



Last week's protest against the Ramla l-Hamra development. The GWU also took part in the mass demonstration against MEPA's decision

GWU lobbied PM for Ghadira tourist extension

GWU chief spoke to OPM official days before protesting against Ramla development

JAMES DEBONO

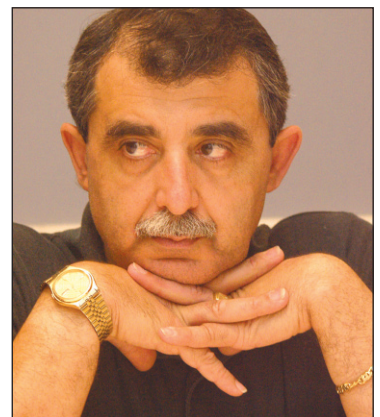
A PERMIT for 30 new units at the Mellieha Holiday complex, which is co-owned by the General Workers' Union, was awarded just weeks after the union's president Saviour Sammut actively lobbied with the office of the Prime Minister to hasten planning procedures.

Sammut, who marched alongside environmentalists protesting against development at Ramla l-Hamra last week, confirmed he asked a senior government official to intercede with the Malta Environmental and Planning Au-

thority on the union's behalf to enquire why MEPA was procrastinating in getting the project approved. MaltaToday can reveal that Salvo Sammut contacted a senior official at the Office of the Prime Minister.

The outline permit for the 30 holiday units on a "special area of conservation" next to the Ghadira nature reserve, was approved without any fanfare by the MEPA board on 31 May, just days before the approval of 23 villas overlooking Ramla l-Hamra – which Saviour Sammut protested against during the protest held last week in Valletta.

"As a trade unionist, in order



GWU president Saviour Sammut

not to lose this opportunity to create

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Discredited Lockerbie witness hides behind wall of silence

THE stern voice of Tony Gauci's brother, Paul, rang loud and clear: "We are not giving any comments to the press!"

The obstinate "no comment" was typical of the Lockerbie star witness, whose testimony has now been called into question after Abdelbaset al-Megrahi, 55, who is serving a life sentence for the murder of 270 people in the Lockerbie bombing, was granted a second appeal after a fresh investigation uncovered evidence suggesting he may have been unjustly convicted.

Yesterday Gauci would not comment on how his testimony,



Lockerbie 1988: the debris of Pan Am Flight 103

which was central to Megrahi's conviction, had been quashed and discredited through new

Megrahi was convicted, squarely on Gauci's testimony, of the Pan Am bombing of De-

evidence.

Gauci's home is now equipped with two CCTV cameras and a video-enabled intercom: telltale signs of the witness's security-consciousness after the Scottish Criminal Cases Review Commission (SCCRC) cast serious doubt on the Lockerbie trial three years ago.

cember 21 1988 which blew up above Lockerbie, Scotland.

The SCCRC says it uncovered six grounds for believing a "mis-carriage of justice may have occurred".

New evidence appears to severely undermine the central prosecution allegation against Megrahi: that he bought 13 items of clothing from Tony Gauci's shop in Sliema on December 7, which he had used to shield the Pan Am bomb. The SCCRC said the Camp Zeist judges had "no reasonable basis" to conclude the clothes were bought that day – the only occasion when the

suspect was able to do so.

The SCCRC also uncovered evidence – relating to the day on which Christmas lights near the shop in Sliema were switched on – which indicated the clothes were bought days before: a claim repeatedly made by lawyers who believe Megrahi is innocent.

It said Gauci saw Megrahi's photograph in an article linking him to the bombing days before identifying him in an ID parade, and that it had other material which "may further undermine Gauci's identification of the applicant".

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