

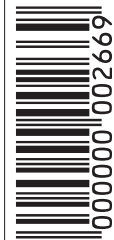
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Exclusive Interview



SCERRI - ALL SET FOR SHOWDOWN

Karl Stagno-Navarra

FORMER PN President Victor Scerri is paving the way for a showdown in a bid to clear his name and ensure "responsibility is carried."

In an interview with MaltaToday (*pages 10,11*) he insists that now he has resigned his political post, "the ball is in the MEPA chairman's court and the prime minister's. They should take the necessary decisions. I won't shoulder responsibilities that are clearly not

mine."

He warns he will sue MEPA if his permit for his Bahrija residence is revoked. "As a private citizen I'm now in a better position to defend and clear my name from all the nonsense and lies said so far."

And he expressed little worry about what faces Lawrence Gonzi over the MEPA auditor's report on his Bahrija permit. "It's not my choice, I'm not in politics anymore..."

Scerri, who is still a PN candidate, insists his political career is far from over: "I have insisted that this is definitely not an adieu but a clear au revoir."

Bookings down 50% for 'bleak August'

David Darmanin

HOTELIERS are hoping last-minute bookings will save the August month, as reservations are currently 50% down over the same month last year. "In spite of the flights and seat capacity being avail-

able, and the marketing being done by the MTA, figures for August look bleak and hoteliers are concerned," Malta Hotels and Restaurants CEO George Schembri said. "We weren't expecting anything spectacular this summer, but they weren't looking at anything this bad."

But Schembri says similar fears in June

were quashed when last-minute bookings turned the situation around. "July turned out to be good. It's a very last-minute booking situation at the moment. Of course however, operators would be concerned about August – because the month generally fills up quite early."

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A very sour deal



The deal that cost Howard Kreiss, a retired Air Malta captain, €500,000 - page 7

Saviour Balzan



After the Scerri resignation, someone at MEPA must carry the can - page 15

Food, pricey food

Restaurateurs rebut Finance Ministry's accusations of 18.6% in price increases, contributing to the general inflation rate - page 15

NEXT WEDNESDAY



SAFETY AT SEA

In the wake of a spate of marine mishaps, we revisit Maritime security rules

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