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Crucial vote

Delegates vote yesterday during the Social Democrats party congress in Bonn, Germany. The SPD delegates voted 362 to 279, with one abstention, to begin formal coalition talks with Angela Merkel's conservatives. PHOTO: REUTERS

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German teen found dead at Dingli Cliffs in 2016

Magisterial inquiry reopened

MATTHEW XUEREB

The magistrate investigating the mysterious death of a German teenager at the foot of Dingli Cliffs in 2016 has reopened the inquiry to probe how the boy's body was returned to relatives with most of its organs missing, the *Times of Malta* has learnt.

Sources said Magistrate Marseanne Farrugia had reopened the inquiry upon instructions by the Attorney General's Office.

Mike Mansholt, a 17-year-old adventurer, arrived in Malta on holiday on July 8 and was found dead on July 26.

He had been reported missing four days earlier after he failed to return home from his holiday.

He was found without his running shoes, a few metres away from his rented bicycle.

It was established that the damage to the bicycle was not compatible with a fall from a height. An autopsy concluded that Mr Mansholt had been dead for between seven and eight days. The cause of death, however, has never been established.

Both the post-mortems held in Malta and in Germany concluded that the teenager had no broken bones, all but excluding the possibility of a fall.

Magistrate Farrugia closed the inquiry once it was established that the cause of death could not be determined.

"Although there were possible witnesses, the police investigation was stopped too early"

But Mr Mansholt's father, Berndt Alexander, and his sister, Maria, would not let it rest: they requested that the inquiry be reopened when they realised the state of the body.

The body was taken to the Medical University of Hannover for a second autopsy. The only organs found inside were Mr Mansholt's left kidney, the diaphragm, the spleen and the large intestine.

They also complained that they were never given a copy of the report of the autopsy carried out at Mater Dei Hospital, nor were they privy to the findings.

The father of the German teenager welcomed the news about the reopening of the magisterial inquiry.

When contacted yesterday, Mr Mansholt said: "Mike's sister, Maria, and I are very pleased that the investigation has resumed. As we always did, we offer the authorities in Malta our full cooperation. There are still many questions left in the death of my son.

"Although there were indications of possible witnesses, the police investigation was stopped too early. It has never been fully understood what happened to his organs. And why was he not embalmed? Why did we not receive an autopsy report?

"This is what we want to know."

Mr Mansholt filed a criminal complaint with Police Commissioner Lawrence Cutajar late last year asking him to investigate a court expert who failed to explain why his son's body was returned with most of organs missing.

Through his lawyers, Veronique Dalli and Dean Hili, Mr Mansholt said the explanations

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Gozo murder suspect could be hiding in Malta

IVAN MARTIN

The main suspect in the Gozo murder investigation is believed to be an Eastern European who has fled the sister isle and is currently hiding somewhere in Malta, the *Times of Malta* has learnt.

The police have launched a nationwide manhunt for the man who was last seen with an Egyptian national, who was found dead in a remote field in Gharb last Monday.

"We believe this man is either Romanian or Bulgarian"

Sources close to the investigation said the victim, Walid Salah Abdel Motaleb Mohamed, 42, was seen in CCTV footage getting into a car in Victoria at around midnight last Sunday. His body was found in the outskirts of Gharb a few hours later, marking the first murder of 2018.

The sources said the person suspected of killing the Egyptian is believed to be a white male of medium build and fair hair.

"We believe this man is either Romanian or Bulgarian and has since fled Gozo. The community on Gozo is too small for someone to stay hidden, and we would have found him by now if he were still there. He has likely travelled to Malta to hide," the sources said.

Mr Mohamed had been married to a Gozitan and had two children. The couple was separated.

Police have obtained CCTV footage from outlets in Victoria which showed Mohamed parking his car on the main road.

Sometime later, he got into another car, lit a cigarette and spoke to the driver for some time before they drove away.

Investigators yesterday said that the second car had left Gozo the same day as the murder on a Gozo Channel ferry before investigators had even known about the murder.

"When we looked through CCTV footage taken on the ferries,

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