



The Voice of the Maltese

**Issue
269**

**(We are for the
Greater Malta)**

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**A fortnightly print
and digital magazine**

**Malta General
election March 26**

(pages 12-15)

**Malta Carnival 2022
in subdued format
(see page 20)**

What we lost and what we found – the story of heritage and the pandemic



Veronica **BARBARA**

loved ones and heading for the office in the morning, were out of bounds for so long we almost forgot what it felt like.

The closure of museums due to the pandemic has been a sad consequence which has proved a setback to many heritage institutions, not only because of the marked decrease in funds this is going to bring with it, but also the extra expenditure in order to adhere to new regulations (Lipski 2021).

In official communication, the Metropolitan Museum estimated a loss of at least \$100 million during its closure and its aftermath throughout 2021 (Christiansen 2020). And yet, museum management teams across the globe realized that this was the perfect opportunity to look back at what they were doing and take their time to update themselves, including looking at new potential business models (de Jong & Grit 2021), ones that complement (and not conflict with) the mission of heritage interpretation.

Whereas in a normal situation one would try to close the museum for as little as possible to do refurbishment works and the like, here we were with the prospect of months with museum doors barred and with museum workers having, at face value, very little to do.

So it was realized that this was the ideal opportunity to spend more time on back office work and to evaluate existing approaches, rethink contemporary notions and draft new strategies.

Among other challenges, audiences were highly discussed internally, trying to identify who the audiences were before the pandemic, who can be the audiences now,

and who might be the audiences after all this turmoil is over. It is not just a matter of coping during this situation and 'inventing' tasks for staff, but rather it's about having a very serious discussion on how to tackle the sector after the pandemic is over.

The world will be different, with an increased focus on health and hygiene. Public expenditure will be different, with many groups having barely anything to spend and a handful of others having been able to spend so little they actually have a lot of money to splurge.

People's needs and yearnings will be different, with a wish to travel and explore but with a certain hesitation. Everything will be different, different from anything

have had to learn to diversify their potential audiences and, finally I may add, have started to look at locals as visitors on an equal par with foreign ones.

Locals have also been rediscovering local heritage – many friends of mine whom I do not know as regular museum visitors have opted to check sites and museums out. Some wanted to enact the role of tourists, a role they could not fulfil abroad as they would usually do in normal circumstances. Others visited out of boredom, not having anywhere better to go without the village feasts and other similar summer activities.

Have our heritage institutions responded well to this reaction on the part of the Maltese population, especially of parents who

were for months at a loss where to take their children in the hope of diverting them when there was almost nothing from the usual activities to engage them?

In October 2020 Heritage Malta planned a series of events ('Babies take over Fort St Angelo', 'Art at the Fort' and 'Rock at the Fort') with the fort closed to the public and open only to pre-booked parents/guardians and their young children. The events were to include a private tour of the site and an age-appropriate activity, providing a safe activity to do during a time when parents with babies and young children were barely showing their faces out of the house.

Unfortunately, due to increased mitigation measures, these activities had to be cancelled, and online workshops were organised instead.

Many institutions abroad focused on research and collection of material, especially oral history and experiences of the pandemic itself. Cardiff Story Museum organised 'Cardiff in Lockdown' a photography project that will make sure the time of the pandemic is adequately represented for posterity. Other museums opted to go through their reserve collections and explore new possibilities of interpretation and reinterpretation.



we have experienced before.

As Christiansen (2020) mentions, not to be overlooked either is the need of keeping staff motivated in such an unsure environment when regulations are constantly changing and where people's list of priorities are omitting heritage at the top.

Try and be useful

One way to respond to this is to try and be useful in the present circumstance, such as Tate Modern (UK) opening its door as a vaccination centre which, though heavily criticized by anti-vax movements, showed that heritage institutions can also take up a more social role and respond to the needs of the community, especially in difficult situations.

In a situation where travel was practically impossible, and even now when tourism has started to kick off but is a far cry from what we had before, Maltese museums

**Continued on Page 3*

The story of heritage and the pandemic

**Continued from Page 2*

A serious self-check is in order to analyse what has been done so far, what has been working but cannot do so any longer in the circumstances and what never actually worked so should be discarded.

It is not always easy to let go of what one would have been used to for so many years but unless such a step is taken the discipline of heritage interpretation cannot resurface strong, resilient and relevant to contemporary society.

One of the most common responses to the pandemic for numerous heritage institutions was going online. Locally, Heritage Malta launched its Virtual Underwater Museum and live streamed the 2020 Spring Equinox sunrise on its Facebook page.

Palazzo Falson organised a series of virtual children's workshop with crafts and storytelling, while the National Library of Malta turned its scheduled programme of onsite lectures into online documentaries.

Going digital was one of the ways in which heritage professionals wanted to ensure their artefacts and sites were still present in people's lives but it was not simply about offering the same service virtually.

There was an emphasis on free access and public streaming, to make sure one could reach as many sectors of society as possible, including those that were, are, and will for the time being experience dire financial constraints due to employment and business loss caused by the pandemic.

The Manoel Theatre streamed on their Facebook page past performances and concerts free of charge, with a note for those who wish to give a donation, although this was not compulsory. With this reality in mind, many academic journals also decided to offer free access to their publications for a couple of months.

The heritage sector took it up on itself to try and give people things to do when they cannot go out as well as offering ideas to think about when people were only thinking about the virus and social restrictions. We have also realized that often people do not need much encouragement to take over heritage and do something

with it.

A very good example is the recreation of classical masterpieces by individuals at home. Some took up the task with whatever came at hand and in a rather humorous vein. Others made huge efforts with make-up, clothing and photo retouching to produce artistic pieces in their own right. It went viral on social media last year and one does not have to wonder why.

Once we, as heritage interpreters, accept that balance can be overturned, discussions on reinventing the world of heritage interpretation become a necessity and not a luxury, as many in the past have considered it.

What do people need now? Self-healing, socializing, feeling the warmth of those around them, optimism for a better tomorrow, a break from hearing about diseases and deaths... these are needed much more than education at the moment.

We need to ask a very important question: are heritage interpreters ready and fully-equipped to see to these needs or will they remain in oblivion and sell themselves in the traditional and perhaps now out-dated role of solely educators and keepers of a nation's heritage?

We are lucky that, unlike in times of war, the conservation of material heritage is not under threat by the current scenario. We can still restore and protect artefacts and sites, even more so with less and less visitors and more time to deal with reserve collections.

What is under threat now is the relation-

ship between people and material heritage through months characterised by lack of access (Lipski 2021, de Jong & Grit 2021). This relationship is what needs to be not only kept but also strengthened and modified.

Ultimately, we need to decide upon and make a public declaration

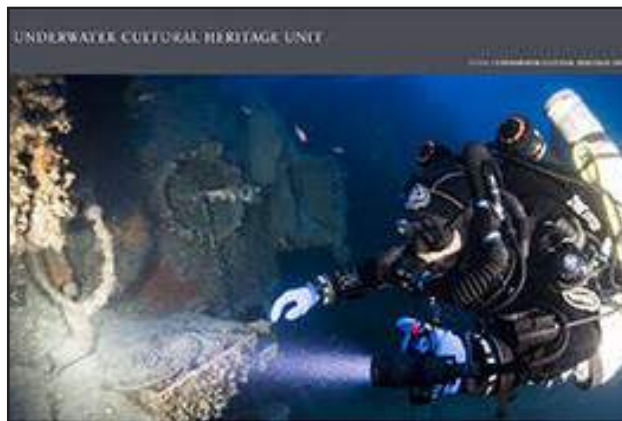
towards change - to recognize the need and to embrace it. The need has been present for some time but perhaps the pandemic brought the necessity at our door at an accelerated pace (de Jong & Grit 2021). We should not miss the boat.

Museum curators and other professional interpreters should ask themselves not only where they are at the moment, but also where they want their institution to be in the future. They should identify what is essential to have and to give to the community, and check whether they are truly equipped with what they need in order to achieve this goal.

They should discuss in depth how the institution should operate, to work hand in hand with all stakeholders, ensuring that heritage interpretation is not only present but that it takes on an important and beneficial role in the lives of people.

Only this way can we truly update ourselves, be open to new ideas and concepts, and ultimately not simply keep our heads afloat during these unstable times, but be there to help bring up those who might have started slowly falling down and don't know what to grasp on.

**First published in the ITS' Futuristic*



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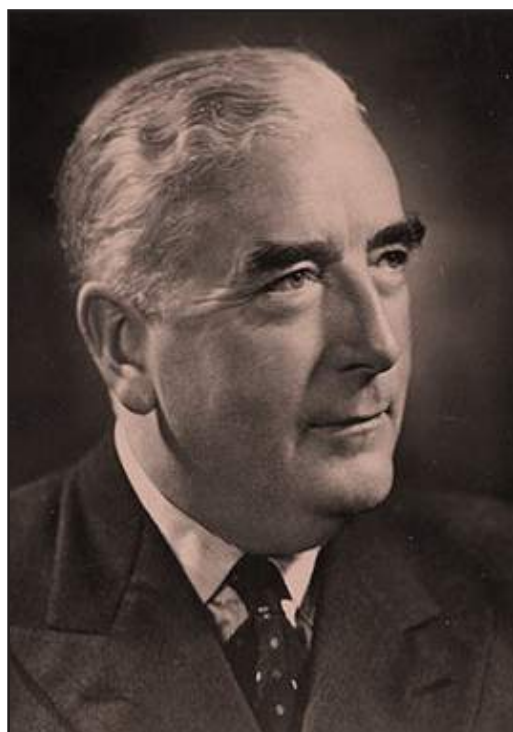


Prime Minister: Sir Robert Gordon Menzies (1939-1941 & 1949-1966)

The 12th Prime Minister of Australia, Sir Robert Gordon Menzies was one of the best known politicians in the country. He served as the 12th Prime Minister of Australia, in office from 1939 to 1941 and again from 1949

to 1966 and played a central role in the creation of the Liberal Party of Australia, defining its policies and its broad outreach. He became the longest-serving prime minister, serving over 18 years in total.

Australia's longest-serving Prime Minister



Sir Robert Menzies was born on the 20th December, 1894 in Jeparit, Victoria and was the fourth of five children. His father was born in Ballarat and his mother in Creswick, Victoria.

Researched by JoeButtigieg

His paternal grandfather whose name was also Robert Menzies, was born in Renfrewshire, Scotland. He arrived in Australia in 1854.

Menzies was very proud of his Scottish heritage and preferred his name to be pronounced in the traditional Scottish manner (Ming-iss). This gave rise to his nickname "Ming" which was later expanded to "Ming the merciless" after the comic strip character.

As a student at school, he ranked first in the statewide scholarship examinations that financed all of his secondary education. He was not very interested in playing sports but excelled academically. In 1913 he entered the Melbourne Law School, and during his

time as a student won a variety of prizes, exhibitions and scholarships. He graduated as a Bachelor of Laws in 1916 and a Master of Laws in 1918.

During World War I, Menzies did not volunteer for overseas service because his two older brothers had already volunteered to serve overseas and was considered as sufficiently patriotic contribution to the war effort. Also, the family's interests would be served best by Robert continuing his academic career.

Menzies started his political career in 1928 when he entered state parliament

representing the Nationalist Party of Australia. He then shifted to the Legislative Assembly as the member for Nunawading. He served as Deputy Premier of Victoria from May 1932 until July 1934, and resigned from state parliament in August 1934 to contest the safe seat of Kooyong for the United Australia Party that he won easily.

With the sudden death of Lyons, Menzies was elected Party leader on the 18th April 1939 and sworn in as Prime Minister eight days later. Therefore, at the age of 44, he found himself a wartime leader of a small nation of just seven million.

From 24th January 1941 Menzies spent four months in Britain discussing war strategy with Churchill and although he returned home to a hero's welcome, his support in Parliament was less certain.

It all came to a head when in August; the cabinet voted Menzies to return to London to speak for Australia's interests in the war. But he did not have the support of the Labor Party and many of his colleagues; therefore, on 27th August 1941 he announced his resignation from the prime ministership.

During his political wilderness, Menzies became very popular on radio by supporting the ordinary citizens whom he called "the Forgotten People". He said that the real life of this nation is found in the homes of ordinary nameless people regardless of their religious beliefs, who see in their children their greatest contribution to the immortality of their race.

In 1944 Menzies called a conference of anti-Labor Parties and they decided to merge as one new non-Labor Party – the Liberal Party of Australia. On 27th August 1949, the Menzies Liberal/Country Coalition won the general election.

**Continued on page 5*

◀Sir Robert Menzies, with his British counterpart, Winston Churchill in London 1941 (National Library of Australia)



All Aboriginal ex-servicemen, Indigenous Australians given right to vote; introduction of Child Endowment Scheme, Pensions, unemployment and tax incentives and rewards

**Continued from page 4*

Under the Menzies government, Aboriginal ex-servicemen had the right to vote and in 1962, all Indigenous Australians could vote in Federal elections. There was also the introduction of the extension of child Endowment Scheme, prescribed medicines subsidised by the government, free medicines service for pensioners, unemployment and sickness benefits and a substantial system of tax incentives and rewards.

In an interview with Radio 2UE's Stewart Lamb in 1955, Menzies was a defender of the White Australia Policy. He said: "I don't want to see reproduced in Australia the kind of problems they have in South Africa, America and Great Britain"

During the interview Lamb told Menzies, "In the past you have been described as a racist". Menzies' reply was: "Well, if I were not described as a racist, I'd be the only public man who hasn't been".

Menzies was brilliant at one-liners. While speaking in Williamstown, Victoria, a protester shouted "I wouldn't vote for you if you were the Archangel Gabriel", and Menzies replied: "If I were the Archangel Gabriel, you wouldn't be in my constituency"

Sir Robert Menzies turned 71 in December 1965 and made the decision to resign from politics on 20th January 1966. He was the 12th Prime Minister of Australia and by far the longest serving Prime Minister in office for a combined total of 18 years.

Upon his retirement from politics, from March 1967 to March 1972 he became Chancellor of the University of Melbourne and in 1977 accepted his knighthood of the Order of Australia (AK) from Queen Elizabeth in a wheelchair at the Melbourne Cricket Ground.

Menzies had a beautiful speaking voice, clear, resonant and flexible.

His appearance was impressive. Finally he had most of the virtues his countrymen and women liked

and respected. He preached religious freedom and his cooperation with Australian Catholics was recognised when he was invited as guest of honour to the annual Cardinal's Dinner in Sydney in 1964 presided over by Cardinal Norman Gilroy.

Sir Robert Menzies died of a heart attack while reading in his study at his Haverbrack Ave home in Malvern, Melbourne on the 15th May 1978.

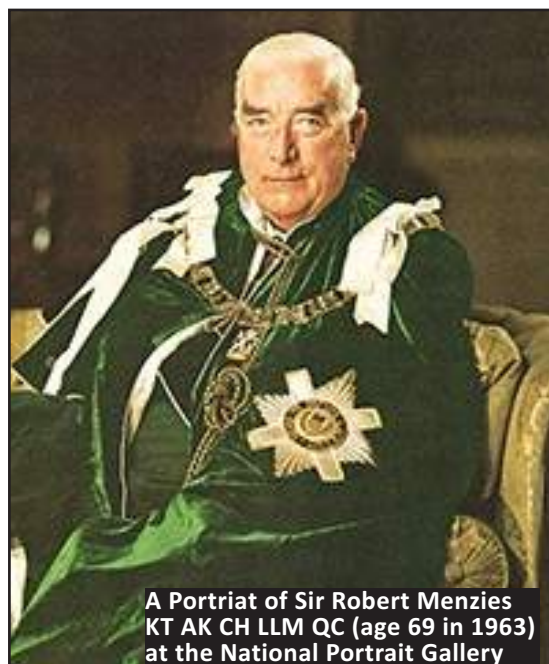
He was survived by his wife Pattie and three children, Heather, Ian and Kenneth.

**In the next issue: Robert James Lee Hawke 1983 -1991, the second longest-serving PM. As Prime Minister he was corporatist and bureaucratic by instinct and presidential in style.*



Prime Minister Robert Menzies photographed with Elizabeth II at the state banquet in Canberra during her first visit to Australia in 1954.

(National Archives of Australia)



A Portriat of Sir Robert Menzies KT AK CH LL M QC (age 69 in 1963) at the National Portrait Gallery

Prehistoric Philately @ Il-Haġar in Gozo

Anybody visiting Gozo up to March 8 should make it a point to visit a new exhibit in the showcase of the Gozo Philatelic Society at Il-Haġar Museum in Victoria's Pjazza San Ġorġ that has been set up on level -1 f the building

The interesting exhibition, which shows a cross section of Malta stamps featuring Prehistoric Artefacts issued

over the last century, is an initiative designed to be in conjunction with a section of the wide exhibition created by Victor Agius around all levels of this cultural centre with the support of the Malta Tourism Authority and the Gozo Ministry's Cultural Directorate.

If interested, the visiting hours remain 9am – 5pm seven days a week, with no entrance fee.

Another service offered by The Voice of the Maltese providing legal information to our readers

Could you be considered an alien?

by PaulSANT

On the 12th of August 2021, the Full Bench of the High Court dismissed an appeal by Frederick Chetcuti in *Chetcuti v Commonwealth of Australia* [2021]. This Court's decision is of significance to people who migrated to Australia prior to the 26th of January 1949 from former British territories or colonies (such as Malta, Singapore and the United Arab Emirates).

Mr Chetcuti was born in Malta on the 8th of August 1945 and arrived in Australia on the 31st of July 1948 at the age of two. Malta was then a colony of the United Kingdom until it gained independence on the 21st of September 1964.

At the time of Mr Chetcuti's arrival in Australia, he was considered a British subject under Australia's then migration laws.

All Australians were in fact considered British subjects prior to the 26th of January 1949, which is when the Commonwealth government enacted the *Australian Citizenship Act 1948* (Cth) (the 'Citizenship Act') that created Australian citizenship. Mr Chetcuti therefore held the same rights as those born in Australia before this time.

Mr Chetcuti resided in Australia since his arrival but never acquired Australian citizenship. This opportunity was open to Mr Chetcuti as part of the transitional provisions under the Citizenship Act because of Malta's status as a British territory.

This opportunity was removed by a legislative amendment in 1973, however British subjects already in Australia still retained privileges not afforded to other migrants.

Mr Chetcuti's legal status again changed

The High Court of Australia highlights the case of Malta born Fredrick Chetcuti, a British Subject living in Australia. A significant decision.

on the 1st of September 1994 when he was automatically granted an Absorbed Person Visa as a result of an amendment to the *Migration Act 1958* (Cth).

In 1993, Mr Chetcuti was convicted of murdering his ex-wife, Gloria Jean Chetcuti, and sentenced to 24 years in prison. Ms Chetcuti's body was discovered in the Parramatta River weighed down with rocks. Mr Chetcuti was released from prison in 2011 but returned after being convicted of assault occasioning actual bodily harm.

Mr Chetcuti's Absorbed Person Visa was cancelled by the Minister for Immigration and Border Protection prior to his second release from prison due to his criminal history. He was then placed in immigration detention following his release from prison in 2017 and was scheduled to be deported to Malta from Australia.

Mr Chetcuti has not returned to Malta since he was a teenager.

The Commonwealth has the power to enact laws concerning citizens of foreign countries who are not citizens of Australia under s 51(xix) of the Constitution. This is commonly referred to as the 'Aliens Power' and allows the Commonwealth government to order the deportation of aliens.

Mr Chetcuti challenged the Minister's cancellation of his visa before Justice Nettle in the High Court of Australia under the Court's original jurisdiction to hear matters concerning the Constitution. He argued that his detention and removal from Australia was unlawful as he was not within the reach of the Aliens Power because he should not be considered an

alien.

Rather, Mr Chetcuti claimed that he should be considered a non-alien as he arrived in Australia as a British subject prior to the introduction of Australian citizenship.

Mr Chetcuti essentially claimed that he should fall into a legal loophole, whereby he was outside the reach of the Aliens Power despite not holding Australian citizenship, as he did not meet the traditional definition of an alien.

Justice Nettle ruled against Mr Chetcuti and held that he was an alien and therefore able to be detained and deported by the Commonwealth government.

Mr Chetcuti then appealed to the Full Bench of the High Court. The Full Bench found in favour of the Commonwealth government by a majority of 6-1 and held that Mr Chetcuti was indeed an alien and therefore within the scope of the Aliens Power.

Chief Justice Kiefel and Justices Gageler, Keane and Gleeson handed down a joint judgement. They held that it was within the Commonwealth government's authority under the Aliens Power to create Australian citizenship and that while Mr Chetcuti was not an alien when he arrived in Australia, he became one after the 26th of January 1949 when the Citizenship Act came into force.

Many people who arrived in Australia prior to the 26th of January 1949 and who have continued to reside in Australia may hold an automatic Absorbed Persons Visa without realising it. Most holders of this category of visa need to obtain a re-entry visa to be able to re-enter Australia if they leave, and can be subject to deportation should they commit a serious offence. At the time of writing, Mr Chetcuti has not been deported to Malta and remains in Australia.

Our experienced team of solicitors are available for an obligation free discussion if you are unsure of your immigration status and would like guidance through the process in obtaining Australian citizenship or permanent residency.



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Maltese Spoken



We have provided you with an overview of the topic above but you should consult a professional for advice specific to your circumstances.

Anzac Day commemoration will again not be held in 2022

The Australian High Commission Malta, the New Zealand High Commission Malta, and the New Zealand Honorary Consulate Malta, have informed The Voice that due to the ongoing pandemic, the ANZAC Day commemoration, traditionally held on 25 April in Malta's Pieta Military Cemetery, will not go ahead again this year.

Instead, like last year, they would be holding a short, private wreath-laying ceremony that they will record and post on social media at @AusHCMalta and @NZ-inMalta later that day, and are inviting everyone to view it whenever convenient.

Of the 302 ANZACs buried in Malta during the First World War, 170 members of the Australian Imperial Force and 61 members of the New Zealand Expeditionary Force are buried in Pieta. They will never be forgotten.

Through their High Commissions on the island, Australia and New Zealand are particularly grateful to Malta for its care of tens of thousands of ANZACs wounded in Gallipoli, Turkey, and taken to hospitals and convalescent homes on the island.

"We remain indebted to Malta and the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) for providing dignified, solemn and beautiful resting places in cemeteries across the country," they said.

Meanwhile, they have asked the CWGC at Pieta Military Cemetery to open the cemetery gates on Triq id-Duluri between 1000am and 12 noon, on 25 April in case anyone would like to visit or lay a wreath.

At the main cross, there will be a small number of poppies and wooden crosses inscribed by Australian primary school children to leave on graves while remembering the lives lost.

The respective High Commissioners in Malta said they hope that next year they would again be able to meet to remember them in person.



Maltese podcasts on health among the world's best 10

A Maltese Podcast has been classified among the 10 best world-wide on health. It was selected among hundreds of health podcasts. The Digital Health Voice Podcast classified ninth, which means that it is among the most followed world-wide in the health sector.

The Digital Health Voice Podcast focuses on digital health stories that are happening in Digital Health in Malta, Europe and World Wide. They talk with people from all walks of life that have decided to make Digital Health, their primary mission.

Fourteen podcasts have so far been produced, five of them this year. In the episodes enthusiasts of digital health from every sector express their opinion.

One of the podcast founders, Dr Stefan Buttigieg, said that together with his colleagues, Dr Dylan Attard, Dr Ryan Grech and the Med Tech World team they are making efforts to inform their audiences on the importance of technology use in the health sector.

A recent guest of the The Digital Health Voice was Jasmine Hounsell, Co-Founder of Evolene Ltd. who visited her family in Malta. She spoke in a very interesting panel about scaling up into different markets, specifically the US Market, about debt collection, digital health, Marsaxlokk, and about the critical importance of including Communication in the very start of the development of Digital Health and Med Tech products.

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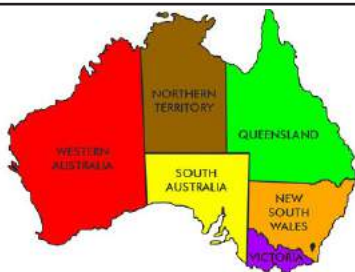
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Have your say/Xi trid tgħid?



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
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Your letters/ L-ittri tagħkom ...

Tell us the truth

S. Muscat from Palm Beach NSW writes:

Now we have the full facts. The Australia Bureau of Statistics has confirmed that the so-called "covid deaths" account for just one per cent of fatalities during the pandemic, but 92 per cent of that one per cent were people with pre-existing health problems ranging from pneumonia to heart disease.

In Malta, fatalities from heart diseases killed double that amount in the same period. Are the doomsayers so wrong? Now that the historical headlines have receded, QR check-ins abolished, why are infections still high? Will someone tell us the truth?

PS. When sending letters to the editor via email, please indicate the suburb and state/country from originating.

Superior citizenship

Josef Micallef from Kent UK writes:

Well, finally Robert Abela has decided on an election date. About time, I say. He should have gone before. I think Malta should have a fixed date for elections and not left to the PM to decide. I hope and pray for a clean election.

Us living in UK are better citizens than the ones living in, say, Canada or Australia as we are given passage assistance to travel. That means our citizenship is worth more, much more. We have a superior citizenship. Who is going to challenge this advantage that we have in a Superior Court?

Toroq ahjar fiċ-ċentru tal-belt Għawdxija

Kav Joe M Attard mir-Rabat, Għawdex jikteb:

Nghid prosit u grazzi f'isem l-Għawdxin u tant Maltin u barranin li ta' kuljum ikunu fil-belt kapitali Għawd-

Mail, what mail?

C.N. Cutajar from Pooraka S.A. writes:

I know we are still in a pandemic, but this is ridiculous! I keep receiving Christmas cards and other mail from Malta in mid-February.

Flights are not as frequent as before, but I did not know that this would affect freight this much. Come to think of it, even normal mail is taking too long to arrive from Malta.

Maybe something can be done about it. Yes, indeed, people still write letters by hand and use the postal services for delivery in a reasonable time.

Factory of lies!

Toni Degiorgio from St Andrews Malta writes:

I am really concerned that there are still agitators in Australia that are using Australia Hall in Malta as a political weapon because they are upset that the Government has pushed them aside as their time was up.

They are now peddling the story that Australia Hall is going to be demolished to be replaced by the building of a block of flats. Australia Hall is situated in a prime real estate area and, with further negotiations, could be either relocated or renovated.

We all want this to happen. What we also need is for the factory of lies to stop interfering and to let the latest negotiations be concluded. Australia Hall does not belong to the Malta Government

xija Victoria u jghaddu bla ma biss jagħtu kas miż-żewġ triqat ewlenin hawnhekk, lil daww il-haddiema li hadmu bla waqfien biex regghu taw wiċċ għid lil din il-parti ta' beltna.

Kont titqalla u tkisser karozza tgħaddi minn hawn għax ix-xogħol li kien sar fuqhom ma kienx tajjeb biżżejjed biex jiflaħ għall-volum kbir ta' traffiku li jghaddi minn hawn, allura l-konsegwenzi kien jafhom kulhadd.

Issa fi żmien relattivament qasir, inqala' l-wiċċ il-qadim u tqiegħed wieħed min-floku, aktar b'saħħtu, flimkien mas-sinjali tat-traffiku. Żgur li meta jżurna l-Papa fi żmien qasir u jghaddi minn hawn bil-Pope Mobile flimkien mal-'entourage' tiegħu mhux se jsib problemi.

Nifhem li ma kinetx spiza żgħira, allura ħajr ukoll lid-Dipartiment tax-Xogħlijiet Pubbliċi li daħal għal din il-biċċa xogħol li kienet tant mixtiegħa.

J'alla li aktar toroq simili tmisshom din ix-xorti!



Dr Hugh McDermott MP State Member for Prospect

For issues concerning:

Ageing and disability - community services - education - environment - health - housing - planning - Police - transport - water

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L-Aħrax tal-Mellieħa – u l-kappella ta' fuq l-irdum

Għalkemm f'Malta għadna fl-istaġun tax-xitwa, u forsi wkoll f'xi jiem għad hawn ftit tal-kesha mhux ħazin, imma jiem sbieħ qed ikollna xorta waħda, u xemx tiżeg ukoll. Allura ssib hafna, kemm Maltin, u wkoll barranin li bħalissa huma turisti f'pajjiżna, li jogħxew iżuru l-kampanja Maltija.



Joseph CUTAJAR

Fost il-Maltin, min għandu l-hin, min jekk bil-karozza jfittex il-kampanja jew jippassiġġa jiskopri n-natura, u l-aktar it-turisti, dawk anzjani u mħumiex, hafna minnhom mqaċċtin biex žgur jilagħqu x-xemx Maltija, jagħmlu mixjiet twal fil-kampanja.

L-isbah eżempji ġeneralment issibhom lil hinn mir-Rabat, fin-nofsinar ta' Malta, u forsi l-aktar, fil-punent estrem ta' Malta, lil hinn mill-Mellieħa, l-aħħar raħal qabel taqsam il-fliegu għal Għawdex, fl-inħawi fejn il-kampanja tiżewweġ mal-baħar. Ftit tista' ssib postijiet isbah mill-Aħrax tal-Mellieħa.

Dan il-post, li jinsab fuq in-naħa tal-Grigal tal-gżira tasal għalih hekk kif thalli l-Bajja tal-Mellieħa, titla' t-telgħa ta-Cirkewwa u tiġbed lejn il-lemin, int u sejer lejn l-Armier u t-tliet bajjiet žgħar l-oħra.

Fit-tarf ta' dawn l-erba' bajjiet tasal-fit-tarf tal-Aħrax u tkun tista' tidda tifhem għaliex "l-Aħrax", irdum imdawwar b'natura selvaġġa, fosthom flora u fauna, u hafna sigar iffullati (speċi ta' boskijiet žgħar) fuq nett ta' rđum li jħares lejn baħar kaħlan minn fejn tista' tilmah kemm il-gżira ta' Kemmuna u dik akbar t'Għawdex.



Hjiel tat-tiġrif ta' kif kienet tidher il-kappella l-antika qabel inbniet il-ġdida fl-1961

F'dan il-post li hu wkoll magħruf bħala l-Irdum tal-Madonna fl-Aħrax tal-Mellieħa, ma tistax ma tapprezzax in-natura verġni Maltija. Hawn għal min jinterressah, hu wkoll il-bidu ta' mixjiet fuq blat uħud minnu tassew aħrax u ppuntat. Fuq il-lemin issib statwa tal-Madonna thares fuq il-baħar, filwaqt li fuq ix-xellug xi mitt metru 'l bogħod issib kappella ċkejna ddedikata lill-Kunċizzjoni.

Skont l-istudju tan-natura Maltija, f'dawn l-inħawi iġbetu għadd ta' għasafar, fosthom il-garni u ċ-ċiefa, filwaqt li ssib



Il-kappella tal-Kunċizzjoni fuq l-irdum tal-Aħrax tal-Mellieħa

ukoll, għasafar residenti bħall-għasfur nazzjonali ta' Malta, il-merill. Skont l-istudju, f'Malta jbejtu sa 10% tal-garni kollu tad-dinja, u terz minn dawn iġbetu f'dawn l-inħawi. Din il-popolazzjoni ta' dawn l-għasafar jagħmlu l-post mill-aktar importanti fuq skala Ewropej, tant li s-sit hu "Żona Speċjali ta' Konservazzjoni".

Is-sit jissokta jissebbah bil-kappella tal-Kunċizzjoni, li hemm illum u li nbniel fl-1971 minflok dik oriġinali li hemm x'juri li nbniel għall-ħabta tal-1900 f'post fejn

kien hemm niċċa li kienet magħrufa bħala "l-Fgura tal-Aħrax", u li anke tidher f'mappa tal-1783 tan-Naxxar – minn fejn ħareġ il-Mellieħa. Fil-fatt, il-kappella hi wkoll magħrufa bħala "tan-niċċa", minħabba n-niċċa li kien hemm fil-qrib.

Il-kappella oriġinali kienet inbniet ferm qrib xifer l-irdum tal-qawwi b'saff tat-L-artal bl-inkwadru tal-Madonna fuq wara l-kanċell

tafal tahtu. Skont kitba ta' Noel Ciantar, biż-żmien l-irdum beda jċedi u bil-mod il-mod il-knisja bdiet tiġġarrarf tant li kien hemm periklu li tispicċa fuq il-blat ta' taht.

Kien dan li wassal li tinbena l-kappella ta' bħalissa fuq pjanta tal-perit Ġorġ J. Galea u l-imgħallem Ġużeppi Bartolo fuq l-istess stil ta' dik ta' qabilha, imma bogħod ferm minn xifer l-irdum. Kienet giet imbierka f'Diċembru tal-1961

Sa ftit tas-snin ilu kien għad jidher xi fdal tat-tiġrif tal-kappella l-oħra. Il-bqija tal-binja llum bħal sparixxiet u b'hekk intilfet binja storika.

Fil-kappella tal-lum hemm altar wieħed magħluq b'kanċell tal-ħadid, li fuqu hemm il-kwadru titolari tal-Kunċizzjoni, kopja tal-kwadru li kellha l-kappella ta' qabel. Quddiem il-kanċell issib xi seba' bankijiet għal min irid iżur il-kappella u jkun irid ftit fil-kwint jagħmel xi talb.

Il-kwadru oriġinali tal-Kunċizzjoni kien gie mpitter fuq l-injam bejn l-1728 u 1736. Fih jidhru l-armi tal-Gran Mastru Antoine de Vilhena u tal-isqof Alpheran de Bussan li kienu li 'jahkmu' f'dak iż-żmien. Illum dan l-inkwadru jinsab ippreservat fis-Santwarju tal-Mellieħa.

Fil-kappella hemm ukoll statwa žgħira tal-Kunċizzjoni u mdawra wkoll b'xi nkwadri oħra bi stampi sagri.

Il-faċċata tal-kappella l-ġdida fiha bieb wieħed u portiku žgħir, imma l-knisja fil-fatt għandha tliet bibien. Mal-ħitan tal-ġenb hemm żewġ twieqi u f'kull naħa hemm żewġ ikmamar žgħar li jservu ta' sagristija.

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-kriżi li jmiss

Bhalissa l-attenzjoni tad-dinja hija mixhuta fuq l-Ukrajna, pajjiż kbir fil-lvant tal-Ewropa, it-tieni l-ikbar wara r-Russja. Ġeografikament, għandu xatt twil fil-Baħar l-Iswed u fruntieri mar-Russja, il-Belarus, il-Polonja, l-Ungerija, ir-Rumanija u l-Moldova.

L-Ukrajna huwa pajjiż kumpless u bi storja twila. L-art ilha abitat mill-bniedem iktar minn tletin elf sena, u matul is-sekli kienet dominata minn diversi ġemgħat ta' kull naha, li jinkludu l-Ottomani, l-imperu Awstrijakk-Ungeriz, u t-Tżar tar-Russja.

L-Ukrajna ġiet kostitwita fl-1917 bħala repubblika Sovjetika, parti mill-Unjoni ta' Repubbliki Sovjetici u Soċjalisti (USSR), u fl-1954 ziedet mat-territorju tagħha l-peninsula tal-Krimea meta l-mexxej Sovjetiku ta' dakinhar Krushchev ittrasferiha mir-repubblika Russa. L-Ukrajna għebet l-indipendenza tagħha fl-1991, meta l-USSR sfaxxat.

L-ikbar membru tal-eks USSR hija l-Federazzjoni Russa, u l-mexxej tagħha Vladimir Putin ilu rrabjat bil-balla fuq l-istonku bl-isfaxxar tal-USSR, li dakinhar gegħlitu jmur jsuq it-taksis biex jgħix. Ilu juri li jrid iregga' lura 'l pajjiżu għall-kobor u l-glorja tal-passat, u minflok ra lir-Russja tbat ekonomikament meta sfaxxat is-sistema komunista.

Ir-Russja xorta waħda baqgħet prominenti fix-xena globali f'hafna oqsma, bl-ammont kbir ta' armamenti nukleari, bl-iżviluppi tagħha fl-ispazju hafna drabi jisbqu dawk tal-Istati Uniti, u billi tforni ammonti kbar ta' fuwils (gass u żejt) lill-pajjiżi tal-punent.

Madankollu, matul is-snin wara l-waqa tal-ħajt ta' Berlin, rat lil xi pajjiżi li qabel kienu parti mill-USSR (l-Estonja, il-Latvja u l-Litwanja), u oħrajn taħt l-influwenza tagħha, bħar-Repubblika Ċeka, l-Ungerija, il-Polonja, il-Bulgarija, ir-Rumanija u oħrajn jingħaqdu fl-alleanza tal-Punent in-NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organisation).

Issa wieħed għandu jifhem li kull pajjiż sovrän għandu, jew għandu jkollu, il-jedd li jiddeċiedi hu kif għandu jimxi u x'allejanzi għandu jkollu, imma dan huwa pjuttost kunċett ġdid. L-istorja hija mimlija sa ruħ ommha b'imperi, pajjiżi, u qabilhom, b'liet b'saħħithom eċċ iddeċidew li jaħtfu artijiet ta' madwar u mbiegħda sabieħ jiehdu r-riżorsi tagħhom - minerali, agrikoli, skjavi eċċ.

Minn fejn se nibdew insemmu? Ibda bl-Imperu Ruman, dak Otoman, il-Mongoli, il-Maya, l-Imperu Brittanniku, l-Ispanjoli, il-Portugiżi eċċ. Aħjar ngħidu, fejn se nispiċċaw!

Il-President Putin ha l-ewwel pass biex jipprova jregga' lura l-arloġġ fl-2014 meta ordna l-annessjar tal-Krimea (interessanti hu li fil-fatt din kienet it-tieni darba li sar dan il-pass, għax kien ukoll seħħ fl-1783 mir-Repubblika Russa ta' dakinhar). Ir-reazzjoni dinjija kienet waħda ta' kundanni, stqarrijiet u sanzjonijiet

ekonomiċi, imma kollox baqa' kif kien.

Nimmaġina li Putin haseb, daqshekk kollox?

Issa tefa' għajnejh fuq il-bqija tal-Ukrajna. Fl-istqarrija li hareġ qabel ma ordna d-dħul tal-armata Russa fi tnejn mill-oblasti (provinċji) tal-lvant tal-Ukrajna, fil-partijiet digà ddominati mir-Russja - Donetsk u Lugansk, ikkummenta li l-popli Russi u Ukrajni huma shab, hbieb u familja.¹

Huwa minnu li hemm rabtiet kbar bejn il-popli - per eżempju fl-Ewwel Gwerra Dinjija tliet miljuni u nofs ta' Ukrajni gġieldu maġenb l-armata imperjali Russa, erbatax-il-darba ikbar mill-ammont ta' Ukrajni li gġieldu fuq in-naha l-oħra - dik Awstrijakka-Ungeriza. Ukoll matul żewġ sekli shah sal-aħħar tas-seklu sbatax, kemm l-Ukrajni u u kemm ir-Russi garrbu invażjonijiet mit-Tartari tal-Krimea biex jinhatfu żewġ miljun persuna bħala skjavi, sakemm ingħelbet il-Krimea mir-Russi bħal ma digà semmejt.²

Illum pero d-dinja m'għadhiex taħtaf pajjiż ieħor taħt idejha bħala regola ġenerali, kif mifhum fil-liġi internazzjonali, u dan jidher li għadu mhux mifhum, jew aċċettat, mir-Russja, minkejja li jista' jkun hemm xi kunsiderazzjonijiet storiċi legittimi.

Fil-verità il-poplu ta' 41 miljun ruħ (jekk teskludi l-Krimea) huwa maqsum, bejn il-maġġoranza ta' Ukrajni etniċi ta' 78% li aktarx ikunu jridu jsaħħu relazzjonijiet mal-punent u l-bqija tal-Ewropa, u dawk il-minoranza Russa ta' 17% li jharsu lejn ir-Russja. Hemm gruppi żgħar hafna oħra li jiġu mill-pajjiżi tal-madwar.

Issa li r-Russja dahlet ġewwa f'partijiet ta' dawn il-provinċji, se jieqfu hemm? Se jokkupaw il-provinċji kollha? U xi ngħidu għall-bqija tal-pajjiż? X'effett se jkollhom is-sanzjonijiet li qed japplikaw il-pajjiżi tal-punent?

Ma tantx jidher li qed ikollhom effett fuq il-kalkoli Russi. Ma jidhirx li Putin jifhem haġ oħra hliet tank jimmira lura lejn tank minn tiegħu, u missila tipponta lura lejn oħra minn tiegħu - fi kliem ieħor, gwerra shiha. Madankollu jaf li d-dinja għajjiet minn gwerra wara l-oħra, u l-Istati Uniti m'għadix baqgħalha l-awra ta' invincibilità li kellha wara t-tieni gwerra dinjija. Ara x'disfatta kellhom fil-Vjetnam, u issa fl-Afganistan.

Thares lejn l-iżviluppi kwieta kwieta hija ċ-Ċina. Go qalbhom probabbilment jgħidu, tgħid Putin jirmexxielu jiehdu 'l dan il-pajjiż daqshekk faċilment? Żewġ ġirien enormi, u allejati, bħal ma huma r-Russja u ċ-Ċina, ma jistgħux jegħlbu sanzjonijiet ekonomiċi?

Liema hi l-kriżi li jmiss? It-Taiwan?

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AGM of the Maltese Community Council of NSW



The newly elected members of the MCC NSW executive: (from left): Michael Zammit, Antoine Mangion, Miriam Friggieri, Marisa Previtera, Frances Montesin and George Bartolo (now retired). Not physically present but on zoom, Sandra Grech and Neville Zammit.

It is believed that the Maltese Community Council, an umbrella body of most legal constituted Maltese organisations in NSW will come out stronger in post-COVID-19. This resulted from the recently held annual general meeting that was held at the La Valette Social Centre in Blacktown, where all affiliated members were present.

Contrary to what has been happening in the community in recent years, the Council has roped in new valid faces to the executive, people like Michael Zammit, an accountant, and Neville Zammit, a management and financial executive, together with Marisa Previtera a live-wire community activist, member of the CMLA.

Observers believe that under the leadership of Miriam Friggieri and Antoine Mangion, this is perhaps one of the strongest executive committees the MCC has ever had.

The meeting thanked George Bartolo who has completed his 11th year as Treasurer on his retirement, although he would remain active as a life member of the MCC. As one of the elders, George has been a tower of strength for the MCC.

In her detailed annual report about the past year, President Miriam Friggieri said that despite the stops and starts, the MCC still managed to accomplish several tasks. It tackled the Census, emphasising the importance of completing it and the need to

Below: George Bartolo cutting the cake on retirement from the position of Treasurer surrounded by delegates of the MCC NSW

Facing post-covid-19 with enthusiasm

answer the questions correctly regarding Maltese heritage and language.

It also engaged the community on a brief survey regarding Covid vaccinations receiving around 200 responses, thus providing a small insight into the attitudes in the community.

The MCC of NSW brought the "Way Forward" proposal back onto the table, bringing it to the attention of the then "new" High Commissioner of Malta to Australia. Once again, it was able to work collaboratively with other Maltese associations around the country, as well as with the High Commissioner.

Another campaign was launched online to encourage members of the community to respond to an SBS radio survey. The responses from the Maltese community were the second-highest received by SBS.

The MCC website was updated. It now has a modern and professional look. The Council encourages all associations to let them know of any upcoming functions that they want to include on their events' page so it could become a hub of useful information, not just for the community but also for every association to become aware of its schedule and also to avoid clashes where possible.

In December, the MCC held the Seniors Reconnection lunch that was funded by a NSW Govt grant. During it, a call was made for volunteers to support a community visitation programme that is planned to be launched later this year.

Its weekly radio programme at 11 am on 2GLF FM 89.3 on Sundays, which is currently being coordinated by Miriam Friggieri is doing well but welcomes more contributors.

The report about the Maltese Language School was read. It mentioned that Lisa Bright has taken on the role of School Administrator. She is already proving to be an asset with her technical and admin skills. At present, the MLS has a total of 15 children enrolled and 69 adults of which there are 47 of which are Beginners Level 1, 16 are Level 2, and six intermediate.

At this stage, it has yet to be decided whether the School would return to any form of face-to-face teaching. However, it has been decided that online lessons will continue as a permanent offering for the Maltese Language School.

Another report read at the meeting was about work initiated by the welfare officer and the St George Maltese Group.

The President also thanked *The Voice of the Maltese* for the support it provides to the MCC and the community.

The newly elected committee is, President: Miriam Friggieri; Vice/President: Antoine Mangion; Secretary & Public Officer: Marisa Previtera; Ass/Secretary: Frances Montesin; Treasurer: Michael Zammit; Ass/Treasurer: Neville Zammit; PRO: Sandra Grech





Roundup of News About Malta



The President of Malta George Vella with Prime Minister Robert Abela (right) at Sant Anton Palace following the signing on the advice of the Prime Minister, of the writ to dissolve Parliament, with immediate effect, to trigger the process of holding a general election on Saturday 26th March

Malta's next general election on March 26

Malta will be holding the next general election on 26th March 2022. Prime Minister Robert Abela, 45, made the announcement during a Malta Labour Party political activity in Floriana on the 20th of February. A few hours later, in early after-

noon, the Prime Minister went to Sant Anton Palace to advise President George Vella to sign the writ to dissolve Parliament.

The signing triggered with immediate effect the process of holding a general election to be followed by the dissolution of Parliament a day later.

On naming the date the Prime Minister said that the time had come to turn to the people as Prime Minister, and seek its trust for his first mandate.

Abela has been Prime Minister for two years, since 13 January 2020 when he was sworn in as prime minister following the resignation of Joseph Muscat.



Four NP candidates jump the ship on first day of campaign

On the first day of the election campaign, Nationalist Party supporters received the unexpected and certainly unwanted news that four experienced popular party MPs members of the shadow cabinet and holding important ministerial portfolios jumped the ship and decided not to contest the forthcoming general election.

Kristy Debono, the spokesperson for Economic Development and Industry, Clyde Puli, spokesperson for Education and Sports, Mario Galea, the NP's spokesperson for Mental Health and Animal Rights, and Claudio Grech, spokesperson for Political Renewal, Research and Innovation.

First to announce the decision were Debono, Puli and Galea. They had one thing in common. All three had been supporters of the candidature of former Nationalist leader Adrian Delia.

Whatever the reasons not to contest, their decision is being considered a great blow to the PN leader Bernard Grech and a setback for the party vying to win back the government after nine years in opposition.

The reason the PN leader Bernard Grech gave for the MPs to quit the race before it started, that it was mainly intended to make room for new blood as the party regenerates itself, does not hold too much water.

President George Vella appeal to the candidates and citizens ahead of the general election

In a special message, following the announcement of the date of the general election, the President of Malta George Vella explained, that such an event, when citizens are asked to choose who they wish to lead their country, and which policies they would like to see implemented by those elected, is always a very important moment in the life of a democratic country.

He felt that in addition to fulfilling his duties as President, he also felt obliged to remind all those involved in the election of their duties, as well as the consequences that the people may face if this exercise is not given the importance it deserves.

He appealed to the candidates presenting themselves to be chosen as the leaders of the people and urged them to be honest, sincere, and transparent in their commitments and to place the citizens' interest first and foremost.

He reminded them that primarily they should consider themselves as offering a service to the rest of the community with the aim of achieving the highest level of common good. He urged them to clearly state their goals and the means they intend to employ to achieve them.

He appealed to them to be unequivocal in order not to give rise to any surprises or misinterpretation in their implementation later on.

"The people deserve the highest respect for their intelligence and for the trust they bestow on who will represent their interests in the running of our country," President George Vella said.

He recommended moderation and respect in the language used during the election campaign. "In order to make arguments and explain differences between different opinions, one does not need to use defamatory words and insults, not least unnecessary accusations, especially if based on unfounded allegations," he said.

He called upon the citizens to do their duty and choose who they believe should be entrusted to lead the country in the coming years.

He said that the choices one makes today can have a huge impact on how to deal with the problems and make the best use of the opportunities that the country will face in the coming years, and that "this choice must be made following serious reflection".

President George Vella hoped that, "in a most mature way we will go through the recently announced election and that in a most democratic manner, we will come to the best choice on who will be leading our country for the next five years.

"Our country deserves nothing less," he said.

**Continued on page 13*



Roundup of News About Malta



A busy time for the Maltese politicians!

The announcement of the day for the General Election was the signal for the professionals whose job normally is to comment, the journalists, but also the armchair critics who always want to express an opinion on anything under the sun, to indulge in pushing their views, rightly or wrongly unwanted or otherwise, high up on their agenda. However, what matters most is the respective parties' agenda.

In the first week of the campaign, the parties, have been kept quite busy working out how best to deliver, not only their views, but their proposals, packaged as attractive as they possible can to try and win the approval, not only of their hard core supporters, but also to lure to their side, the doubters among the opposite party.

In the first week, campaigning by the two big parties, the Labour Party in government, and the Nationalist Party has been going on unabated, and is sure to continue until the final day reserved for such, before Election Day. Most campaigning has been in daily press conferences and rallies for the parties' faithful, addressed by the respective leaders, experienced party candidates and others making their debut in the field.

During these events, the parties have been

Proposals galore

mentioning an abundance of proposals, some of them very interesting and most costing millions of euros to be fulfilled. At times one is given the impression that caution is thrown to the wind when proposals are announced, and one cannot but help feel that some of the proposals are unattainable as Malta tries to get back into a period of stability following the COVID-19 pandemic and economic downturn.

Both political parties launched their campaigns in

years. It wants to improve the environment so would create new urban green spaces. One of its proposals includes that St Anne's Street in Floriana would be turned into a public garden and traffic would be redirected underground. It also made a number of such other major proposals.

The Nationalist Party kicked off its campaign by announcing a €1 billion fund to create new economic sectors, although some are already in progress. It proposes that half of the money would be paid through public funds; the other half would come from loans from national and foreign institutions, it said.

The sectors mentioned include metaverse, due diligence, specialised manufacturing, 3D printing, AI applications, e-sports, production of video games, the sport industry, energy and social enterprises.

Since the first day, the two parties have kept announcing proposals on a daily basis. Anyone interested in learning about them should log on to the respective party's websites

Meanwhile, the polls show the Labour Party to be well ahead, however, as the party leaders keep on telling us, it is the people's vote on election day that decides and both would start that important day on even terms. Until that day, both will still have a lot of work to do. They know that they just cannot let up.



The two leaders addressing supporters. Robert Abela (above) and Bernard Grech (right)



a big way, with major proposals on two major topics, the Labour Party on the environment, and the Nationalist Party on the economy.

The Labour Party pledged €700 million for green spaces over a period of seven

Four NPMs jump ship on day 1 of campaign

**Continued from page 12*

At least four of the candidates, though experienced politicians were still regarded by many as "new blood". Not only that, but at least nine of those contesting the next election on the NP ticket, are all older.

Meanwhile, Mario Galea, an NP stalwart and former Cabinet member from Żejtun was reported saying: "Nobody who dedicated their life to the party and the country, in full honesty without ever being tarnished, should be discarded simply because they have been elected for a long time."

Galea, who has long faced mental health issues, added that it was his choice to withdraw his candidature. Claiming he was stigmatised by two NP officials in particular, he said: "They made my life hell."

These withdrawals followed others weeks ago by two more former shadow ministers, Therese Comodini Cachia, Spokesperson for Human Rights and Good Governance, and Herman Schavone, Spokesperson for Planning and the Construction Industry.

Minister Bartolo strongly condemns Russia's aggression against Ukraine and its people

At an extraordinary Foreign Affairs Council meeting of the European Union convened to discuss the latest developments following Russia's invasion of Ukraine, Minister for Foreign and European Affairs Evarist Bartolo (right in picture) strongly condemned this act of aggression against the sovereignty of Ukraine and its people and called for all cessation of hostilities.

He also echoed other EU ministers on the need for a strong message of solidarity that should be conveyed to the people of Ukraine in the face of unprovoked aggression. He added that, "notwithstanding our indignation and condemnation, a door must be left open for dialogue".

He also stressed the importance that Russia abides by international humanitarian law and allows safe and unhindered humanitarian access and assistance to all persons in need.



of FATF.

In a statement, the Maltese minister said that Donfried appreciated the efforts of the Maltese Government on the implementation of the action plan of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) and lauded the government strengthening of good governance in the areas of democracy, the judiciary, finance, and freedom of the press," the ministry said.

She also conveyed her appreciation for Malta's efforts in the field of maritime security and looked forward to working together at the Security Council should Malta's bid to become an elected member for the period 2023-24 be successful.

Meanwhile, in a phone call that Minister Evarist Bartolo, had with Karen Donfried, the US Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs, Ms Karen Donfried, praised Malta on its implementation



Mix-xena tal-hajja Maltija

minn Ġużè Camilleri

Issa s-suffara ssaffret

Wara li l-elezzjoni ġenerali ma ssejthx għat-19 ta' Marzu, hafna bdew ibassru li kienet se issir wara April. Dan minhabba l-fatt li fid-19 ta' Marzu kienet il-festa ta' San Ġużepp u s-26 qrib sewwa ż-żjara tal-Papa, filwaqt li minbarra ż-żjara tal-Papa, f'April hemm ukoll il-Gimgha l-Kbira u l-Għid.

Iżda f'daqqa waħda, meta l-Partit Laburista habbar attivitá politika fil-Furjana, mill-ewwel beda jtbassar li l-Prim Ministru kien se jhabbar id-data tal-elezzjoni, u d-data li bdiet tissemma kienet tas-Sibt, 26 ta' Marzu, propju ftit jiem qabel iż-żjara tal-Papa Frangisku "Nemmen li wasal il-mument li niġi għandkom u bħala Prim Ministru nitlobkom il-fiduċja. Fil-hin li ġej se nkun qed immur għand il-President tar-Repubblika u nagħtih il-parir biex ixolji l-parlament biex tinzamm elezzjoni ġenerali fis-26 ta' Marzu", habbar Abela.

Il-Prim Ministru qal li kien għażel propju din id-data għax f'Jannar tas-sena l-oħra l-prioritá kienet l-istabbiltá. Meta tfaċċat il-Covid-



Is-slogans tal-partit għall-elezzjoni: Xellug: PL; u lemin: PN

l-19-interess nazzjonali kien li jiġu salvati l-hajjiet u anke l-impjigi.

Matul l-2020 u anke l-2021 l-prioritá tal-Gvern ma kienetx l-elezzjoni, imma li jibqa' jsostni l-impjigi u jgħin lin-negozji waqt l-akbar krizi li jgħid li laqet lil pajjiżna mit-Tieni Gwerra Dinjija.

"Issa rridu naraw kif se noholqu aktar opportunitajiet, irridu nhallu warajna l-inċertezza, għalhekk fir-Rebbiegħa rridu nidhlu f'perjodu sabih. Ir-Rebbiegħa fejn il-Maltin igawdu, niċċelebraw il-festi, jifthu l-clubs, iż-żgħażaġh jitlaqgħu u jiddevertu. Malta kuntenta, vibranti u kkulurita," sostna l-Prim Ministru.

Huwa qal li meta jsehh dan ma jistax ikun li tkun għaddejja kampanja elettoralu u li allura l-għażla tkun diġà giet issiġillata.

Iżda l-interpretazzjoni tal-Kap tal-Partit Nazzjonalista, Dr Bernard Grech, kienet waħda għal kollox differenti billi stqarr li l-Prim Ministru kien sejjah l-elezzjoni għax beza' li jekk idum ma jsejjah l-elezzjoni jitlef il-maġġoranza.

Erbgħa jirtiraw il-Kandidatura

Propju fl-ewwel jum tal-kampanja elettorali, hafna nhasdu bit-thabbira li erba' eks membri Parlamenari Nazzjonalisti kienu rtiraw il-kandidatura tagħhom u ma kienux se jikkontestaw l-elezzjoni.

L-ewwel thabbir kien ta' Clyde Puli, Kristy Debono and Mario Galea. Wara segwa Claudio Grech, li waqt attivitá tal-Partit Nazzjonalista fil-belt, qal lil dawk prezenti li ma kienx jikkontesta l-elezzjoni.

Sorsi tal-Partit Nazzjonalista taw x'jifhem li dan għamlu biex jagħtu ċans lill-kandidati godda u jirreġenaw il-partit tant li Bernard Grech qal: "Irrid inkompli nirriġenera l-partit għaliex jekk nieqfu nirriġeneraw lill-partit dak hu l-mument li nieqfu nikbru".



L-erbgha tal-PN li rtiraw (mix-xellug): Kristy Debono, Clyde Puli, Mario Galea u Claudio Grech

Xi oħrajn sostnew li seta' kien hemm raġunijiet oħra, aktar u aktar meta l-ewwel tlieta li rtiraw il-kandidatura kien appoġġaw lil-eks kap tal-Partit Nazzjonalista Dr Adrian Delia, filwaqt li Mario Galea immedjatament kiteb "Nemmen ukoll bis-siħh li min iddedika hajtu għall-partit u l-pajjiż bl-akbar onestá mingħajr qatt ma kien hemm l-iċken ombra ta' dubju fuq l-onestá tiegħu m'għandux jintrema għas-

sempliċi fatt li ilu jiġi elett."

Aktar tard l-istess kandidat stqarr mal-Maltatoday: "Diġà kelli l-kampanja ppreparata. Hadt ir-ritratti u kont bdejt il-home visits". Imbagħad sahaq ukoll, kemm mal-istess Maltatoday kif ukoll ma' żewġ gazzetti oħra, The Times u l-Malta Independent: "Għamluli hajti inferm. Persuni viċin it-tmexxija saħansitra kienu jsemmuli s-saħħa mentali tiegħi."

Aktar minhekk, anke ċahad dikjarazzjonijiet li saru mill-Kap Nazzjonalista Bernard Grech li kien hemm kunsens biex hu u deputati oħra ma jkunux kandidati halli jagħmlu spazju għal nies godda.

Clyde Puli, li fi żmien il-kap Adrian Delia kien inhatar Segretarju Ġenerali, ppubblika ittra li bagħat lil Bernard Grech fejn semma kif hassu kburi jahdem ma' diversi kapijiet tal-Partit Nazzjonalista għax kellu diversi l-karigi, iżda fi żmien Bernard Grech ma semmiex biex kien kburi.

Kristy Debono li kienet president tal-Kunsill Ġenerali tal-PN fi żmien Delia, qabel ma rriżenjat għax kienent komda bil-kurrent ta' kontra Delia, qalet li ddeċidiet li tirtira biex tibbilanċja hajjitha lejn il-familja tagħha. Semmiet ukoll deċiżjonijiet nofs saġran li kienu qed isehhu.

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Mix-xena tal-hajja Maltija

minn Gużè Camilleri



L-ewwel stharrig

Propju kif thabbret d-data tal-elezzjoni sar l-ewwel stharrig mill-istatista Vincent Marmarà, u skont dan l-istharrig li sar bejn is-17 u l-21 ta' Frar, intwera li bhalissa l-Partit Laburista jgawdi l-appoġġ ta' 55.7% tal-fiduċja tal-elettorat, u l-Partit Nazzjonalista 42.7%. L-ADPD jew partiti oħra għandhom l-appoġġ ta' 1.6% tal-elettorat.

Fl-istess stharrig, meta mistoqsi dwar min jahseb li huwa l-aħjar mexxej biex imexxi l-pajjiż, 52.9% tal-elettorat qal li jafda lil Dott. Abela filwaqt li Dott. Grech għandu l-appoġġ ta' 30.7%.

Dan ifisser li l-mexxej tal-Partit Laburista Roberta Abela għandu vantaġġ ta' 22.2% fuq Bernard Grech. L-appoġġ lill-partiti l-oħra kien biss ta' 2.6% tal-elettorat.



Bernard Grech

Jidher li l-Partit Laburista se jagħmel użu tajjeb mill-fatt li l-mexxej tiegħu għandu vantaġġ hekk kbir fuq il-kap Nazzjonalista... vantaġġ li hu akbar minn dak bejn iż-żewġ partiti. Dan għax iħoss li jekk jibni l-kampanja elettorali tiegħu billi jif-

foka fuq il-popolarità tal-mexxej għandu ċans jikseb maġġoranza akbar milli jekk l-emfasi tkun fuq il-partit.

Attwalment din it-tattika tintuża f'diversi pajjiżi, l-aktar fl-Istati Uniti u saħansitra kienet intużat f'Malta wkoll mill-Partit Nazzjonalista, meta minkejja li kien minn taht, il-PN kien bena l-kampanja elettorali tiegħu fuq il-kap ta' dak iż-żmien, Lawrence Gonzi li kien popolari aktar mill-partit u rnexxielu bi sbrixx jirbah l-elezzjoni.

Jidher li għalhekk il-PN bil-ghajnuna ta' parti mill-midja, fetaħ attakk qawwi personali fuq Robert Abela.

*Fi tmiem il-gimgha sar sharrig iehor minn tliet gazzetti li kollha wkoll irriżultaw vantaġġ sostanzjali għall-Partit Laburista.

L-istharrig ta' *The Sunday Times*: PL 56.2% u PN 42.4% (vantaġġ a' 44,500 vot għall-PL); *Maltatoday*: PL 52.5 u PN 44.9 (vantaġġ ta' 23,000 għall-PL); *It-Torċa*: PL 55.9% u PN 42.5% (vantaġġ t' 41,000 għall-PL).



Robert Abela

Id-drittijiet tal-LGBTIQ – Malta terġa' l-ewwel

Għal darb'ohra Malta reġġet ikklassifikat l-ewwel fost 49 pajjiż Ewropew fl-indiċi interim tal-ILGA-Europe għall-protezzjoni u d-drittijiet umani ta' persuni LGBTIQ.

L-indiċi jikklassifikaw il-pajjiżi skont il-ligijiet u l-politika li taffettwa l-persuni LGBTIQ u jiehdu kont ta' bosta kriterji bhall-ugwaljanza, problemi fil-familja u l-libertà tal-espressjoni fost l-oħrajn. Malta giet lewwel b'punteġġ ta' kważi 93.8%.

Fit-tieni post, id-Danimarka kellha punteġġ ta' 15% inqas minn pajjiżna.

Ir-rapport dwar Malta jinnota wkoll kif l-Uffiċċju tal-Istatistika Malti, l-NSO, għall-ewwel darba hareġ ċifri dwar l-orjentazzjoni sesswali u l-identità tal-ġeneru fl-aħhar censiment.

ILGA-Europe innotat ukoll l-intervent tal-Membru Parlamentari Ewropew Cyrus Engerer, li fil-Parlament Ewropew ressaq rizzorluzzjoni biex l-Ewropa tiddikjara lilha nni-fisha bhala '*LGBTIQ Freedom Zone*'. Dan wara attakki fuq il-komunità LGBTIQ fl-Ungerija u fil-Polonja.

Dan ir-riżultat ferm pożittiv għal Malta wasal f'kuntest fejn f'bosta pajjiżi Ewropej żdiedet ir-retorika politika kontra l-komunità LGBTIQ kif ukoll esperjenzaw zieda f'każijiet ta' diskors ta' mibegħda fil-konfront ta' nies LGBTIQ.

Hu hass il-bżonn li jfakkar fid-dmirijiet li jgħorri kull min hu involut f'din l-elezzjoni ġenerali, kif ukoll il-konsegwenzi li l-poplu jista' jiffaċċja jekk dan l-eżerċizzju ma jinghatax l-importanza li tixraqlu.

Appella lill-kandidati li jkunu onesti, sincieri u trasparenti fil-wegħdiet tagħhom u jpoġġu l-interess tan-nies l-ewwel. Heġ-ġigħom jaraw lilhom infushom qaddejja li joffru servizz lill-bqija tal-komunità bl-iskop li jintlaħaq l-oġġettiv li jgħid komuni.

(Ara l-messaġġ f'aktar dettal f'pagna 12)

“Tivvutax għan-nannu”

Filwaqt li l-partiti jissieltu bejniethom biex jiksibu l-appoġġ tal-poplu, u l-kandidati jagħmlu l-almu tagħhom halli jiksibu l-voti, toħroġ storja mhux tas-soltu fejn tifla qed tghid lill-eletturi biex in-nannu ma' jgix elett halli jkollu aktar hin jilgħab magħha.

Dan in-nannu mhu hadd hlief Evarist Bartolo, wiehed mill-aktar li ilu fil-Parlament, (l-ewwel li kkontesta kien fi Frar 1992) u li oriġinalment kien mahsub li mhux se johroġ bhala kandidat għal din l-elezzjoni.

Din l-istorja xandarha Bartolo stess fuq il-paġna tal-facebook tiegħu meta kiteb hekk: “tivvotax għal varist halli jirtira.”

In-neputija ta' sitt snin kitbet u pengiet dan il-poster u qagħdet iddur bih mad-dar f'dimostrazzjoni ta' persuna wahda.

“Ilha tghidli biex nirtira ha noqgħod nilgħab magħha noli, nehodha l-bandli, inwaddbu l-imhaded lejn xulxin u niġru wara xulxin jew inmorru xi mixja rari fil-kampanja.

“Ma haditx gost meta fehmet li se nerġa' noħroġ għall-elezzjoni 26 marzu 2022 u għamlet dimostrazzjoni ta' protesta,” kiteb Evaris Bartolo.

Jitkellem il-President

Mhux soltu li l-President tar-Repubblika jagħmel sqarrijiet f'kampanja elettorali, tant li meta l-President George Vella tkellem dwar dan, fil-midja ntqal: “President George Vella in unprecedented appeal to election candidates, voters”.

Il-President ta' pariri lill-kandidati u lill-votanti u sostna li wiehed għandu jqis l-elezzjoni ġenerali mument ta' importanza kbira fil-hajja ta' pajjiż demokratiku.



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A quick glimpse at Australia

Federal government seeks greater visa cancellation powers



Prime Minister Scott Morrison (*left*) insists the laws are needed to bolster powers to deal with foreign nationals with criminal convictions, but Labor has accused him of adopting a “desperate” pre-election ploy.

“The law needs to be fixed. It needs to be changed,” Mr Morrison said. He added: “Judges are handing down sentences which enable people to get around this, and we need an objective test. We want to make sure we can punt them.”

Under the bill, foreign nationals would face having their visas refused or cancelled if they have

been convicted of a serious crime that's punishable by more than two years in prison.

The government says the laws would seek to address a gap in existing legislation, by allowing the character test to be applied to individuals, who have received less than 12 months imprisonment for their crimes.

But Labor has previously raised concern over why the measures are needed, considering the immigration minister already holds broad discretionary powers to cancel and refuse visas.

It has also been critical of the bill's retroactive powers, which would allow it to be enforced retrospectively, once the laws were legislated.

No vacancy for migrants in Sydney

The deputy Prime Minister of Australia, Barnaby Joyce has warned that as Australia's leading economists have endorsed a return to the highest immigration on record of 190,000 people a year, the country must be strategic about where people are located to minimize pressure on housing and resources. Sydney is full but Australia isn't.

Mr. Joyce said Australia must welcome migrants who want to “work hard, build businesses and live in the country” which he said was “basically anywhere away from the southeast coastal sections of our nation”. “Our economic growth is held back in many areas because Australians won't pick fruit, work in the abattoirs or be a doctor in Waggett” he said.

The federal government slashed Australia's overall migrant intake from 190,000 to 160,000 in 2019 in an effort to tackle the impact of the increasing population in congested cities. But a report released last year by the government assumed a return to about 190,000 a year from 2023-24.

New logo “only in Australia”

A new national brand featuring a kangaroo logo and the tagline “Only in Australia” has been launched in a \$10 million bid to jumpstart trade and investment.

The brand replaces a controversial golden wattle-inspired logo that was dumped two years ago after it drew unfavourable comparisons to a coronavirus cell. It will run in parallel with the hugely successful “Australian

Made” global product symbol. More than 300 marketing resources will be made available for free to Australian businesses using the logo and slogan.

“A strong nation brand and tagline will reinforce Australia's reputation as an internationally competitive investment destination, a great place to visit, a quality provider of education, and a trusted exporter of premium goods and services,” Trade Minister Dan Tehan said.

Modelling by Deloitte Access Economics found a one-place improvement in Australia's global brand ranking would increase merchandise exports by about \$3.1 billion a year. It would also improve foreign direct investment by \$704 million a year, boost tourism by \$174 million a year and increase international education by \$137 million a year.



Bad result for the Liberals in NSW

The NSW premier Dominic Perrottet says there are lessons to be learned from some disappointing by-election results.

Labor appears set for a historic win in the NSW seat of Bega, while the Liberals have suffered heavy swings against them in former premier Gladys Berejiklian's seat of Willoughby in the state's Super Saturday by-elections.

A Labor victory would be its first in Bega, held by the Liberals since its creation in 1988 and occupied by retiring member Andrew Constance since 2003.

Opposition Leader Chris Minns previously said the seat would be “almost impossible” for his party to win, but early tallies in the south coast electorate a swing of more than 14 percent to the ALP's Michael Holland over the Liberal Party's Fiona Kotvojs.

Labor candidate Jason Yat-Sen Li looks set to win Strathfield, held by former Labor leader Jodi McKay. The Nationals will hold former deputy premier John Barilaro's seat of Monaro despite a swing of more than six percent. As we went to press the results have not been officially confirmed.



A quick glimpse at Australia

Laws to protect migrants from exploitation

A Senate committee examining new laws to protect migrant workers from exploitation has been told foreign skilled workers in Australia have been paid as little as \$40 a day, meaning they were only able to afford to eat plain white rice for three meals a day, an inquiry has heard.

The Electrical Trades Union told the inquiry two Filipino and two Thai workers were engaged on a solar farm construction project outside of the north Queensland city of Townsville in 2018.



It was discovered the workers were being paid \$40 a day, plus a \$42 allowance for food and accommodation, and employed under subclass 400 "short-stay specialist" visa arrangements. Union members passed the hat around to raise money for the workers.

It emerged the "highly specialised" work they were hired to do included licensed electrical work but their skills and qualifications were never assessed or licensed to perform it.

The bill, introduced to parliament in November, establishes new criminal offenses and civil penalties for "coercing or exerting undue influence or pressure on a non-citizen to accept or agree to certain work arrangements".

It also sets up a power to ban, for a specified period of time, employers who are subject to a sanction from allowing additional non-citizens to begin work. And Australian Border Force will get regulatory powers in relation to compliance notices and enforceable undertakings for work-related breaches.

The government believes it will strengthen protections for migrant workers and ensure unscrupulous competitors are not undercut by unscrupulous competitors.

Not a good look at age care

More people have died in residential aged care in Australia from COVID-19 outbreaks in just two months than during the whole of 2020, a Senate committee has been told.

Since the start of the year, the committee heard that 691 aged care residents have died in COVID-19 outbreaks, as Omicron cases surged across the country. Those figures spanned 1 January to 5pm on 14 February. An updated figure of 711 until 15 February was also provided. That's compared with 685 aged care fatalities during the whole of 2020 and 282 throughout all of 2021.

After the government announced up to 1,700 Australian Defence Force personnel would be sent into aged care to assist the workforce, just 106 had been deployed.

ADF members had been deployed to 21 residential aged care facilities out of the 2,900 across the country. ADF personnel deployed in Queensland, 12 in NSW, 45 in Victoria, 18 in South Australia and six in Western Australia.

Senator Colbeck Minister for Aged care said the government had moved quickly to implement new rules on furloughing staff following workplace shortages in aged care. The opposition is demanding his resignation.

The head of Australia's vaccine rollout, Lieutenant-General John Frewen, said 80 per cent of the country's population over 70 had received a booster dose. "The efforts for the booster in residential aged care and disability care is the highest priority," he said.

International borders are now open

Emotions were running high on Monday 21st February as international travellers touched down in Sydney, two years after Australia imposed some of the world's toughest COVID-19 restrictions. Australia's international borders are now open to all vaccinated tourists.

"The wait is over," Prime Minister Scott Morrison said during a press conference ahead of the re-opening. "Pack your bags," he told potential visitors, adding, "Don't forget to bring your money with you, because you'll find plenty of places to spend it."

The first flight into Sydney Airport arrived from Los Angeles at just after 6am. Australia closed its borders to almost everyone except citizens and residents in March 2020 in an attempt to slow surging COVID-19 case numbers.

The travel ban - which also barred citizens from travelling overseas without an exemption and imposed a strict cap on international arrivals - earned the country the nickname "Fortress Australia". Every month under the policies has cost businesses an estimated \$3.6 billion, according to the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, with tourism particularly hard hit.



At the airport



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Tagħrif dwar il-kitba bil-Malti



Il-varjanti tal-ortografija Maltija (L-ghaxar parti)

Waqt li nissoktaw ingibu għall-attenzjoni tal-qarrejja d-deċiżjonijiet tal-Kunsill Nazzjonali tal-Ilsien Malti dwar forom li għandhom jintużaw fil-kitba bil-Malti biex ikun hemm uniformità, nissoktaw bit-tema dwar “il-kitba tal-għerq u z-zkuk”, u nifukaw fuq:

Deċiżjonijiet dwar kliem iehor

Kliem bla varjazzjoni sinkronika fl-għerq/zokk

F’dan il-kliem, li fih titlissen dejjem l-istess konsonanti, ingħazlet il-kitba li tikkorrispondi għall-fonetika. Dan sar mhux biss biex iħaffef il-kitba imma wkoll fid-dawl ta’ deċiżjonijiet oħra li ttiehdu qabel, fosthom dik li tirrigwarda

l-kitba ta’ kliem bil-konsonanti h (ara: *Aggornament tat-Tagħrif, It-Tieni Parti, I, 2*).

Il-forma li qed tidher ingassata fil-parentesi kwadri m’għandhiex tkompli tinkiteb.

bies (pl. bisien) [u mhux ~~biez~~]. Titlissen s f ’kull għamla tagħha.

duh [u mhux ~~dugh~~]. Titlissen h f ’kull għamla tagħha.

dvalja [u mhux ~~twalja~~]. Titlissen d f ’kull għamla tagħha.

dverna [u mhux ~~twerna~~]. Titlissen d f ’kull għamla tagħha.

ghafrit [u mhux ~~ghafrit~~]. Titlissen t f ’kull għamla tagħha.

kazbar [u mhux ~~kasbar~~]. Titlissen z f ’kull għamla tagħha.

lembuba [u mhux ~~lenbuba~~]. Titlissen m f ’kull għamla tagħha.

nahnah [u mhux ~~naghnaah~~]. Jitlissnu h f ’kull għamla tagħha.

risq [u mhux ~~riżq~~]. Titlissen s f ’kull għamla tagħha.

rkoppa (+ *gharkopptejh/gharkupptejh*) [u mhux ~~rkobba~~, eċċ.]. Titlissen p f ’kull għamla tagħha.

skont [u mhux ~~skond~~]. Titlissen t f ’kull għamla tagħha, anke b’vokali warajha. L-ambigwi ta’ skont “trahhis” hija improbabbli hafna minhabba l-kuntest.

eż. **Jigifieri, skontok, il-hajja kompliet toghla? Skonti, iva.**

il-Vangeli skont San Matthew

zoptu/soptu [u mhux ~~zobtu/sobtu~~]. Titlissen p f ’kull għamla tagħha.

**Darb’oħra nittrattaw It-Tqarrib lejn ir-realtà fonetika*

L-ahrax tal-Mellieħa u l-kappella fuq l-irdum

**Ikompli minn paġna 9*

Kif tidhol fil-kappella, fuq kull wieħed miż-żewġ hitan tal-ġenb hemm fontijiet żgħar għall-ilma mbierak, u żewġ inkwadri mdaqqs li fihom hemm l-istorja ta’ din il-kappella.

Bhal ma kien isir bil-kappella l-antika, s-sajjieda jużaw din t’issa biex minn fuqha jiehdu d-direzzjonijiet lejn il-postijiet tas-sajd jew meta jkun deħlin lura lejn ix-xatt.

Leggendi

Fost it-tagħif interessanti li wieħed isib fuq l-inkwadri fil-kappella, hemm rakonti ta’ xi leggendi li nibtu u li juru l-qima kbira li s-sajjieda u l-baħħara tal-inhaw u daww Għawdxin kellhom lejn il-Madonna tal-Aħrax. Is-sajjieda mhux biss jitolbuha tibghathilhom sajda tajba, imma bħall-baħħara, li wkoll li twassalhom lura l-art bis-sliem.

Leggenda minnhom iġġblek tbissima. Jingħad li bidwi kien qed jahdem bil-hmar tiegħu f’x-ifer l-irdum, imma bla jaf kif, il-hmar żelaq u waqa’ għal isfel. Il-bidwi talab lill-Madonna biex iżzommlu l-hmar haj għax jekk kien permezz tiegħu li kien jaqla’ x’jiekol.

Il-grazzja nqalghet u l-bidwi żamm il-wegħda li kien għamel, li jibni l-kappella originali ta’ xifer l-irdum, li kif diġà ngħad, maż-żmien għalha wkoll bħall-hmar u ggarfet u kien għodda waqgħet fl-irdum.

F’leggenda oħra tingħata verżjoni differenti dwar il-bini tal-kappella. Jingħad li sajjied li kien ma’ shieħbu nqaleb bid-dghajsa fl-inhaw. Sieħbu għereq, imma hu talab u wiegħed lill-Madonna li jekk isalva mill-għarqa jibni din il-kappella. Wara li kiseb il-grazzja, żamm mal-wegħda u bena l-kappella lill-Madonna.

Donnu li hemm ċerti rabtiet ma’ dawn iż-żewġ leggendi, tant li l-irdumijiet lejn it- Tramuntana tal-kappella jissejhu “Rdum tal-Madonna” fil-waqt li daww fin-naħa ta’ Nofs in-Nhar jissejhu “Rdum il-Hmar”.



SAINT NICHOLAS FESTA COMMITTEE

Sunday 13th March 2022
 Good Shepherd Parish Hall
 130-136 Hyatts Road, Plumpton Sydney NSW
 (Opposite the shopping centre)



THE BIG FETE – FIERA TAL – FNIEK

At 1.30pm
 Music & Entertainment by:
The Heartbeats
 With lots of popular music.
 Lots of fantastic prizes to be won.
 There will be drinks and food available, including:
 ‘Pastizzi, Hobz biz-zejt or bil-Bigilla and Hot Chips’
 And **FREE** Ice-cream for the kids



ENTRY IS FREE AND PLENTY OF PARKING
 So come along, bring your family and friends!



IMPORTANT DATES FOR 2022

Variety Night on Saturday 30th April
Lejla Fil-Buskett on Sunday 10th July
Fiera on Sunday 16th October
Dinner Dance Saturday 19th November
The Feast of St Nicholas on Sunday 4th December



For further information please contact:-
The President – Emmanuel Vella on 0405 677 064
 Or
Public Relations Officer – Stella Vella on 0414 188 226



PLEASE NOTE!!
All Government Covid-19 rules will apply

Jibda l-ministru ta' Arcipriet fil-Qala

Saret il-funzjoni formali tal-bidu tal-ministeru ta' Mons. Edward Xuereb bhala l-Arcipriet tal-Parroċċa tal-Immakulata Kuncizzjoni u ta' San Ġużepp fil-Qala.

Mons Xuereb ha t-tmexxija tal-parroċċa wara li 17-il sena u nofs bhala l-kappillan tal-Parroċċa tal-Ġisem Imqaddes ta' Kristu fl-Għasri u mill-2007 bhala Vigarju Ġudizzjali. Barra minhekk, Mons Xuereb ilu mill-1999, u għadu jservi fit-Tribunal Ekkleżjastiku ta' Ghawdex.

Minhabba li l-pandemija tal-Covid-19, iċ-ċelebrazzjoni kienet pjuttost ridotta, imma saret bis-sehem ta' diversi saċerdoti u orkestra fformata u diretta mill-Mro. Frankie Debono.

Qabel iċ-ċelebrazzjoni, l-Arcipriet il-ġdid iltaqa' ma' diversi gruppi u għamel bosta home visits, waqt li l-hidma pastorali li qed issir skont l-ispirtu u l-linji tal-Pjan Pastorali Djoċesan.



L-Isqof (lemin) u l-Arcipriet idoqqu l-qanpiena l-kbira bhala sinjal tal-ministeru tal-kappillan li jsejjah lil kulhadd bla distinzjoni għal għand Kristu.

Mill-Gżira
Għawdxija

Charles Spiteri



Il-Mużika ta' Joe Vella

Fil-mużew Il-Haġar, fil-belt Victoria, fethet wirja dokumentarja li tfakkar lill-Professur Joseph Vella fir-raba' sena minn mewtu. L-enfasi dis-sena tpoggiet fuq il-mużika vokali tiegħu.

Il-Kanonku George Frendo għażel li juri l-manuskritti ppublikati dwarhom – ta' Trittiku (1970), Seher (1984), Bahrija, Kantilena, *Cantico delle Creature* (1992), *Passaggero* (1993), *Madrigale* (1994), *Askesis* (1999) u Kant ta'

Mara (2009). Min iżur il-mużew sat-8 ta' Marzu jista' l-kant, flimkien ma' xeni.

Iċ-ċelebrazzjoni nkudiet ukoll konferenza bl-Ingliz mill-Professur Ivan Callus, kunċert b'kompożizzjonijiet tiegħu, mill-arpista Caroline Calleja, il-pjanist Francis Camilleri, Jennifer Melville bl-oboe u l-ilhna ta' Maria Frendo, Georgina Gauci, Antoinette Camilleri u Louis Andrew Cassar. Saret ukoll quddiesa għal ruħu (u l-benefatturi l-oħrajn tal-Haġar) bil-kant ta' xogħlijiet ta' Joe Vella mill-kor Laudate Pueri.

Xena rari!

Ragħaj anzjan (*taħt*) imexxi l-Rmerhla tiegħu ta' nagħaġ u mogħoż biex jirgħu fl-għelieqi qrib it-triq fl-inhawwi tal-heliport f'Għajnsielem Ghawdex kmieni wara nofsinhar tal-15 ta' Frar li għadda.

Fl-imghoddi xena bhal din kienet tkun komuni f'għadd ta' rhuli fil-Gzejjer Maltin fejn kont issib għadd ta' rgħajja mhux hażin għaddejjin bil-merhliet tagħhom mit-toroq dak iż-żmien hielsa mit-traffiku, mill-irziezet għall-għelieqi. tagħhom.

Illum, kemm minhabba t-traffiku u wkoll għax l-irhula fejn għad hemm l-għelieqi tgħoddhom fuq is-swaba tal-idejn, trid tagħmel wegħda biex tarahom fit-toroq. Dan anke minhabba l-fatt li r-rgħajja llum iżommu l-merhliet tagħhom fi rziezet moderni imdawrin mill-għelieqi tagħhom, bogħod mill-bini, hu mpossibbli li johorguħom fit-toroq.



In the wake of Russia's invasion of Ukraine ...

PM Robert Abela promises to continue prices stability despite spike in the prices of commodities

In the wake of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, Malta, along with Europe in particular is facing a spike in the prices of commodities, especially in oil and natural gas. However, Malta Prime Minister Robert Abela is guaranteeing price stability as the island has already been doing in the past weeks with the energy price rises.

After discussions during a meeting of EU leaders in Brussels in the past few days, a decision was taken to inflict sanctions against Russia and President Vladimir Putin following his decision to invade Ukraine.

The company that runs the Delimara power plant, whose main shareholders include Socar Trading, the international marketing arm of Azerbaijani state oil company Socar, procures Malta's gas supply.

Two days before he launched Russia's massive invasion of Ukraine, Putin signed a wide-ranging agreement with his Azerbaijani counterpart, Aliyev deepening their diplomatic and military cooperation. The signing of the declaration "brings our relations to the level of an alliance between Russia and Azerbaijan."

With news of Moscow's the full-scale military incursion of Ukraine, oil prices jumped with Brent rising above \$105 a barrel for the first time since 2014, exacerbating concerns about disruptions to global energy supply.

Oil prices keep soaring with news of the full-scale military incursion of Ukraine, immediately putting at risk up to 1 million

barrels per day of Russian crude oil exports transitioning through Ukraine and the Black Sea.

Russia is not only the third-largest oil producer and second-largest oil exporter, but it is also the largest provider of natural gas to Europe, providing over 35% of its supply.

Britain has joined the EU, the US, Canada and Australia in announcing a massive package of economic sanctions on Russia, saying that the West must end its reliance on Russian oil and gas.

According to Prime Minister Robert Abela said there are some 70 Malta-flagged ships in Ukrainian ports, two Malta-registered airplanes in Ukraine, and a number of Maltese investors in Russia who could be impacted with a freeze on the banking system.

Abela said that the government is monitoring the system to give assistance to those investors, and following the price of

oil and natural gas. He has given guarantees to the Maltese people that Malta will have price stability.

The Prime Minister said that Malta had spoken in favour of peace in Ukraine, and that this does not compromise its constitutional neutrality. He pointed out that the war in Ukraine did not mean that people of Russian nationality or descent were "bad". "I know there are many Russians who do not approve of what happened, so we have to see this situation in its entire context. The attack breaches international law, and we will keep hoping for peace and for the two parties to sit at the same table for a peaceful end to the conflict," he said.

The European Council agreed on further restrictive measures covering the financial sector, the energy and transport sectors, dual-use goods, export control and export financing, visa policy, and additional listings of Russian individuals.

Carnival 2022 in subdued format

Carnival, one of the oldest historical festivals in Malta, with just under five centuries of credited and documented history dating back to the Knights of St John's occupancy in Malta is celebrated annually in February. However, this year due to the pandemic, it was organised in a subdued format between February 25 and March 1.

While respecting the current COVID-19 measures, this year's Carnival programme, featured various initiatives around Valletta, Hamrun, and Marsa, including competitive artistic installations (*like the one on the front page*) as well as initiatives in collaboration by *Spazju Kreattiv*, which included an exhibition of Carnevalesque, an exhibition of past carnival costumes and a theatrical production of the traditional poetic *farse il-Qarçilla*.

Good Forestation Practices for Maltese Islands

The Ministry for the Environment, Climate Change and Planning, and the Environment and Resources Authority (ERA) have launched a public consultation on the draft 'Guidelines for Good Forestation Practices for the Maltese Islands.'

Making the announcement, the Minister for the Environment, Climate Change and Planning Aaron Farrugia explained that these guidelines are intended to provide a general guide for successful and functional tree-planting projects in natural, rural, and urban environments, looking at forestation from a holistic perspective with the end target of assuring the greater success of such projects.

These draft guidelines highlight the full process of how a forestation project should be addressed from concept to design, implementation, and eventual long-term sustainable management of such sites.

Special emphasis was put on the importance of not only implementing afforestation projects, but also properly maintaining them. "These forestation projects and their upkeep for the further greening of the islands will also enhance the environment and create more spaces for the enjoyment and benefit of the

public," the Minister said.

This document is to provide a quick guide in the form of practical pointers, recommendations and a checklist of general codes of good practice to enable a successful tree-planting initiative in areas such as bare land, reforestation of areas previously covered with trees and habitat restoration to assist in the recovery of an ecosystem", continued the minister.

The main objectives of the Guidelines are:

- To promote environmentally friendly and ecologically sound forestation practices
- Encourage greening and ecological restoration incentives in different areas using suitable species
- Establish common standards of good forestation practices, in line with complimentary legislation and policy
- Encourage ownership and long-term maintenance of forestation projects
- Support the implementation of the National Trees and Woodlands Strategy and Action Plan 2022-2030
- And support Malta's commitment and efforts in climate change adaptation and mitigation.

New SBS programmes guidelines show media inclusion leadership

The Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia (FECCA) has welcomed the announcement by SBS outlining a new and expanded commitment to advancing on-screen and off-screen diversity and inclusion in its programmes.

It said that in addition to its great work through multilingual and multicultural programming, SBS has now put in place new specific guidelines and targets to provide more media pathways for people who are currently under-represented in the media sector in its Australian programmes.

"FECCA congratulates SBS for its leadership in providing more opportunities for multicultural voices to be represented on our screens. We commend SBS for removing barriers for our communities and aiming for equal participation," FECCA Chairperson Mary Patetsos (*pictured*) said.

"These guidelines also recognise the importance of the intersectionality of multicultural Australians with other under-represented people and groups, and the need to improve media pathways, specifically for multicultural LGBTIQ+ people and multicultural people with a disability."

"It is critical that Australia's increasingly culturally and linguistically diverse communities can see themselves in the media and participate in society through media engagement."

Ms Patetsos added: "We also welcome and acknowledge SBS's continued commitment to being a leader in inclusion through its internal policies within the SBS organisation and as outlined in its new inclusion strategy."

"FECCA looks forward to continuing to work with SBS to make sure the media needs of multicultural Australians are met through programs and services across all platforms, particularly as our media partner for our upcoming conference, FECCA 2022: Advancing Multicultural Australia."

Editorial Comment

The Voice of the Maltese is to understand that SBS has now put into place new specific guidelines and targets to provide more media pathways for people who are currently under-represented in the media sector in its Australian programmes.

This has been our cry for many years. We have been advocating that SBS must consider the Census results with more caution. Basing criteria so heavily on census data relating to the proportion of persons, who state that they speak English at home, is a flawed way to allocate airtime.

Much more emphasis should be placed on the specific needs of a particular ethnic community. The importance of cultural preservation, as distinct from language maintenance to our community is of paramount importance as well.

The Maltese community leaders of the two biggest Community Councils of Victoria and NSW have made strong representation emphasising these special needs of a community, although long-established but is one of the fastest ageing communities.



FECCA is Australia's peak multicultural organisation representing and advocating on behalf of Australia's multicultural communities.

FECCA Chairperson Mary Patetsos

World War II diary:

1st March 1941:

Minesweeper is saved from sinking but seaman is killed

This early in World War II on Malta, there were reports that minesweeper drifter HMS Ploughboy that had been engaged in a sweep and operating a Kango hammer at the entrance to Grand Harbour exploded mines at the entrance to Grand Harbour. It was severely damaged when three mines exploded close to the vessel.

One of the mines was very close beneath the drifter and caused it serious damage. It had to be beached to prevent her from sinking. One rating, Able Seaman Carmelo Farrugia was killed, while nine others were wounded, at least one of them seriously.

Ploughboy had been heavily engaged in clearance since the Luftwaffe laid large numbers of acoustic and magnetic mines in and off Grand Harbour and Marsamxett Harbour two weeks earlier. It was the only vessel at present in Malta that could carry out the necessary clearances. Ploughboy saved from sinking and expected to be out of action for some time until repairs could be completed.

In a communiqué to the War Office, the Governor and Commander in Chief reported that over 2300 pedal cycles were currently in constant use by the infantry for tactical and petrol-saving purposes.

The communiqué added that since a large proportion were not service pattern the number of repairs required was relatively large. Armourers were already overworked and fully employed on weapons, and to avoid using fighting person-

Vale Judy Cadman 1939-2022



The Maltese community in NSW is saddened to learn of the passing of Vera Judith Cadman (known as Judy), beloved wife of Alan Cadman OAM, long serving Federal Parliamentary Member for Mitchell (NSW), on Tuesday 15th February 2022. She was 83 years old.

Judy was a long time stalwart of the North West community. Her dedication and passion for the many people throughout Galston and surrounding areas that she impacted is well known and highly regarded. Her contribution through the Country Women's Association – Galston and her local church will always be remembered by so many.

Judy was a long-standing strong supporter of people and of liberal values.

nel for repairs, the Governor requested the authority to enrol twelve cycle fitters for attachment to battalions, and that any necessary training could be given.

In air raids from dawn March 1 to dawn March 2, an air raid alert for several enemy formations totalling 20 aircraft, including JU 88 bombers and ME 109 fighters, which circled round the Island crossing the coast at intervals was reported, while Malta fighters were scrambled and anti-aircraft guns engaged.

There was another air raid alert for approaching enemy aircraft. Six JU 88 bombers escorted by fighters drop bombs in the sea, on Tigne, and on a line from Rocco to Tarxien. Eight Hurricanes were scrambled; no engagement. Anti-aircraft guns were engaged with heavy fire, but there were no confirmed results. There was a civilian casualty, 50-year-old Carmel Attard from Valletta.

A vessel by the name of Regent arrived from patrol off Tripoli with some damage from a depth charge attack, having sunk a merchant vessel. A floating mine in the harbour settled near a post of B Company that had to be evacuated from the danger area. All approaches were roped off.



Pedal cycles were in constant use by the infantry

Emma Muscat wins ticket for Eurovision 2022

Emma Muscat has earned the right to represent Malta in this year's Eurovision Song Contest after she triumphed in the final to select the island's entry. She secured the ticket for her participation in Turin in Italy in May with the song, 'Out of sight'. She was a clear winner with both the jury and the public's vote.

Emma, a 22-year-old singer, songwriter, pianist and model, won the maximum 12 points from all six jury members and also the public vote with 20 points for an overall total of 92 points. With his entry in Maltese, "Ritmu", Adnan obtained the runner up spot with 72 points, while Nicole Azopardi finished third with 36 points with "Into the Fire".

Malta joined the competition in 1971, kicking off its participation in the contest 51 years ago through Joe Grech's song,

"Maria l-Maltija"

Malta withdrew from the competition after 1975 but returned again in 1991 and has participated every year since.

Malta finished third behind the UK and Ireland in 1992 and again in 1998 despite nearly winning the entire competition in one of the closest voting sequences ever through Chiara, who represented Malta that year with the song "The One That I Love."

In 2002, Ira Losco finished second for Malta with the song "7th Wonder", a record equalled by Chiara when she returned with the song "Angel" in 2005.

Last year Destiny brought the island to the final with "Je me casse" and finished seventh in the grand final. Also in 2019 the country qualified to the final when Michela represented Malta with "Chameleon". However, the country failed to qualify in



Emma Muscat

Calling all the Community Leaders

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

I would like to thank those of you who have responded to my survey, I truly believe that the courses that will come out of this research will help connect the younger generation to their Maltese ancestry.

However I am still in need of more responses so please do help me by sharing my survey with your children and grandchildren (as long as they are aged 18 years and over).

Liking and sharing my Facebook page Re-

searching Malta on your Facebook profiles would also be of help.

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

If one prefers to share on Facebook, use this link: <https://www.facebook.com/researchingmalta>.

Please keep on sharing and getting your relatives and friends to fill this in.

Jonathan Micallef

2017 and 2018.

There's only one position that can improve on Malta's record, and that's to take the win. Now the question is, can Emma Muscat do it in 2022?

Emma Muscat begun playing the piano and singing at the age of five and released her first single "Alone" in 2016. Her entry "Out of Sight" was the favourite to win Malta Eurovision Song Contest 2022 from the start after big success on YouTube.

Antonio Caputo, Emma Muscat, Gabriel Rossi, Lorenzo Santarelli and Marco Salvaderi wrote the song.

Malta is set to compete in the second semi-final of the contest on May 12th. Emma will perform on the first half of the show.

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THE AUSTRALIAN GENIES ANNUAL FAMILY PICNIC DAY

MENU

Roast beef, Pork, Chicken
all served with peas, carrots, pumpkin, potato and gravy.



FOR TICKETS CONTACT
JOHN ZARB 9679 8851
or 0411 166 386
SAM – 0425 844 203

WHERE – Balmoral Centre Balmoral Street, Blacktown
When – 10th April 2022 11am till 5 pm

The AUSTRALIAN GENIES is a registered charity dedicated to granting wishes to children between the ages of 0-18 who suffer from various problems. It is our intention to help these children to attain a better standard of living through granting a wish to help with their disability. The AUSTRALIAN GENIES is run by volunteers. It guarantees that 100% of all monies raised go towards the children. All donations are tax deductible. www.australiangenies.com

Music from DJ ALBERT

All meals include Bread Roll and cold soft drink.
Excludes Kinnie/Ginger beer
Beer, wine and spirits available at club prices.
NO BYO

FRG
Ministry

INSIGHTS

By Fr. Rob Galea

Dear Friends,

I love Jesus so much, but if I am honest, my life and actions don't always follow this burning love for Jesus. Why? Because I am a broken person, just like you!

We struggle to love authentically. Love is not easy. Love is a battle. Love is about giving, serving and putting the other first... with too many moments of wanting to be served, understood, and appreciated.


But that's ok! Keep moving forward in love even though your love is far from perfect. God loves us. He loves our effort and loves that we get up again each time we fall.

Make this your prayer: "Jesus, if you can take this imperfect love, here I am!"

On another exciting note, check out our new Encounter Course for teens and our October Holy Land Pilgrimage!

Fr Rob Galea


Community News



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

Learn Maltese Due to the covid restrictions, we are only conducting lessons online.

Applications are also welcome for paid positions from people to assist in language teaching and/or administration. For more information, call 0419 476 924. Email: malteselanguageschoolnsw@hotmail.com





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We get to the point, provide the right advice and get the work done at a reasonable price.

La Valette Social Centre

Saturday and Thursday activities at the La Valette Social Centre at Blacktown are back to normal. It is following the COVID guidelines as indicated by the Government.

Next activity: Malta to Memphis by Marku, the Maltese from Gozo, on Sunday 6th March. There are two shows, at 1pm and 7pm. Some tickets @ \$29 still available, call Antoine 0405233144. Another show will be held Sunday 27th March @ 7pm. Bar & restaurant available.

Inc. 175 Walters Road, Blacktown Tel. 96225847

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-AHBARIJIET 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



Malta National water polo team coach Karl Izzo giving instructions to his team

Malta clinches finals berth in Euro Waterpolo Chips for 4th time in succession

Malta booked a place in the finals of the FINA European Waterpolo Championships for the fourth time in succession by clinching one of the two places from Group C that were up for grabs in their qualifying group in Malta.

This prestigious place, that makes Malta one of the top 16 teams in Europe was achieved after victories over Ireland (28-4) and Lithuania (19-5). Malta's national team lost its only match against the other qualifiers and group winners, Romania by 4-18.

Malta managed qualification despite the absence of two of its most experienced players, Steve Camilleri, who was on duty with his Italian team Muri Antichi, and Andreas Galea. However, coach Karl Izzo managed to bring out the best from a young, promising and enthusiastic squad aligned with a few established players.

The locals dominated throughout the matches against Ireland and Lithuania.

Against the Irish, eight of the 13-man squad jotted their names as scorers with Jake Muscat and Matthew Zammit getting six each and Ben Plumpton scoring netting five. Zammit also scored five against Lithuania.

The venue for the finals has been changed to Split in Croatia in the summer.

Meanwhile, Malta's women's team will be vying for its first participation in the ladies' section of the championships when it faces France, Israel, and Portugal in its commitments in Malta between March 4 and 6.

Champions league final taken away from Russia

The European football governing body, UEFA, has moved the 2022 Champions League final from Saint Petersburg, Russia to the Stade-Saint-Denis in Paris.

The decision came after an emergency meeting of its executive committee, as the sporting world continues to react to the military action launched by Vladimir Putin's regime against Ukraine. The game will be played as initially scheduled on May 28

Football: Malta Premier League

Floriana replace Hibs as leaders

Hibernians' failure to beat Hamrun Spartans, and Floriana's victory over Gudja on Day 20 of the championship has established the Greens as Malta's new Premier League leaders.

The Paolites, leaders since almost the start of the season dropped four points in their last two outings and have been overtaken by Floriana.

Latest results – Day 20

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

DAY 19

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

STANDINGS

Teams	P	W	L	Pts
Floriana	20	12	2	42
Hibernians	20	11	1	41
Birkirkara	20	9	4	34
Hamrun S	20	8	7	29
Gzira U	20	7	7	27
Sirens	20	7	7	27
Gudja U	20	8	9	26
Valletta	20	7	10	24
Mosta	20	6	8	24
Balzan	20	7	11	23
Sta Lucia	20	3	7	19
Sliema W	20	2	13	11

Floriana closed in on Hibs by defeating Gzira. They led 2-0 at half time, then survived the sending off of their goalkeeper in the second half, conceded a goal from a penalty but still managed to get all three points. The Greens ended the day five points clear of Birkirkara, and 11 better off than champions Hamrun.

The arrival of new coach Branko Nisevic failed to give the Spartans the boost they needed. They could only share the spoils against Sirens. Valletta also kept disappointing even under their new coach, Doncic. Their defeat against Sta Lucia was their seventh in the last eight games and third fourth on the trot. Then they improved somewhat at the weekend.

Balzan were unable to stop Gudja's run up the table. They were defeated with an own goal, so the relegation zone beckons.

Parramatta Eagles sign Tallon Zahra

Parramatta FC have signed striker, Tallon Zahra (left), for the 2022 season. He arrives at "The Eagles' Nest" with NPL1 & NPL2 having previously played for Sydney United 58 FC (Youth - NSW NPL1 in 2013), Manly United FC (Youth & Senior - NSW NPL1 2014 to 2019), & Northern Tigers (Senior - NSW NPL2 in 2020).

It was Tallon Zahra himself who contacted the Eagles expressing his interest to play for them. He will be 22 on March 3.

As far as the 2022 competition (now named FNSW Div. III Men's) goes, Parramatta FC's Round 1 match is on Sunday, March 13, (Kick Off 7pm), away to Newcastle Jets at Lake Macquarie Regional Football Facility Synthetic Field, 13 Park Road, Speers Point.

Parramatta's first home match will be in Round 2 on Saturday, March 19 at 5 p.m. at the Melita Stadium, Everley Road, South Granville.

