

## Thousands protest against overtourism in Spain's Mallorca

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Dhaka: Thousands of activists protested against overtourism on the roads of Palma de Mallorca in Spain on July 21. Tourism is a key industry for Mallorca, one of the country's Balearic Islands in the Mediterranean.

Anti-tourism activists walked on the roads of Palma, the capital of Mallorca, with makeshift models of planes, cruise ships and posters reading "no to mass tourism" and "stop private jets".

Reports cited local police saying, about 10,000 protesters took part in the Mallorca demonstration on July 21. While some tourists supported the march, others appeared uncomfortable.

As per reports, the protesters claimed, visitors are driving up housing costs, making it difficult for residents to afford living in city centres.

They further claimed, tourists fill up beaches and put a strain on public services in summer.

“We want to cut mass tourism and ban non-residents from buying houses which are just used for a few months a year or for speculation,” said a protester, according to reports.

Apart from Mallorca, anti-tourism activists have staged a series of protests in 2024 in Barcelona and other popular holiday destinations like Malaga and the Canary Islands.

After Catalonia, the Balearic Islands was the second most popular region of Spain for tourists in 2023, attracting 14.4 million holidaymakers, said reports citing the Spanish National Statistics Institute.

Tourism generates 45 per cent of the Balearic Islands' gross domestic product, added reports. In the first quarter of 2024, 16.1 million people visited Spain, an increase of 18 per cent compared with the same period in 2023. It may be mentioned here that visitors spent EUR 109 billion (USD 118.56 billion) in Spain in 2023.

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