

maltatoday



BISHOP VS SAFE SEX CAMPAIGN
See pages 8-9 ▶

Sunday, 09 December 2007 – issue 422

www.maltatoday.com.mt

Government boycotts judge and magistrate

KARL SCHEMBRI

GOVERNMENT has decided to formally exclude a judge and a magistrate, both of whom are accused of breaching the judicial code of ethics by the Commission for the Administration of Justice, from all official functions with immediate effect.

This follows the two judiciary members' insistence on defying

calls for them to resign their respective positions on local sports councils, on the grounds of a possible conflict of interest.

The decision will come into force this Thursday 13 December, when Mr Justice Carmelo Farrugia Sacco and Magistrate Antonio Mizzi will be omitted from the official list of invitees to all functions commemorating Republic Day.

This ostracism of Mr Justice Farrugia Sacco and Magistrate Mizzi

marks a clear attempt on the part of the administration to humiliate the two members of the judiciary, who have so far remained steadfast in their determination to hold onto their committee posts with the Malta Olympic Committee (MOC) and the Malta Basketball Association in open defiance of the justice commission's rulings.

MaltaToday can reveal that the decision to sideline the judge and the magistrate has been taken at

the highest government levels, just in the wake of the two men's declarations indicating that they have actually hardened their stand against the commission's position.

The government's decision was taken in line with the commission's correspondence with Justice Minister Tonio Borg earlier this year, which insisted that government should in no way undermine its orders to the judiciary members.

▶ page 11

Euro price hike scare

JAMES DEBONO

IF the Prime Minister decides to go for an election early next year, immediately after the change of currency, he will have to live with an anxious electorate which associates the Euro with price increases.

Nearly half the respondents to MaltaToday's survey – 47.3% – are afraid of price increases immediately after Euro adoption on January 1.

Significantly, 50% of the self employed are also convinced that prices will rise with Euro adoption.

If these expectations are matched by reality, the Euro could prove to be a big electoral liability for the Prime Minister. With the electorate expecting price increases, it will be also be more susceptible to the slightest price movements.

But if these fears do not materialise the Prime Minister will reap the electoral dividend of having piloted and anchored Malta in the world's strongest currency while proving the soothsayers of doom wrong.

Yet even if the transition is smooth, Gonzi will still face two problems. First, to ensure that no abuses take place he will have to clamp down on those retailers who

attempt to mark up their prices, thus alienating a very volatile category of voters, even though many retailers have already committed some of their prices in euro.

Secondly, even if prices remain stable, the Prime Minister may have to confront a growing fear that prices will go up after March when the price stability agreements with leading importers expire.

▶ page 6



COST OF LIVING AFTER THE EURO (%)

Will increase	47.3
Will increase after a few months	14.0
Will decrease	0.7
Will remain the same	27.3
Don't know	10.7

Louis Deguara turns down Mental Health Commission's free drugs proposals

HEALTH Minister Louis Deguara has said he disagrees with the National Commission for Health Reform's proposals to widen the mental illnesses covered by free medication, claiming the commission's views came from a "narrow perspective".

The same commission has threatened mass resignation in a letter it sent last month to the minister should he keep ignoring their proposals.

The commission has expressed its disappointment at the minister's lacking feedback to proposals it made in October to entitle long-term mental health patients to free medicine, while stopping the blatant abuse of patients and the system.

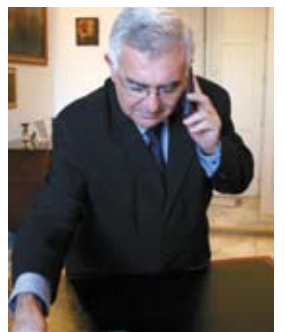
But when asked for his

reaction to the letter, Deguara said the commission was "just an advisory body" that was only meant to give him advice. "The demands the commission is making are similar to demands made by diabetics, eczema sufferers and all others who want to increase the range of free medicinals available," Deguara told MaltaToday.

"It's a very narrow perspective and whoever has an interest in one illness or another is putting across the same argument."

As the present health regulations stand, most of the medication given for free is being prescribed under a false diagnosis simply to fall under Schedule V – the list of chronic illnesses meriting free medicine.

▶ page 10



pgs 12-13

Interview JOHN DALLI
Defiant but forgiving

MONA'S MEALS



pgs 36-37

No-no zone



pg 26

PAMELA HANSEN

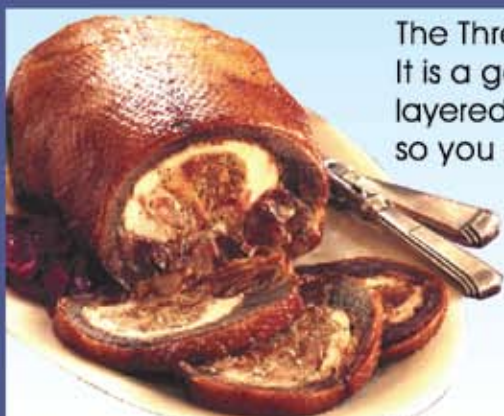
From philanthropy to misanthropy



Al Qaeda on Order of Malta

back page

The Sensational Three-Bird Christmas Roast



The Three-Bird Roast is a true treat for a Special Christmas Feast! It is a goose stuffed with a chicken, stuffed with a pheasant, layered up with spiced pork and orange... and it's totally boneless so you can carve right through and enjoy the whole roast.

See Santa at Miracle Foods!
He's got goodie bags for the kids!

SANTA'S DECEMBER VISITING TIMES AT MIRACLE FOODS:

Tue 18th	5-7pm	Zabbar	Sat 22nd	10am-Noon	Naxxar
Wed 19th	5-7pm	Marsa	Sun 23rd	10am-Noon	Swieqi
Fri 21st	10am-Noon	Attard	Mon 24th	10am-Noon	Bugibba

Open 9am- 8pm every day from the 17th December, Sunday 23rd, Christmas Eve, Boxing Day, Sunday 30th and New Year's Eve till 1pm

MARSA • ZABBAR • SWIEQI • ATTARD • BUGIBBA • NAXXAR • Victoria GOZO Tel: 2558 2400

...at a Miracle Foods near you in December!

Merry Christmas!

MIRACLE Foods

www.miraclefoods.net