

Majorca Daily Bulletin

Friday, November 22 2019

1.20€ · Founded 1962 · N.17062 · Passeig de Mallorca 9 A,
Palma 07011

SPAIN HAS PERMITS TO BUILD GIANT TELESCOPE

● The director of a Spanish research center says a giant telescope, costing \$1.4 billion, is one step nearer to being built on the Canary Islands in the event an international consortium gives up its plans to build it in Hawaii.

Canary Islands Astrophysics Institute Director Rafael Rebolo said that a building permit for the telescope has been granted by the town of Puntagorda on the island of La Palma.

He said "there are no more building permits needed according to Spanish legislation."



The international consortium backing the construction of the Thirty Metre Telescope wants to build it atop Hawaii's tallest peak. But some native Hawaiians consider the Mauna Kea summit sacred and their protests have stopped construction from going ahead since mid-July.

CALLS FOR ABUSIVE AIRLINES TO BE FINED

● The Aviba association of travel agencies in the Balearics has voiced its **anger over festive air fare hikes this year** and wants airlines to be penalised.

● Demand that **maximum prices be introduced** for Balearic air routes which the **airlines can not exceed.**

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NAUTICAL LEGEND



● Palma was treated to a real surprise yesterday when the *Sørlandet*, a Norwegian heritage tall ship and one of very few full-rigged ships in the world, sailed into port. The training ship is one of the largest in the world. Photo. G. Alomar

Spain's BBVA tells court it bears no responsibility for alleged spying

MADRID. Spain's BBVA has told the country's High Court it bore no responsibility for alleged spying 15 years ago, and which is being investigated in a case which has roiled Spain's corporate sector.

News websites *El Confidencial* and *Moncloa.com* reported in January that Spain's second-biggest bank had hired Grupo Cenyt, a security firm belonging to a former police commissioner Jose Manuel Villarejo, to investigate officials of construction company Sacyr as part of efforts to stop a takeover bid by the company in 2004.

Villarejo was arrested in 2017 as part of a separate investigation and is in prison pending trial over allegations of money laundering and bribing public officials.

Adolfo Fraguas, BBVA's rep-

resentative, "responded to all the questions posed by the judge and the prosecution and pleaded that the bank bears no responsibility for the facts under investigation," the bank said in a statement.

The bank, which has acknowledged that the case has damaged its reputation without impacting its business, said it would fully cooperate with judicial authorities in the probe and continue its court testimony at a later date.

The bank has officially acknowledged that it hired Grupo Cenyt. But BBVA, which is being investigated on offences of bribery, disclosure of secrets and corruption in business and is also conducting its own probe, has said it had not found any evidence of spying.