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Education Ministry renews its commitment to work for children's rights

The Education Ministry renewed its commitment to work for children's rights on the occasion of World Children's Day being celebrated today. Every child has the right to enjoy their childhood, play, receive education and all the support and love they need, the Education, Employment and Family Ministry said in a statement. Although a lot has been achieved when it comes to children's rights, one cannot turn a blind eye to the many children who are still living in appalling situations, the ministry said. The government has a duty to work for the most vulnerable children in order to remove them from their negative environment and ensure they have a stable and normal childhood as much as possible. Children have the right to an education that helps them develop their skills and personality, therefore the education system should be fine tuned in a way that makes sure that all the children develop the basic skills they need to help them move on in life. The ministry renewed its commitment to continue working towards an education that ensures each student's childhood is a happy and healthy one and which helps them achieve success and satisfaction they deserve throughout their life.

BWSC contract

Nationalist MP 'sees nothing wrong in witnesses being summoned' to PAC

Continued from page 1

"But I see nothing wrong in considering summoning other witnesses before the PAC once the auditor general has finished giving his evidence."

During a meeting of the PAC last month, the government majority in the Committee voted against a list of individuals who Dr Mangion wanted to summon to give evidence on the power station extension contract.

However, Dr Debono said, one could even consider other witnesses over and above those referred to by Dr Mangion. Infrastructure, Transport and Communications Minister Austin Gatt had said he had no objection to a debate on the auditor general's report, but has steadfastly disagreed with witnesses being summoned, because, he said, such a move would undermine the work of the auditor general, who had interviewed the same people during the course of his investigation.

It should be pointed out that auditor general Anthony Mifsud told the PAC during a sitting last Tuesday that while he found no hard evidence of corruption, there were many coincidences that make one wonder.

But while Dr Gatt objected to the summoning of witnesses, Prime Minister Lawrence Gonzi did not rule out the possibility. He had said witnesses could be brought in to testify if, when the auditor general finishes giving his evidence, there are points that would still need to be elaborated on.

Dr Debono has long been voicing his views on matters related to the Delimara power station and the contract for its extension, and he has often been critical of the way in which things were done.



Dr Franco Debono

During a speech he gave in Parliament last May, Dr Debono, who was the only government backbencher to speak in the debate, said the auditor general's report revealed that things could have been done better with respect to the power station extension contract.

Before making a number of suggestions, including urging for the use of gas or at least diesel instead of heavy fuel oil, Dr Debono quoted part of the auditor general's report which said: "With the benefit of hindsight it is fair

that much of the controversies surrounding this tender could have been avoided, had the tender been stopped and re-issued to reflect such change."

National emission laws had been changed midway through the tendering process, and the accusation is that the change had been made to the benefit of the eventual winner of the highly-controversial contract, Danish firm BWSC, which had proposed an extension running on heavy fuel oil as opposed to less polluting fuels proposed by competing bidders.

Dr Debono, in his speech last May, said the auditor general had noted certain administrative shortcomings that led him to say that with hindsight, things could have been done better.

The Nationalist MP had said in Parliament last May: "The auditor found no corruption. He used the term 'hard evidence'. The opposite of hard evidence is suspicion... we all know that a suspicion, no matter how strong, remains a suspicion. If other eventual investigations show otherwise, then it's different, but until then this is the situation."

The PAC is to resume the debate on 30 November.

PHARMACIES OPEN TODAY – 9am to 12 noon

MALTA - Valletta: Empire Pharmacy, 77, Old Theatre Street; **Hamrun:** Fra Diego Dispensary, 94, Villambrosa Street; **Qormi:** Spiteri's Pharmacy, 82, Victory Street; **Sta Venera:** St Bartholomew Pharmacy, 230, Fleur-de-Lys Road; **Gzira:** D'Argens Pharmacy 330, Rue D'Argens; **San Gwann:** Lourdes Pharmacy, Naxxar Road; **Sliema:** The Economical Dispensary, 86/87, Sir Adrian Dingli Street; **Iklin:** Iklin Pharmacy, Geronimo Abos Street; **Mosta:** Sghajtar Pharmacy, Sghajtar Road; **Qawra:** Qawra Pharmacy, Earl's Court/1, Imhar Street; **Tarxien:** Sonren Pharmacy, Zejtun Road; **Fgura:** Alpha Pharmacy, 'Maria Immaculata', Cospicua Road c/w Cottoner Avenue; **Zabbar:** Felice Dispensary, 95, Sanctuary Street; **Zejtun:** St Catherine Pharmacy, Bishop Emanuel Galea Street; **Mqabba:** Kristianne Pharmacy, Cavi Street; **Zebbug:** Spizerija Hal-Mula, Fr Salv Ciappara Street; **Rabat:** Ideal Pharmacy, 63, High Street. **GOZO - Victoria:** Palm Pharmacy, 2, Palm Street; **Ghajnsielem:** Lauretana Pharmacy, 36, Imgarr Road.

WEATHER

MAX 23°C	MIN 15°C	UV INDEX 3
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WEATHER: Partly cloudy and with increasing high clouds
VISIBILITY: Good
WIND: Light to moderate Southerly, becoming moderate and backing South Southeast.
SEA: Slight to moderate becoming moderate
SWELL: Negligible
SEA TEMPERATURE: 21 °C

LOTTO DRAW NO: 333

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