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Spain's former king pays 4.4 million euros in back taxes amid scandals

Madrid.— Spain's former King Juan Carlos, who left the country in August amid a cloud of scandals, has settled a back tax bill worth more than 4 million euros (\$4.9 million), his lawyer said yesterday.

It was the second such payment by the former monarch in recent months.

The voluntary tax settlement of 4.4 million euros, including interest payments and fines, was based on fiscal

duties related to travels and other expenses paid by a foundation from which he benefited, lawyer Javier Sanchez-Junco said in a statement.

In December, he paid the tax authorities more than 678,000 euros including interest and fines, which, according to *El Pais*, sought to settle alleged illegal credit card transactions with the revenue service to avoid being charged in an investiga-

tion and to be able to return to Spain.

Prosecutors at Spain's Supreme Court have opened several investigations into Juan Carlos' business dealings, including those linked to a high-speed train contract in Saudi Arabia.

Through his lawyers, he has over the past months repeatedly declined to comment on corruption allegations.

His son, King Felipe, is the current head of state.



Sir Richard Branson gave the Bulletin a tour of his Son Bunyola estate almost two decades ago. His dream is now close to reality.

A MAJORCA DREAM COMES TRUE FOR RICHARD BRANSON

- Virgin tycoon **is given permission to transform the main building of the Son Bunyola estate in luxury 29 bedroom hotel**
- Building work **will start later this year** and the hotel could open in 2023.
- Branson has wanted **to transform Son Bunyola estate into luxury hotel for more than two decades.**

Palma.—For twenty years Sir Richard Branson has wanted to transform the Manor House at the Son Bunyola estate in Banyalbufar into a luxury hotel. His dream moved a step closer yesterday.

"We have now been granted permission to develop the *Finca* building on our Son Bunyola Estate into a small luxury 29-bedroom hotel. We are hopeful to start construction work later this Spring to open in 2023 and bring a beautiful his-

EXCLUSIVE BY HUMPHREY CARTER

toric Majorcan building back to life in one of most ancient areas of Banyalbufar," a Virgin source told the *Bulletin*.

The announcement yesterday will bring some cheer to the Covid-battered Balearic tourist industry and also underline the fact that British business people are still willing to make big investments on the

island despite the current economic climate and the challenges of Brexit.

Branson has made no secret of his love for Majorca. He has been a frequent visitor for many years and he helped launch one of Majorca's most successful hotels, the La Residencia in Deya. He then planned to capitalise on his success in

Deya with another hotel at Son Bunyola in Banyalbufar. But the plans and other investments were thwarted when the Son Bunyola project was not given planning permission.

Branson later sold all his assets on the island but he would still return as a tourist staying at La Residencia. About five years ago it was revealed that Branson had repurchased Son Bunyola....and the dream lives on.