



"Malta has great potential if sold as a real estate destination and location"

Andrew Cross INTERVIEW ■ PAGE 10



"Employees need to be recognised for their skills and talents if a business is to succeed"

Dr Vanessa Borg, MIM OPINION ■ PAGE 8

Business Today

ISSUE NO. 495

www.businesstoday.com.mt

WEDNESDAY 18 July 2007

ALLURING SALMA



The 2007 Campari ad campaign stars Salma Hayek in turbid hotel scenes directed by Matthew Rolston and created by American agency Lambesis. See story on page 14

Children to be focus of pre-budget document

No income tax changes expected

Kurt Sansone

The pre-budget document to be published on Saturday is expected to lay down government's intentions for the next budget which according to government sources will address the particular needs of families with children.

This time around government will not be quantifying the amount of dosh it intends to forego or hand out as it did last year when discussions on the pre-budget document revolved around the Lm8 million leeway, which turned out to be Lm15 million in the budget.

It is widely expected that the pre-budget document will contain proposals to reform the Children's Allowance and possibly the introduction of new allowances to encourage families to have more kids.

Government sources admitted with Business Today that the tax cut delivered across the board last November did not address the

needs of families with kids and this time around an array of measures will be adopted to alleviate the financial burden of child care for families.

In a wider family context the pre-budget document is also expected to include proposals to introduce fiscal incentives for parents who send their children to sports schools. Another suggestion is to widen the scope of tax credits on donations made by companies to cultural and sports organisations.

No changes are expected to the income tax regime except for a minor realignment of bands in view of the euro's introduction come 1 January 2008.

The pre-budget document is also expected to address other vulnerable groups such as the elderly and will also reiterate government's commitment to invest heavily in education.

The sources said that the rather lengthy document will include a number of proposals to direct the



What's in that box for next year?

discussion along the lines dictated by government. At the end of the consultation period government will then decide which proposals to take on board in the budget which is expected to come late October.

Corinthia clinches operation of new hotel in Dubai

Corinthia Hotels International yesterday announced the signing of a long-term management agreement with Golden Sands Hotel Co. LLC of Dubai for the operation of the 371 all-suite 'Ramada® Hotel & Suites Jumeirah Beach'. The exclusive property is set to open in January of 2008 and forms part of the larger Jumeirah Beach Residence master complex, a unique high-rise development located minutes away from Dubai's golden sandy beaches.

The management agreement is a first for Corinthia Hotels International in this thriving destination since signing a joint venture agreement with Wyndham Worldwide, last year, for the exclusive operation of Corinthia, Wyndham® and Ramada Plaza branded hotels in the EMEA region.

In addition to the 371 suites, the 'Ramada Hotel & Suites Jumeirah Beach' ► **page 3**

Poor response to hoarded cash scheme as deadline approaches

Gerald Fenech

As the deadline for the scheme on hoarded cash approaches, sources from within the financial community told Business Today that the actual response by the public has been extremely lukewarm so far.

The scheme was announced by Parliamentary Secretary Tonio Fenech a couple of months ago and was intended to bring out the large amounts of undeclared cash before the changeover to the Euro currency and to avoid inflationary pressures.

However retailers and shop owners have also reported a

surge in cash payments especially in money that dates back some years and which has evidently been kept from circulation.

One particular retailer said that he experienced a number of customers who came to pay for goods with LM 2 notes that were rather flaky and old indicating that they had been kept aside for a number of years and were only resurfacing as the changeover to the Euro draws near.

Banks and financial intermediaries have also reported an increasing number of querying customers who came with relatively large amounts of cash but ► **page 3**

MCA confirms 2010 turn-off date for analogue terrestrial TV

Charlot Zahra

The Malta Communications Authority (MCA) has confirmed that the turn-off date for all analogue terrestrial television broadcasters will be at the end of 2010 as established in the policy on Digital Terrestrial Television (DTTV) issued by the Government two years ago.

By that time, all existing analogue terrestrial television broadcasters – PBS, NET TV, One TV and Smash TV – will have to migrate to DTTV transmission.

Speaking during the launch of the 2006 annual report of the MCA last week, MCA Chairman Joseph V Tabone explained that the frequency spectrum currently occupied by analogue terrestrial television broadcasters will be required for other purposes.

He explained that existing analogue terrestrial television broadcasters are already being carried by digital network operators Melita Digital and GO Plus (except for Smash TV on Multiplus).

However as a contingency measure, existing terrestrial television broadcasters will be allowed to broadcast in digital mode independent of network providers if they ► **page 5**

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