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Queen Elizabeth has carried out virtual audiences

London.—Britain's Queen Elizabeth carried out her first official engagement yesterday since spending a night in hospital and being ordered to rest by her doctors.

The 95-year-old queen, the world's oldest and longest-reigning monarch, stayed overnight at London's King Edward VII private hospital last Wednesday after undergoing "preliminary investi-

gations" for an unspecified but not COVID-19 related ailment.

It was Elizabeth's first overnight hospital stay for years, but royal officials said she was in good spirits and she returned to her Windsor Castle home the following day where she got back to carrying out light duties.

Yesterday, she carried out two virtual audiences to welcome the new ambassa-

dors to Britain from South Korea and Switzerland. Pictures showed the monarch, wearing a yellow dress, smiling and looking her usual self during the engagement.

Elizabeth, who is queen of 15 other realms including Australia, Canada and New Zealand and next year celebrates 70 years on the throne, is known for her robust health and still carrying out many public duties.

WE ARE READY, SAYS BALEARIC PRESIDENT

● The Balearic President, Francina Armengol told parliament yesterday that the Balearics **are ready if there's another wave of Covid-19** and said 983 Health Professionals who were hired to reinforce staffing during the pandemic will have their contracts renewed. Page 3



Balearic President Armengol.

102 new cases reported in last 24 hours: See Inside Today



Heathrow says full travel recovery at least five years away

London's Heathrow Airport does not expect air traffic to recover completely until at least 2026, with the number of passengers travelling through Brit-

ain's biggest airport well below pre-pandemic levels despite a pick-up in the past three months.

Passenger numbers in the third quarter recovered to 28% and cargo to 90% of pre-

pandemic levels at Heathrow, but the airport has lost 3.4 billion pounds (\$4.68 billion) cumulatively since the start of the pandemic.

Its expectations echoed those of Spain's airport operator Aena,

which also sees the timeline for a full recovery stretching until 2026. French airport operator ADP predicts traffic at its Paris airports will take until 2024 to reach 90% of pre-pandemic levels.

EU countries split over joint response to energy price spike

European Union countries failed to agree on a bloc-wide response to surging energy prices in an emergency meeting of government ministers yesterday, with some countries seeking a regulatory overhaul and others firmly opposed.

European gas prices have hit record highs this autumn and remain at lofty levels, prompting most EU countries to respond with emergency measures like price caps and subsidies to help trim consumer energy

bills. Countries are struggling to agree however on a longer-term plan to cushion against fossil-fuel price swings, which Spain, France, the Czech Republic and Greece say warrant a bigger shake-up of the way EU energy markets work.

"There was no agreed position on whether or not intervention measures should be adopted at the EU level and applied in all member states," Slovenian infrastructure minister Jernej Vrtovec, whose country holds the EU presidency, said.