

maltatoday

ELECTIONS
20
DAYS TO GO

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Sant, Pullicino wash their hands over spring hunting

MATTHEW VELLA
DAVID DARMANIN

LABOUR leader Alfred Sant yesterday was non-committal over whether a new Labour government will open the spring hunting season or not if Environment Minister George Pullicino refuses to take a decision by the 8 March.

On his part,



Pullicino yesterday told MaltaToday that he had kicked the ball back into the Ornis Committee's court, asking chairman Louis Cilia to reconvene the

committee and give him a clear recommendation in favour or against opening the spring hunting season.

Addressing a press conference outside a pig-breeding farm in Ghasri, Gozo, Sant adopted a wait-and-see approach on the hunting question:

"We'll see about it when we get to that point," Sant said when asked what a Labour government would do on spring hunting if government takes no decision before the election.

The Ornis committee last Tuesday decid-

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LEADER: **THE CHANGES WE BELIEVE IN**

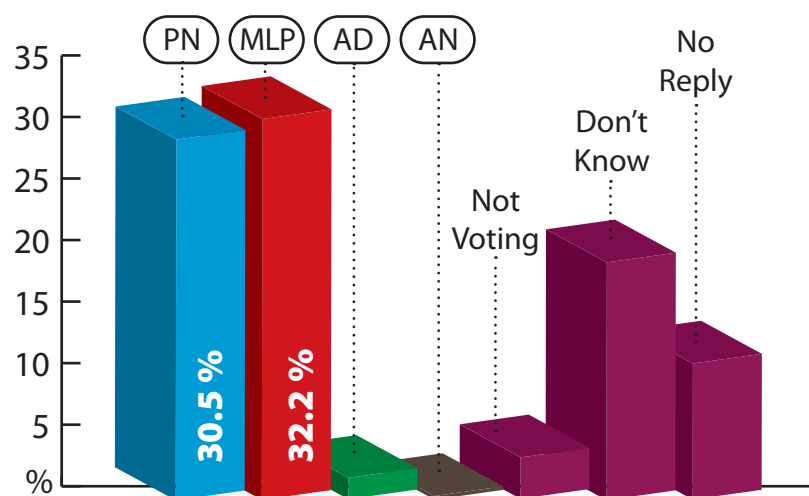
AS election day draws nearer, MaltaToday announces its editorial stand. While political parties keep pandering to the masses in their race for votes, this newspaper calls for some political stocktaking four years since our country became a full European Union member.

Divorce, gay rights, separation of Church and State, transparency and accountability laws are among our priority policies; the changes we call for in the national interest, irrespective of who is elected to govern in three weeks' time.

Editorial page 27 ▶

PN GAINS AS MLP RETAINS WAFER THIN ADVANTAGE

mt SURVEY



JAMES DEBONO

WITH 3 weeks to go for D-day, the MLP retained a wafer thin 1.7% advantage over the PN-an advantage which falls within the survey's margin of error of +/-3.3%.

This was the first MaltaToday survey conducted over a larger sample of 900 respondents-a sharp increase from the 300 respondents contacted in all previous surveys.

Over the past week both big parties have slightly increased their voting share while AD suffered

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Mosta Labour mayor will refuse civil unions at local council

DAVID DARMANIN

MOSTA'S Labour mayor Paul Chetcuti Caruana has declared he will not permit any civil marriages to take place in the local council, claiming he cannot allow it as a Catholic.

His comments, expressed earlier this month during a pro-life ceremony in Mosta, reveal the stark contradiction between the Labour mayor's religious stand in his role as a State's delegate, as well as the fact that it was a Labour government to have introduced civil marriages in the first

place.

Even more ironic, is the fact that Chetcuti Caruana was a Labour MP elected in 1976, a year after the introduction of civil marriage.

While the law allowing mayors to officiate civil marriages is still awaiting the ministerial

go-ahead, Chetcuti Caruana has adamantly confirmed his intention of ignoring the bill, come what may.

"I have a right to stick to my principles," Chetcuti Caruana said.

"Couples should first undergo a Cana movement course,

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interview ▶ 12-13

Harry Vassallo

PN



VOTE GREEN FOR ME:

Lawrence Gonzi courts the green vote, beseeching environmentalists and all those tempted to vote Alternattiva to trust him with the environment and MEPA reform. But what does this say about the actual environment minister, George Pullicino?

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MLP



WAITING FOR HEALTH:

Labour promises to cut hospital and healthcare waiting lists by 15% through new deals with private hospitals. But none of the private hospitals have been informed of this prospect, let alone discussed the possibilities, costs, and the actual consequences on waiting lists.

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AD



DISPENSING SECRETS:

Carmel Cacopardo reveals the secret MEPA report on Sant' Antnin recycling plant, defying government's and the audit officer's warning not to abuse of his former position for political gains. And AD Chairman Harry Vassallo reminds Gonzi how five years ago he was courting the Greens to form a coalition.

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GAY BUT NOT BROKEN:

The far right gets down to accepting gays and calling for an end to their discrimination, but adds in the same breath that broken families are leading to violent kids and lots of expenses for their rehabilitation and imprisonment.

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