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Gibraltar boosts port preparations in case of no-deal Brexit

London.—Gibraltar has extended port facilities to be able to handle more ships carrying goods as part of contingency plans if Britain leaves the European Union without an agreement, the British territory's maritime minister said on Friday.

With a population of just over 30,000 people and a land area of nearly 7 square kilometres, Gibraltar voted overwhelming to remain in the EU in Britain's 2016 referendum. There have been concerns that Gibraltar's open land border with Spain would be affected by Brexit, especially given long-

running tensions with Madrid. Spain ceded the port at the mouth of the Mediterranean to Britain in 1713 after a war, but claims sovereignty over it. Gilbert Licudi, minister with responsibility for port and maritime affairs, said that after carrying out infrastructure work, Gibraltar's port could handle a greater volume from container ships and other vessels bringing in food and medicine. He added that lorries could exit by ferry to the nearby Spanish port of Algeciras if administrative checks increased at the land border.

WHAT A NIGHT

● Bad weather continues to pound the island with a massive storm in the early hours of the morning. See Inside.



Storm warning in Santa Ponsa in the early hours of the morning.



Floods kills at least five in Spain, thousands evacuated

Madrid.—At least five people have been killed and some 3,500 evacuated in two days of torrential rains in southeastern Spain, with many roads, railways and an airport closed on Friday and emergency services rescuing people stuck in flooded highway tunnels.

Floods swept away cars and debris in the regions of Valencia, Murcia and eastern Andalusia. Motorway tunnels in some areas were flooded almost up to the tunnel lighting, with some vehicles partly or fully submerged.

A man who had been missing since leaving his home on foot earlier on Friday was found dead in the village of Redovan in Valencia. Another was found in Granada province after his car was swept off a motorway and a third man in Almeria after trying to drive through a flooded tunnel, rescue services said.

Two siblings died on Thursday when torrential rain dragged their car away.

A total of 74 roads were closed, as was the entire Murcia regional railway service, and the Murcia airport. The railway link between Alicante and Spain's two main cities - Madrid and Barcelona - was shut, acting Interior Minister Fernando Grande Marlaska said, calling the floods "a serious tragedy".




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