

Majorca Daily Bulletin

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Spain's Rajoy says will seek parliament's backing to form new government

London.—Spain's acting prime minister Mariano Rajoy said yesterday he had accepted a mandate from king Felipe to seek parliament's backing to form a new government and end over 10 months of political deadlock.

The Socialist party agreed on Sunday to abstain in the vote, allowing Rajoy to lead a minority government of his conservative People's Party (PP), but they have said they will not give him a free hand in passing legislation.

"I guarantee to you that if I am invested in the vote I will work from the first day so that this government is stable and long-lasting," Rajoy told reporters.

"I am perfectly aware of the difficul-

ties that governing in minority entails."

The parliament speaker is expected to announce when the assembly will begin debating the confidence vote later last night.

See Reports Inside.



Mixed views over new Heathrow runway: P18



GROWING DEATH TOLL

Deadly Mediterranean

● The death toll on the Mediterranean has nearly matched that of all last year, with more than 3,740 migrants and refugees having drowned on their way to Europe, and perilous winter months still to come, aid agencies said yesterday.

Smugglers are now sending thousands of people on flimsy inflatable rafts from Libya to Italy in mass embarkations, perhaps to lower their own risks of being caught, but also complicating the work of rescue teams, they said.

At least 3,740 people have perished so far, nearly matching the death toll of 3,771 for all of 2015.