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# Sliema accuse goalkeeper of accepting bribe

### Simon Agius refuses to play in protest

Waylon Johnston

The goalkeeper of Sliema Wanderers FC yesterday refused to play the deciding match with Qormi for the Europa league, claiming his club bosses falsely accused him of corruption and threatened him hours before the match.

Simon Agius filed a judicial protest explaining that he was called for a 1 a.m. meeting yesterday with club president Steve Abela, coach Mark Marlow and PR officer Ivan Calleja. During the meeting it was

alleged that he had accepted a bribe, he said, adding he had been intimidated by club officials.

The team was staying at the Le Meridien Hotel, in St Julians to prepare mentally for yesterday's match. Before a team-building exercise, the players were told by the officials they had found out that someone had been bribed and that they would speak to the player personally. Later, they called Mr Agius, whose contract with the club expired yesterday, for a meeting outside the hotel when he was told he was the one. The goal-

keeper said the officials told him they had paid money to get the information.

He said they would not tell him who gave them the details but they threatened that there would be consequences for him and his family.

Mr Agius denied the claims vehemently in his judicial protest, pointing out that he had invited the officials to take the allegations to the police. They refused, confirming that the claims were baseless, he said.

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# Drive to recruit up to 300 foreign nurses

Fiona Galea Debono

The Health Ministry is seeking to recruit between 200 and 300 foreign nurses to solve the "crisis" resulting from the shortage in the sector.

Some operating theatres at Mater Dei Hospital had to remain closed because the human resources were lacking, said the Parliamentary Secretary for Community Care, Mario Galea about the recruitment drive.

In recent months, the health authorities have embarked on a

campaign to entice more students to consider taking up nursing but the profession is competing with other areas of healthcare, such as social work and psychology, where there is also a shortage.

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## Budding beauty



A girl from the multicultural St Paul's Bay primary school dressed up as a flower joined her "garden" friends to welcome Children Commissioner Helen D'Amato, yesterday. Photo: Darrin Zammit Lupi

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