

## National

# Girl, 5, returned to her mother after Christmas 'nightmare'

Christian Peregrin

A girl who was caught in the cross-fire between her separated parents and remained in Scotland with her father for almost two months, has finally joined her Maltese mother.

"She's my little girl and it's amazing to have her back. But it's hard to see her so confused. She's a bit traumatised," Emma McLelland, 26, said, as her daughter, Caitlin, five, was at her first day of school since the incident.

In November, they went on holiday to visit relatives in Scotland, where Ms McLelland's estranged husband, Chris, also lives. She said he showed up at the airport and asked whether he could keep their daughter for a day, a request she acceded to because their relationship had stopped being as volatile as it used to be.

But, instead of returning the girl, Mr McLelland made serious allegations about his wife, convincing the Scottish authorities to allow him to keep his child until the courts decided on the case, Ms McLelland said.

She had to return to Malta empty-handed after being told by the police the only thing she could do was "kidnap her back".

On January 8, the courts heard that she had care and custody of

Caitlin and her husband had no legal entitlement to keep her, Ms McLelland said.

"When they saw all my evidence, his lawyers advised him he does not have much of a defence and he should return the child," Ms McLelland said.

In court, Ms McLelland invoked the Hague Convention, which spells out the procedures that should be followed for a child to be returned to her rightful guardian.

Last week, Ms McLelland flew to Scotland to get an "over the moon" Caitlin back home.

"She was singing Home Sweet Home on the plane. She didn't even give me five minutes; she rushed to open her Christmas presents as soon as she got through the door."

Before returning to Malta, however, Ms McLelland had some unfinished business to take care of.

"I took her to the zoo like I promised," she said.

Even though she has now settled down, Caitlin is still afraid to be without her mother and does not want her to go to work or leave her alone in a room.

Ms McLelland is still worried about the girl's safety.

"I don't want to stop her from seeing her dad but after what has



Caitlin was "over the moon" to be back with her mother.

happened, how can I? And if I don't, will Caitlin retaliate later on in life? It's a really hard situation to be in and I don't know what to do."

When The Times contacted Mr McLelland on New Year's Eve he denied any wrongdoing, insisting he took back his daughter because she was being neglected

In an unhygienic and dangerous environment. He could not be reached for comment yesterday and nor could his Scottish lawyers.

## Fifth swine flu death

Christian Peregrin

A 94-year-old man died of swine flu complications yesterday morning, making him the fifth person to succumb to the virus.

The Health Department said the man had underlying medical conditions.

Meanwhile, the results of the autopsy on the young man who died five days after getting the swine flu jab are still not out.

When contacted, Magistrate Consuelo Scerri Herrera said: "Once I have the reports from experts I will conclude the inquiry and send the findings to the Attor-

ney General. Experts told me they should conclude by Monday. If that is the case, I will conclude the inquiry by Tuesday latest. Results have to be presented in a conclusive manner before I can conclude".

A magisterial inquiry is launched when there is a sudden and unexpected death.

The Director General of the health department Ray Busuttill said his team was eagerly awaiting results. "As soon as we get them we need to send them abroad. But since this is a magisterial inquiry, we have to wait for the courts to give us the results," Dr Busuttill said.

Described by his parents as "perfectly healthy", Clayton Cachia, 23, died suddenly on January 13.

Since his mysterious death occurred just days after he was administered the swine flu vaccine, the health authorities launched an investigation to see whether this was merely a coincidence or not.

The health authorities have said that Mr Cachia may have had an "underlying medical condition" and that his death had no "apparent" connection with the jab.

The drive to vaccinate all health-care workers, pregnant women, children under five years and people with chronic conditions has continued.

## Higher tariffs legally in force

### Controversy expected to drag on

Kurt Sansone

Contentious higher electricity tariffs were made legal last week after having been approved by the energy regulator in December.

The government published a legal notice bringing into force the new regime.

The controversy over the tariffs, which saw unions and employers' organisations up in arms, is expected to drag on after Labour leader Joseph Muscat said the opposition would ask for a parliamentary vote on the legal notice.

Speaking on Wednesday at the annual conference of the Labour Party's women's section, Dr Muscat said the opposition would challenge the high tariffs in Parliament.

The government has defended itself citing soaring oil prices but social partners say the hike should be absorbed, at least in part, because the rise is likely to deal a serious blow to the economy.

The tariffs, applicable from January 1, stipulate that the lowest residential rate is 16c1 per

kilowatt hour for the first 2,000 units. The next tranche of 4,000 units is calculated at 17c3 per kWh and the third tranche of 4,000 units is charged at 18c9 per kWh.

Residential tariffs jump dramatically at the fourth tranche of 10,000 units, priced at 36c per kWh. Any consumption above 20,000 units is charged at 62c per kWh.

Various tariff regimes apply for commercial outlets and a distinction is drawn between day and night consumption, with the evening rates cheaper than daytime tariffs.

Employers' organisations have complained the tariffs are substantially higher than promised and have also demanded that the government reviews the stimulus package announced in Parliament to make up for the added costs incurred by the higher utility rates.

At the last meeting of the Malta Council for Economic and Social Development, the government promised it would hold one-on-one negotiations with those companies and sectors that experienced difficulties caused by the tariffs.

## Greek nightclub bouncer jailed for 22 years over Doujon Zammit's death

Greek nightclub bouncer Marios Antonopoulos, 28, was yesterday jailed for 22 years for causing the death of Maltese-Australian tourist Doujon Zammit in the summer of 2008.

A Greek jury found him not guilty of murder but guilty of causing serious injuries that led to Mr Zammit's death.

Two other Greek men, George ChatzIoannou and Dimitri Varonas, were convicted of having

been present but not of having had the intention to kill Mr Zammit. The first was jailed for eight years and the other for seven and a half years.

Stamatis Dakrylidis, the owner of the nightclub, was found not guilty of supplying the truncheons with which Mr Zammit was bludgeoned.

Mr Zammit's parents Oliver and Rosemarie were in court for the verdict alongside Kostas Gribilas,

who has received the young man's donor heart.

Mr Zammit died from head injuries when he was savagely beaten with metal truncheons after leaving a nightclub. It was wrongly claimed that Mr Zammit and his friends had been involved in the disappearance of a number of wallets.

Mr Zammit had been to Malta a few days before travelling to Greece as part of a European holiday.