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Messengers get their message across in Palma: See Page 3

Justice sought for Spain's elderly coronavirus victims

Madrid.—Families for elderly Spanish coronavirus victims are initiating hundreds of compensation and criminal claims for nursing home residents who died often without hospital care in a legal morass that could affect the delicate national political balance.

Spain has been one of the worst-hit countries from COVID-19, with more than 28,000 deaths officially reported and a much higher-than-average fatality rate of six per 10,000 people.

Homes for the elderly and disabled have borne the brunt, with some 19,000 deaths, according to a Reuters tally based on regional authorities' data and local

media, leaving relatives upset and angry at refusals and delays in hospitalising patients, plus inadequate equipment.

Delimiting responsibilities between public and private bodies during a pandemic is the Gordian knot judges will have to untie in order to apportion blame, if any, for deaths.

Their decisions could lead to millions of euros in damages, feed into a global ethical debate over prioritising the young over the old, and influence the future of socialist Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez' fragile minority coalition.

"In court, the documents will prove what we have been saying for a long time

- that the health service turned its back on us," said Ignacio Fernandez Cid, president of the Dependency Business Association (FED) which represents care homes.

"The homes have acted well, and have done what they could with the means they had," he told Reuters.

Documents seen by Reuters show that when hospitals were swamped, regional authorities applied tough restrictions to prevent more patients coming from care homes.

In one of the worst-hit areas, Catalonia, lawyers Cremades & Calvo-Sotelo, has filed a lawsuit against the regional gov-

ernment seeking 150,000 euros (\$168,400) for the death of one woman whom the family said received belated and negligent care.

One of the few in Spain specialized in collective actions, the firm represents a lobby group already encompassing about 80 families seeking an average of 130,000 euros for deaths in both Catalonia and the capital Madrid, another hard-hit area.

Cremades & Calvo-Sotelo said it was coordinating with another 40 firms from around Europe, including Britain, France, Italy and Germany, on similar potential action elsewhere.

Three killed in stabbing attack in Scottish city of Glasgow

London.—Three people were killed in a stabbing attack in the Scottish city of Glasgow yesterday, British media reported yesterday, with police saying a suspect had been shot and an officer injured.

An eyewitness told Sky News she had seen several people covered in blood being treated by emergency services after an incident at a city cen-

tre hotel, and armed police on the scene.

"It is believed three people have died after being stabbed in the stairwell of a hotel," the BBC reported.

Police Scotland Assistant Chief Constable Steve Johnson said the incident had been contained and there was no wider risk to the public.

"Armed police officers attended the incident

and I can confirm that a male suspect was shot by an armed officer," he said.

"I would like to reassure the public that at this time we are not looking for anyone else in relation to this incident. I can also confirm that a police officer was injured while dealing with the incident, and that officer is receiving treatment in hospital."

