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MALTA'S INDEPENDENT VOICE

ANALYSIS

Right-wing flops: Hunting and Migration *See page 6* ▶

NEWS

Trading in influence charges possible in Mistra case *See page 4* ▶

Sunday, 23 March 2008 – issue 437

www.maltatoday.com.mt

RCC pushes Malta into Partnership for Peace

Reactivation of PFP coincides with pending US tax agreement



MATTHEW VELLA

MALTA'S Permanent Representative to the EU Richard Cachia Caruana has reconfirmed the crucial role he plays in politics, putting his personal store in the surprise decision to take Malta into the Partnership for Peace.

The decision to reactivate the application to join the NATO-led initiative, frozen in 1996 by the newly elected Labour government, was taken last Monday in the first Cabinet meeting after the election.

But the issue had previously never been on the agenda of Malta's foreign policy.

MaltaToday is informed plans to take Malta back into the PFP were unknown to various Cabinet ministers as well.

High-level sources said the reactivation of PFP membership "was never part of former foreign minister Michael Frendo's policy agenda" – a factor confirming Cachia Caruana's newfound influence in foreign affairs now that Frendo is no longer foreign minister.

MaltaToday is informed the proposal to join the PFP was advanced by Cachia Caruana in Brussels with Prime Minister Lawrence Gonzi and Tonio Borg.

Government is claiming it is reactivating **pg 3** ▶

Richard Cachia Caruana, first from right, is attributed with the decision to reactivate Malta's membership in the PFP, something the new foreign minister Tonio Borg (centre) consented to.



WARNING Teacher shortage

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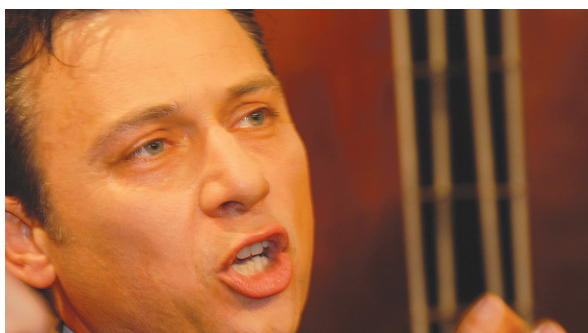
INTERVIEW Alfred Mifsud

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EDITORIAL SOUL-SEARCHING FOR THE NATIONALISTS

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PM HAD WARNED JEFFREY 'We could lose the election because of you'

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POWER OF INCUMBENCY?

JAMES DEBONO

MEPA caseload trebles in last week before election, as DCC boards consider unprecedented 430 applications

THE Malta Environment and Planning Authority's development control commission boards (DCC) considered an amazing total of 430 cases in the last week of the election of 8 March – nearly three times

the number of cases considered over the same period a year before – this newspaper can confirm.

The number of cases considered by the DCC boards shot up from 162 in the first week of March in 2007, to 430 in the week before the election.

It also turns out that in 49

cases, the DCC boards ignored the case officers' negative recommendations, and issued a permit all the same.

These permits included the sanctioning of illegal stables and illegal penthouses, apartments sited in outside development zones, to a permit for a **pg 8** ▶



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