

Majorca Daily Bulletin

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IT'S SUMMER TIME SO DROP THE TOP:
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PM WANTS SPAIN TO DEPEND LESS ON TOURISM

- Socialist leader of Spain's coalition government Pedro Sánchez was in Palma yesterday for the annual summer meeting with King Felipe at Marivent Palace.
- PM said that Spanish economy is "robust", needs to explore new avenues and not depend such much on tourism while promising a new financial package.



Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez in Palma yesterday.



Spanish court finds signs of bribery in awarding of PP leader's degree

● Spain's High Court found yesterday that the new leader of the opposition Partido Popular Pablo Casado gained an academic degree in dubious circumstances, raising pressure on him as support for the conservative PP falls in opinion polls.

Casado, who took over the former ruling party last month, denied any wrongdoing and said he was unaware of any irregularities in the awarding of his master's degree nine years ago, adding that he had no plans to step down over the case.

The court said it could not hear the case due to immunity laws for members of parliament. However, it passed the case to the Supreme Court which must decide whether to proceed. Spain's top court holds final authority in interpreting the immunity laws.

In its findings, the lower court said there were signs of bribery in the awarding of degrees to a number of people including Casado. "The director of the course ... acted so that a particular,

chosen group of students were given a master's degree (...) without any academic merit, giving it to them as a gift," the ruling said.

Casado, who replaced former prime minister Mariano Rajoy as PP chief, rejected this finding. "Under no circumstances have I accepted a gift or requested something that was not given to any other students," he said.

The masters degree was awarded to Casado in 2009 by Rey Juan Carlos University in Madrid.

The case is the latest to rock the PP, which led Spain from 2011 until 1 June this year when Rajoy's government lost a parliamentary no-confidence vote. This followed the prosecution of dozens of people linked to the PP in a corruption case. Socialist leader Pedro Sánchez now heads a minority government.

Casado, has taken the PP to the right since becoming leader on 21 July faces an uphill struggle to regain voters.