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Barcelona, January 19 (RHC)-- Faced with the dilemma of holding or postponing an election in the midst of a pandemic, politicians in Catalonia have chosen to heed health experts' advice to adjourn a February election as a surge in coronavirus cases threatened to overwhelm hospitals in what local media perceive as the third wave of the pandemic.

The pro-independence government picked May 30th as the chosen date for the next poll. All parties agreed to postpone the election but the Socialist Party of Catalonia the offshoot of Spain's Socialist Party leading the central government in Madrid said the date was too far away.

Latest opinion polls show the separatists leading a majority in the 135-seat regional parliament, possibly passing the 50% symbolic threshold for the first time, but growing divisions between the two largest pro-independence blocs led by Oriol Junqueras from jail and Carles Puigdemont from exile suggest they may seek new alliances to form a new government.

With the election on hold, the focus in Catalonia now is on the evolution of the contagion in the coming weeks and the progress of vaccination. There is a shared feeling: the more people get the vaccine, the safer the environment for in-person voting.

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