieħa oħrajn kienu jinkludu lil Elisa Buttigieg (Distinct Talent Award); Kylie Micallef (l-ewwel) u Krista Chircop it-tieni post ta' Sezzjoni A; Eliana Gomez Blanco u Maya Cauchi bħala l-ewwel u t-tieni ta' Sezzjoni B; u Bradley Debono (t-tieni) wara Danica f' Sezzjoni Ċ.

Ta' min jghid li Danica Muscat għandha esperjenza vasta f'għadd ta' festivals, u anke programme televiżivi, fosthom, dak Taljan *Io Canto*; u l-aktar contests popolari fix-xena Maltija, fosthom ir-reċenti *Mużika Mużika – Festival tal-Kanzunetta Maltija*.

Il-Beatu Carlo Acutis u r-raħal tal-Fontana

Fl-aħħar jiem ta' Jannar, is-Santwarju Nazzjonali tal-Qalb ta' Ġesu' u l-komunità tal-Fontana laqgħu r-relikwija tal-Beatu Carlo Acutis (*lemin*), l-unika wahda fil-Gżejjer Maltin, li tul it-tlett ijiem li baqgħet fir-raħal żaruha għadd kbir ta' pellegrini li telgħu minn Malta apposta.

Carlo Acutis huwa qaddis żagħżuġh Taljan li miet fl-2006 fl-età ta' 15-il sena u gie ddikjarat beatu f'Ottubru 2020. Id-devozzjoni lejha ixterdet malajr mad-dinja kollha u d-devozzjoni lejha fil-Fontana kibret hafna fl-aħħar xhur.

Ir-relikwija ngabet il-Fontana għall-anniversarju tat-tqegħid tal-ewwel gebla tas-Santwarju (29 ta' Jannar 1893) u tal-konsagrazzjoni tal-knisja (29 ta' Jannar 1905).



Il-President Reġjonali jingħata l-mandat

F'ċerimonja żgħira imma sinifikattiva fiċ-Ċittadella saret l-inawgurazzjoni tal-mandat u l-ghoti tal-gurament lill-president tal-Kunsill Reġjonali t'Għawdex, l-Avukat Samuel Azzopardi li għaliha attendew is-Sindki tal-lokalitajiet Għawdxin u l-Ministru għal Għawdex, Clint Camilleri.

F'kelmtejn qosra l-Avukat Samuel gedded l-impenn tiegħu favur Għawdex u l-Għawdxin bil-ghajnuna tas-Sindki u l-kunsilliera kollha ta' Għawdex.

Iċ-ċerimonja ntemmet bil-kant tal-Innu lil Għawdex u l-Innu Malti mis-Sopran Rosabelle Pavia.



L-avukat Samuel Azzopardi (is-seba' mix-xellug) mal-Ministru Clint Camilleri fuq ix-xellug tiegħu, flimkien mas-Sindki Għawdxin

Sister Bonnie Attard - always with a cheerful smile on her face

Since the early days of Maltese emigration to Australia, Franciscan Clergy have also pioneered their way in Australia to assist the Maltese Migrants settling there. For some 47 years, Sister Bonnie Attard has been in Australia carrying out her spiritual work among the Maltese Migrants.

Along with her fellow Franciscan Sisters of the Heart of Jesus, and the very capable gentleman CEO, Mr. Charles Zarb, Sister Bonnie Attard takes care of St Raphael's Nursing Home at Lockleys in South Australia. This is a very onerous task particularly since the dwindling of the number of Franciscan Sisters left to do this job. It is therefore interesting to peer into Sister Bonnie's interesting life.

Roza Attard (Sr Bonnie) was born to parents Carmelo and Tereza in Xaghra Gozo on the 1st March 1950. She started her education with the Franciscan Sisters and continued her primary schooling at Xaghra Primary School.

Secondary schooling was not compulsory at the time; therefore Roza opted to help her mother raise her seven siblings. On her mum's death, her own brother admitted that Roza was his second mother!

Since early childhood, the Franciscan nuns impressed Roza. She said she admired them and it was her passion to meet the nuns after school when they were on their way to their Nazzarenu Convent.

This attraction became her "call", and with the encouragement of three other women from Xaghra, her vocation was strengthened. Such was her enticement, that at the age of 13, she attended the-

monthly 'retreats' organised by the sisters at 'Tal-Istilla' at Rabat in Malta's sister island.

She said that during the coffee breaks, she cherished listening from the window in the courtyard of the 'Casa Madre' the nuns' choir singing in the evening. This type of Choral singing appealed to Roza, and she savoured listening to the Vespers of the Capuchin monks while she was in the fields with her dad.

On 27th December 1965, Roza bid farewell to her parents and her seven siblings and joined the Franciscan nuns to begin her novitiate (probationary trial period) at Rabat. She took the name of Sr. Bonaventura.

In 1968, when she achieved her "Temporanea profession", her superiors sent her to further her secondary schooling studies, firstly at Blata l-Bajda in Malta, and later, after graduating in 1973, went on to London to further her studies at St. Thomas's Hospital where she became a Senior Enrolled Nurse.

On returning to Malta, on 8th September 1975, the nun took on her Perpetual Vows, and two months later her superiors assigned her to Mackay Queensland in Australia where, after a three-year course, she served as a Senior Registered Nurse.

Then, at the end of a successful Management course, she took over the management of the senior citizens nursing home in Mackay where she spent 23 years before being asked to take over the management of St. Raphael's Nursing Home in Lockleys South Australia.

Sister Bonaventura, more commonly known as Sr. Bonnie, still conducts "Pastoral Care" with the residents at St.



Sister Bonnie Attard FCI

Raphael's home to this very day. With the dwindling number of the Franciscan sisters at the home, her job has become much more demanding.

In addition, due to the demise of the Maltese Franciscan Friars in Adelaide, culminated with the departure of the Maltese Chaplain from Adelaide, sister Bonnie has even taken following her graduation additional duties to cover the void.

She also assists the Maltese Chaplaincy Group with some of the arrangements of the annual 'Festas', coordinates our monthly Maltese masses with our Maltese priest Fr. Alfred Farrugia, and is also the very patient conductor of the Maltese Chaplaincy Choir that takes part in the Adelaide Maltese feast masses.

Despite the constrictions brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, Sister Bonnie still fulfils her vows and manages to continue to tend compassionately to the residents at St. Raphael's Nursing home in their twilight years with a cheerful smile on her face!

Thank the Lord for Sister Bonnie. !!!



The Franciscan sisters celebrating 30 years in Lockleys in 2017

RonBorg

The changing face of Malta - 11

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.



New €70m national fuel distribution centre

A godsend for the Birżebbuġa community

A new multi-million investment in a new national fuel distribution centre at Has-Saptan has led to the closure of the 31st March 1979 plant in Birżebbuġa thus giving the residents of this town and the surrounding area a new lease of life.

The new facility, a €70 million investment by Enemed, the national distributor of petroleum products in Malta, is equipped with the latest technology that provides more modern, efficient and sustainable operations. It will enable Enemed to continue to raise its standards and offer higher quality

fuel.

It comes a few months after the government officially closed down the old 31st March plant, which for decades led to some 44 trucks a day entering the heart of the village to refuel. This has now ended once and for all because, as Minister for Energy, Enterprise and Sustainable Development Miriam Dalli said, this operation is now being carried out entirely from the new facility.

The centre will increase its operating efficiency by 60% while reducing CO2 emissions by 20%, as it will reduce traffic caused by fuel trucks.

Speaking at the inauguration, Prime Minister Robert Abela said that the Has-Saptan facility is a clear example of how innovative technology is being used to modernise the service provided while reducing the negative

impact on the surrounding communities.

Before this new facility, the Birżebbuġa community had the burden of storing fuel tanks in the locality. The biggest burden was a result of old infrastructure that has a negative impact, both on health as well as aesthetically, the Prime Minister said.

The Has-Saptan facility is not just a relocation. It eliminates the escape of toxic emissions into the air during the transfer of fuel, which is harmful to both people and the environment.

Minister Dalli explained that this investment is part of a larger plan to regenerate the south of Malta, leading to a better quality of life for residents.

The Has-Saptan facility is located 45m below the ground. It was built in 1950 by the British Admiralty and co-financed by NATO member countries. It is connected to two underground tunnels, one leading to Ras Hanzir in the Grand Harbour and another leading to the port of Marsaxlokk.

Several changes have been made to the facility, including the installation of another layer in the fuel tanks leading to increased safety, the installation of new fuel transfer pumps and other technological equipment in the facility's underground pipes.

It is in addition to the design and construction of an above-ground fuel storage facility for trucks to load and distribute fuel efficiently and safely across the Maltese islands.



Prime Minister Robert Abela (centre) flanked by Enemed CEO Kevin Chircop (left) and Minister Miriam Dalli at the inauguration

Son of Maltese Australian migrants (Peter Sciberras) among 2022 Oscar nominees

Peter Sciberras, the son of Maltese immigrants (pictured right) who moved to Australia, is among the nominees for the March 27 Academy Award (the 94th Annual Oscar Nominations) at the Dolby Theatre in Hollywood, Los Angeles for his work on the Netflix film *The Power of the Dog*.

Peter is up against four others in the Film Editing category, namely: Hank Corwin for *'Don't Look Up'*, Joe Walker for *'Dune'*, Pamela Martin for *'King Richard'*, and Myron Kerstein and Andrew Weisblum for *'Tick, Tick... Boom!'*

This is not the first time that Peter, who has already won awards for his work on *The Power of the Dog*, has ventured into the cinema world. He previously had a hand in the editing of a number of other feature films that included, *'The King'* (2019), *'War Machine'* (2017), that starred Hollywood heavyweight Brad Pitt, and *'The Rover'* (2014).

Starting out from a career in marketing, with several high-profile ads under his belt, Peter Sciberras has received high praise for his work on other feature films, including the 2019's *The King*, a visceral historical drama about the battle of Agincourt.

In an interview with *Awards Daily*, Sciberras revealed that despite his humble upbringing, he always knew he wanted to work in film.

Peter said that he was the son of two Maltese people who moved to Australia, so he was a first-generation Australian, and grew up in an area that wasn't very creative, a very blue-collar neighbourhood.

He said that film was always his passion since he was a kid. "I was living with a good friend who has made music videos and I tried editing when he couldn't find an editor for one of his music videos. Then the next day I started calling all the editors I could find in Melbourne and started interning straight away.

"I stopped all my other retail jobs and just did



editing full-time from that day one and I haven't done anything else since. I just instantly loved it the second I did it," he told *Awards Daily*.

The Power of the Dog is leading this year's Oscar nominations with nods in 12 categories, including Best Director for Jane Campion. *Dune* scores 10, *Belfast & West Side Story* each earn seven. *The Power of the Dog*, that last year earned Campion the Silver Lion for Best Direction at the Venice International Film Festival, has also been nominated for Best Picture.



*World War II diary:
February 1942:*

Malta was not Equipped for Night Attacks

During February 1942, the German *Luftwaffe* and the Italian *Regia Aeronautica* heavily bombed Malta. They unleashed their full might against the island and its civilian population. This caused much distress and even more so to the military forces that were called upon to defend the island.

It is worth recalling the impression most of the personnel got during these deadly attacks. This is one of the sentiments reportedly expressed: "Anywhere else but Malta, an air raid warning would sound over a large area as the enemy aircraft moved towards their target; whereas when our sirens sounded, we were the target."

No wonder that reports were rife that Malta's defenders were struggling against increasing numbers of night-time air raids. The Island is just 27 km long and 14.5 km across, and from the first sight of an approaching raid to when enemy aircraft crossed the coast and reached the target took just a few minutes, giving little opportunity for a successful counter-attack.

The Island was in need of more searchlights, to give the gunners a better chance of getting enemy aircraft in their sights.

The reasons for an increase of AA S/Ls [Anti-Aircraft Searchlights] were, that a small area of island with consequent proximity [vital positions] created a gun and fighter aircraft zone in confined space that demands quick pick-up and efficient illumination of many targets, in order to ensure quick results with gun or fighter aircraft in short time available for engagement.

The authorities believed that enemy intruder tactics demanded adequate searchlights for co-operation with Bofors for defence of aerodromes, and that further searchlights were required for co-operation with Bofors for the defence the harbour and for anti mine-laying role.

They said that enemy activity over small area necessitated all lights in action constantly without gaps in layout, or in aerodrome or harbour defence.

In memoriam Harry Zammit Cordina - (1934-2022)



Thabbret il-mewt ta' Harry Zammit Cordina, ir-raġel għal 64 sena tal-preżentatriċi u attriċi Josephine Zammit Cordina u missier l-attur Henry Zammit Cordina. Huwa kien se jagħlaq 88 sena f'April li għej.

Harry hađem u anke għamel għadd ta' snin iservi bħala Segretarju tal-Bord, u aktar tard bħala Direttur tal-Programmi tal-Awtorit  tax-Xandir.

Huwa kien popolari fil-Ħamrun fejn twiled u kellu l-kariga ta' President tal-każin

tal-banda San Guzepp. Zijuh kien il-kappillan Dun Nerik Cordina Perez. Flimkien ma' martu żar hafna drabi l-Awstralja biex jipproduċu l-programmi fuq ix-Xandir u t-TV Malti dwar l-emigranti.

Minbarra lil Josephine, Harry, li kellu l-funeral tiegħu nhar il-Ġimgħa li għadda, halla wkoll jibku t-telfa tiegħu lil ibnu Henry u bintu Jacqueline, għadd ta' neputiġiet u bosta ħbieb. Kien ukoll nannu ta' erba' subien u buż-nannu ta' tifel.

Strieh fis-sliem.

Community News



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La Valette Social Centre

Inc. 175 Walters Road, Blacktown Tel. 96225847



Saturday and Thursday activities at the La Valette Social Centre at Blacktown are now back to normal, with the centre following the COVID guidelines as indicated by the NSW Government.

Next activity: Grape picking tour to the Hunter Valley on Sunday 27th February. Price \$65 for coach, tea and lunch. Tickets from the centre or Frances on 0412320432.

St Nicholas Festa Committee Plumpton -NSW

Events for 2022

Sunday March 13: Fete
Sunday July 10: Imnarja
Sunday, October 16: Fete
Sat. Nov. 19: Dinner Dance
Sunday December 4: Festa

Tune in to Radio and Television

SBS RADIO: 97.7 FM Tuesdays 12:00pm; Friday 12:00pm. Listen on Digital Radio or Live Streaming on www.sbs.com.au/radio/ or on TV Channel 38.

On Demand and podcasts on www.sbs.com.au/maltese

SBS TV: Channel 32 (Viceland). Sundays 8:00am; Thursdays 8:00am L-AHBARIJET latest news bulletins direct from PBS Malta.

VICTORIA

3ZZZ 92.3FM: Mondays 7-8pm, Fridays 5-6pm and Saturdays 10-11am. Presenters: Paul Vella, Mario Sammut, Liz Phillips. Listen live on www.3zzz.com.au

98.9 North West FM: Mondays 7-8pm and Fridays 6-7pm. Maltese Program. Presenter: Emmanuel Brincat.



www.893fm.com.au or On Demand on www.893fm.com.au/on-demand/

WOW-FM 100.7: Tuesdays 6pm to 9pm. Maltese program with Joe Borg and Michael Mallia. Listen live on www.wowfm1007.com.au

VOX FM 106.9: Mondays 5pm to 6pm. Voice of Valletta – Illawarra Maltese program presented by Louis Parnis. Live streaming on www.voxfm.org.au

QUEENSLAND

4EB FM 98.1: Tuesdays 6:00am to 8:00am; Presenter: Lucy Stewart. Music, news from Malta, topics of interest, song requests, community announcements. Live streaming on www.4eb.org.au or On Demand on www.4eb.org.au/shows/program-bill-multi-global-maltese/

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

5EBI FM 103.1: Maltese Community Radio Program from Adelaide. Sunday: 7.00am; Monday: 8.00am; Monday: 6.00pm. Presenters: Bernadette Buhagiar and Ron Borg. Listen live or On Demand on www.5ebi.com.au

Listen live on www.northwestfm.org/ethnic-radio/

97.9 FM Melton: Tuesday 6.00pm to 8.00pm Maltese Program. Presenter: Miriam Vella. Live streaming on www.979fm.com.au

NSW

2GLF FM 89.3 Maltese Voices with Marthese Caruana: Sundays 10:00 am to 11:00am. One hour of Maltese talent, songs from Maltese artists.

2GLF FM 89.3 Maltese Community Council programme: Sundays 11.00am to 12:00pm. News from Malta, music, information, culture, interviews, community notices and topics of interest. Listen live on



Football: Malta Premier League

Hibernians and Floriana well ahead – Valletta, Balzan in dangerous position

Latest results – Day 18

Hibernians v Valletta	4-1
Floriana v Mosta	2-0
Birkirkara v Sirens	1-1
Gżira U. v Balzan	3-1
Hamrun S. v Gudja U	0-1
Sliema W. v Sta Lucia	1-1

Day 17

Hibernians v Sliema W	1-0
Floriana v Balzan	2-1
Gżira U v Hamrun S.	4-1
Birkirkara v Gudja U	1-0
Sirens v Valletta	2-1
Mosta v Sta Lucia	1-0

STANDINGS

Teams	P	W	L	Pts
Hibernians	18	11	0	40
Floriana	18	10	2	36
Birkirkara	18	8	3	31
Gżira U	18	7	5	27
Hamrun S	18	8	7	27
Sirens	18	7	6	26
Gudja U	18	7	9	23
Valletta	18	6	9	21
Balzan	18	4	10	20
Mosta	18	1	8	18
Sta Lucia	18	1	7	13
Sliema W	18	2	10	11

Hibernians and Floriana hold on to the reins as the end of the first phase of the Premier League is fast approaching. They sail on and have now opened up a comfortable lead at the top of the league ladder. Hibernians lead the way four points ahead of Floriana, while the Greens have opened a five-points gap ahead of Birkirkara in the runner up position.

When it comes to the other teams, Birkirkara try to keep within reach of the runner up position hoping that Floriana falter and they make up the leeway or at least hold on to their position ahead of fast improving Gżira and defending champions Hamrun who seem to have missed the boat, particularly after their heavy defeat against Gżira and the loss with Gudja.

However, perhaps even more disappointing than Hamrun are Valletta and to a certain extent also Balzan. Both started the campaign hoping to regain the league positions they had lost in the past two seasons, but they have failed rather miserably.

By their own standards, this season is turning out to be disastrous, especially for the Citizens. The return of Doncic as coach in the past two weeks does not seem to have improved their situation. They have only managed one point from their last five outings and have suffered four defeats including three in a row.

Balzan have dropped points when least expected, and along with Valletta they could end up in the relegation pool along with Sliema, Sta Lucia and Mosta.



Jenise Spiteri 21st from 22 in Beijing Olympics snowboarding event

Jenise Spiteri (above), making her Olympic debut at the Winter Games in Beijing as Malta's sole representative at the event, placed a disappointingly 21st from 22 competitors in her snowboarding event.

Jenise, who was born in California of Maltese ancestry managed a low score of just 25.25, putting her out of the final after she fell on her first round in the qualifier. She managed to complete her second attempt without incident.

Afterwards Jenise took to twitter to thank her fans for standing behind her. She said: "I really wanted to show the world the best snowboarding I could do and I'm a little bummed I didn't put on the show I'm capable of. However, seeing the hundreds of tweets from people congratulating me here really makes me feel special. Thank you all for the support!"

Euro Waterpolo Championships Malta vying for 4th finals

Malta's national men's and women's waterpolo teams will this week (Feb, 17-20) host the First Round of the Group C qualifiers for the Men's European Waterpolo Championships 2022 to be held in Budapest, Hungary. The men's team will be vying for a finals' place for the fourth time in the history of the competition.

Three cother group qualifiers are also taking place simultaneously in Slovenia (Grp A), Georgia (Grp B) and Israel (Grp D).

The waterpolo competition will be part of the FINA World Championships taking place between June 18 and July 3

The men's team will play Ireland, Lithuania and Romania, while the women's team has to face France, Israel, and Portugal.

The top two teams in each group will qualify for Championships in Hungary.

Chelsea World Champs
English Premier League and European Champions League holders Chelsea maintained Europe's domination of Club World Cup when they beat Palmeiras of Brazil 2-1 in the final to win the competition in Abu Dhabi



Nick D'Agostino



Jack Brimmer

Nick D'Agostino, Jake Brimmer win FFA Cup with Melbourne Victory

Two players of Maltese descent, Nick D'Agostino and Jake Brimmer were in the Melbourne Victory football team that won the FFA Cup by beating Central Coast Mariners 2-1 in the final. It was Melbourne Victory's second FFA Cup success after previously winning the competition in 2015. The final of the 2021 competition was played in front of 15,343 fans at AAMI Park on Saturday February 5.

Jack Brimmer, a midfielder, won the Mark Viduka Medal, sharing the honour with

Mariners defender Kye Rowles. He and Nick D'Agostino, a striker, also played together in their previous club, Perth Glory.

Nick D'Agostino comes from a well-known Maltese family in football. His father and grandfather both played for Melita Eagles, while his aunt was for some time the president of the Parramatta Melita Eagles club.

The current triumph for the Victory arrived just eight months after their poor 2020-21 showing.

Meanwhile, the FFA Cup, Australia's main men's national knockout football competition will undergo a name change, with Football Australia confirming that it will become the Australia Cup.

The competition will not be the first played with the name Australia Cup. For seven seasons in the 1960s, a competition with the same name was played between leading state league teams.

The last side to win that Australia Cup was Sydney Hakoah.