

# Majorca Daily Bulletin

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## P&O Ferries sacks 800 staff, threatening union standoff

London.—Britain's P&O Ferries yesterday made 800 staff redundant with immediate effect and suspended crossings for the next few days, sparking a backlash from politicians and unions who criticised plans to hire cheaper agency workers instead.

The shock move caused delays around Britain's busiest port, Dover, and drew threats of a standoff as trade unions urged their members to defy any instructions to leave P&O ships.

P&O's move was immediately condemned by unions and described as a public relations disaster on social media after the BBC broadcast a clip of an unidentified man announc-

ing the news in a pre-recorded Zoom message.

"Your final day of employment is today," the man said, outlining plans to use a third-party crew provider. P&O did not immediately comment when asked to verify the video.

Owned by Dubai ports firm DP World, P&O is recovering from two years of disruption when COVID-19 prevented tourists from travelling on its routes between Britain, France, Ireland and elsewhere in northern Europe. P&O, which has almost 4,000 employees and operates more than 30,000 sailings a year, said it had lost 100 million pounds year-on-year and the business was no longer viable in its current form.

# Balearic truckers and government in a jam over strike

● Freight carriers in the Balearics have given a period of ten days to find a solution to the situation affecting the sector as a result of the war in Ukraine and the rise in prices. If a satisfactory agreement is not reached, they will initiate a strike ten days from now – March 28 has in fact been stated. Yesterday a meeting between the government and truckers was held but no agreement was reached. They will meet again on Monday: **see page 3**

## SPAIN HAS REGISTERED 4,500 UKRAINIAN REFUGEES SO FAR, MINISTER SAYS

**MADRID.** About 4,500 Ukrainian refugees have been registered in Spain since Russia's invasion of Ukraine on February 24, but the real number is much higher, Spain's Migration Minister Jose Luis Escrivá said yesterday.

More than three million people have fled the war in Ukraine in what the U.N. Refugee Agency (UNHCR) called Europe's worst refugee crisis since World War Two. "It is difficult to know the real number of refugees because many go directly to their families here in Spain without registering with the authorities", the minister said.

The majority of European countries have offered to take in refugees in the past weeks to help alleviate the

pressure on Ukraine's neighbours as the conflict between Russia and Ukraine continues.

Poland has taken in more than 1.8 million Ukrainians so far while Romania and Moldova have registered 435,432 and 337,215, respectively, following the invasion.

The UN estimates around 300,000 Ukrainian refugees have arrived in Western Europe since the start of the war on February 24.

Thousands more refugees crossed into Eastern Europe yesterday, many hoping that ongoing peace talks between Moscow and Kyiv may end the war soon, though more people were expected to flee in the days ahead.

Ukrainian families arriving in Madrid with a group of Spanish taxi drivers who drove to Poland to support the mass evacuation of refugees in Madrid.

PHOTO: REUTERS/SUSANA VERA

