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Karm Farrugia

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## Government backtracks on public holidays

James Debono

The 2004 budget measure through which all Maltese workers lost the right for extra leave days as compensation for public holidays falling on a weekend will no longer apply to workers whose collective agree-

ment states otherwise.

The change in legislation was announced yesterday by government following the damning ruling delivered by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) last week.

Effectively workers whose collective agreement says that they are to be compensated by an

extra day of leave when a public holiday falls on a weekend will regain this right after an 18-month lapse.

But the new measure risks perpetuating the divide between two classes of workers according to former finance minister John Dalli.

"I hope that the proposed

amendments will not be contributing to increase the discrimination between workers in this country," Nationalist MP John Dalli told Business Today immediately after the amendments were announced. ▶ page 5

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## Bar owners pray for England victory

Karl Schembri

The World Cup is proving to be bad for most of the bars and restaurants around the island as many people are opting to watch the games at home while only England is drawing out the crowds.

Isabelle Debattista of Mirabelle Restaurant in Bugibba square says it's only Maltese supporters of England and British tourists who are generating some business.

"There's not much really going on, not even when the Italians are playing," she said in an obvious reference to the thousands of Italy's supporters among the Maltese.

"It's only in games like tonight's when England is playing that everyone here gets extra staff as British tourists fill up our establishment and Maltese supporters join them, that's why we hope England make it to the finals. Everyone hopes the British team remains in the competition."



Passionate beer drinkers, England fans are a godsend for bar owners

Debattista said everyone felt they had to install big screens and projectors in their bars and restaurants although only a few will be seeing a return.

"With no screens, you will have no patrons, but then it doesn't mean that you will see a return

either," she said.

Further out of the Bugibba centre, Godwin Cutajar, the owner of Beach Haven and president of the Bugibba shop owners' association, said the World Cup actually brought a decline in his business. ▶ page 3

## Another ADT official interrogated

Karl Schembri

The police have interrogated yet another Transport Authority official last Monday as part of its investigations into the cash-for-licences scandal.

The man, Alfred Magrin, also happens to be the father of one of the investigated driving test examiners and is the authority's

Management Enforcement Officer in the Planning Directorate.

Last Sunday, MaltaToday revealed that his son, Nicholas Magrin, had run over the elderly father of Labour MP Joseph Cuschieri as he was driving a van in a drunken state. The 71-year-old accident victim was walking on a zebra crossing in Sliema. Three breathalyser

tests marked Nicholas Magrin's alcohol levels at 103mg, 92mg and 87mg respectively, way above the permitted 35mg.

The police however have not yet issued any charges against Nicholas Magrin on this specific accident, despite the damages suffered by the victim and the high alcohol levels registered by a breathalyser test. ▶ page 4

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