

# Majorca Daily Bulletin

Saturday, January 16 2016

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**THE FIRST  
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# King to try and break

# Spanish political deadlock



Madrid.—Spain's King Felipe will meet leaders of political parties throughout next week in an attempt to help break the political impasse after last month's inconclusive national election, the palace announced yesterday.

Although Spain is a constitutional monarchy and the king is a ceremonial figure, he also has a role as a facilitator. The country has had only an acting government since the 20 December election.

From Monday, the king will hold individual consultations at the Zarzuela Palace with the leaders of the 15 parties represented in parlia-

ment, starting with small regional parties, the palace said in a statement.

The process will culminate on Friday, when Acting Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy of the Partido Popular (PP), Pedro Sanchez of the opposition Socialists (PSOE), and Pablo Iglesias of the new left-wing party Podemos will discuss the situation with him.

The king is then expected to propose a candidate for prime minister.

The fragmented election has thrust Spain into a situation unprecedented in the four decades since the return of democracy. Rajoy's PP,

which ruled for the past four years, won most seats but failed to gain an outright majority. The PSOE came second but also with greatly reduced support.

Two new parties, the anti-austerity Podemos and the centrist Ciudadanos, attracted a new generation of voters disillusioned with the old elite, breaking the traditional mould.

Rajoy has called for a "Grand Coalition" of the PP, PSOE and Ciudadanos to maintain stability and confront a separatist challenge from the Catalonia region. The PP aims to hold a first vote on its proposal for a gov-

ernment by the end of January. The PSOE wants a coalition of the left with Podemos, but that idea is complicated by Podemos's support for a referendum on Catalonian independence, which Sanchez rejects.

Many analysts believe a rerun of the election is inevitable.

In his Christmas Eve message just days after the election, King Felipe appealed for dialogue and unity among Spaniards.

"What should matter to all, first and foremost, is Spain and the general interest of the Spanish people," he said then.

● The Balearic director-general of emergencies and the interior, Pedro Perelló, met with the heads of various emergency agencies yesterday because of the alert caused by the cold front and snow affecting Majorca.

The Tramuntana mountains have been particularly affected, and so it is being recommended that the public doesn't go looking for snow in the higher areas of the mountains this weekend.

The Aemet meteorological agency's branch in the Balearics was highlighting a significant drop in temperature yesterday afternoon and evening as well as heavy rain and snow at higher levels in the Tramuntana.

Snow is forecast at around 500 metres, or even below for today, and there will be widespread storms which will be severe at times.

Accordingly, the government, security forces and

emergency services were all advising against going to these higher levels and are continuing to advise against for the remainder of the weekend. Reminders have been made regarding checking information on road conditions before setting out on journeys, with there being the possibilities of road closures.

In these circumstances, only emergency vehicles will be given access as also will residents with snow chains.

Local police forces, the Guardia Civil, Civil Protection volunteers, operatives from the Council of Majorca's main roads' division and the emergency services will all be working through the weekend to ensure safety on the roads in the Tramuntana and to also make sure that emergency vehicles have access if any incident occurs. Hospitals have taken on extra staff as well.



Gale force winds battered Majorca yesterday.

## Public advised against going to Tramuntana peaks