

## World News Roundup

## Britain

## Bad feeling in party remains

## May reasserts authority after Brexit 'resignations'

LONDON, July 10, (Agencies): British Prime Minister **Theresa May** moved to reassert her authority on Tuesday after two top cabinet members quit and launched broadsides against her Brexit plans, winning support from many of her ministers including a leading euro-sceptic.

May said she had chaired a "productive" meeting of her government, unswayed by the resignations of Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson and Brexit negotiator David Davis that rocked the government on Monday.

Among those rallying around the prime minister was environment minister Michael Gove — a prominent campaigner to exit the European Union alongside Johnson for the 2016 referendum — who said he would not follow suit by resigning.

With less than nine months until Britain is due to leave the bloc, May is sticking to her plan for a "business friendly" Brexit.

She looks set on facing down a rebellion in her Conservative Party, where headline Brexit supporters are livid over her plans to negotiate "a free trade area for goods" with the EU. One described accepting EU rules as "the ultimate betrayal".

## Meeting

Above a picture of her cabinet, including her new foreign secretary Jeremy Hunt and Brexit minister Dominic Raab after a mini-reshuffle late on Monday, May wrote on her twitter feed: "Productive Cabinet meeting this morning — looking ahead to a busy week."

Her spokesman said she had welcomed the new members of her cabinet and they had discussed the publication of a white paper policy document on Britain's future ties with the EU and stepping up preparations for any no-deal outcome to the negotiations with Brussels.

Other ministers described the meeting as "very good".

"I think it is right that the cabinet backs the prime minister and speaks with one voice and if people don't do that then they have to go," Justice Secretary David Gauke told BBC radio.

May must now move quickly to try to win the EU's support for her Brexit proposal to unblock talks. These have all but stalled because of her reticence to show her cards until now for fear of angering one of the two main factions of her party.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel arrives in London later on Tuesday for a meeting with May and other leaders to discuss the Western Balkans.

The British leader may have stilled the waters over a possible leadership contest, but some Conservative Brexit supporters are still incensed over what they see as her decision to break her promise for a clean break with the EU.

"It is the ultimate betrayal of our democracy and people's belief in it. It's not even an accidental betrayal, it was planned and plotted well in advance," said Conservative lawmaker Andrew Bridgen.



May

"Never have so many campaigned for so long and so hard for so little," he told Reuters.

But while many Brexit campaigners were still hoping for a vote of confidence to oust May, it is unlikely that they have the numbers. They also are in a minority in parliament to try to change any deal that is agreed with the EU.

At a meeting with Conservative lawmakers on Monday, she was cheered and applauded by many, having warned them that internal squabbling could pave the way for socialist opposition leader Jeremy Corbyn to take power instead.

May's proposals for a future EU relationship after Britain departs from the bloc next March had taken two years of internal government wrangling to agree. But within 48 hours Davis had quit and Johnson followed. The Daily Telegraph newspaper ran a photograph on Tuesday of him, pen poised, resigning as foreign minister. Three junior ministers also quit their posts.

"Brexit should be about opportunity and hope," Johnson said in a scathing resignation letter that was echoed in headlines in a number of Britain's national newspapers. "That dream is dying, suffocated by needless self-doubt."

The Sun, Britain's biggest-selling newspaper, said there had been "blunder after blunder" by May.

"Now there is chaos," the paper said in its editorial. "Brussels must not mistakenly conclude, as EU Council chief Donald Tusk hinted, that one more push will destroy Brexit. Brexit must and will happen."

But others argued May had adopted the most realistic plan after she was weakened in an ill-judged election last year when she lost her parliamentary majority, meaning she has to rely on a small Northern Irish party to govern.

"But I come back to this point, if people don't like this proposal what is their alternative?" Gauke said. "The challenge is all very well for people to say I wouldn't do this. But remember, what are the options in front of us?"

## Starkly

Two years after Britain voted 52 percent to 48 percent to leave the European Union, May is trying to find a middle way between two starkly differing views — within her party and the country — of the UK's relationship with Europe.

Pro-Europeans want to retain close economic ties with the bloc and its market of 500 million people, while some Brexit supporters want a clean break to make it possible to strike new trade deals around the world.

A plan agreed by May's Cabinet last week seeks to keep the UK and the EU in a free-trade zone for goods, and commits Britain to maintaining the same rules as the bloc for goods and agricultural products.

May says the plan will deliver frictionless trade with Europe and avoid a hard border between the UK's Northern Ireland region and EU member Ireland.

But many pro-Brexit lawmakers are furious at a plan they say will stop Britain forging an independent economic course. Davis and Johnson initially backed the plan, before deciding they could not support it.

EU officials say they will respond to the proposals once they have seen details. The British government is due to publish a detailed version of the plans on Thursday.



Members of the royal family gather on the balcony of Buckingham Palace, with (from left), Prince Charles, Camilla the Duchess of Cornwall, Prince Andrew, Queen Elizabeth II, Meghan the Duchess of Sussex, Prince Harry, Prince William and Kate the Duchess of Cambridge, as they watch a flypast of Royal Air Force aircraft pass over Buckingham Palace in London on July 10. Various events were held Tuesday to mark 100 years since the formation of the RAF. (AP)

## Diplomacy

## Trudeau urges 'firm response' to Russia ahead of NATO summit

## EU's Tusk tells Trump: 'Appreciate your allies'

BRUSSELS, July 10, (Agencies): European Union President Donald Tusk delivered a blunt message to US President Donald Trump on Tuesday on the eve of a NATO summit in Brussels, telling him to "appreciate your allies".

Trump has ramped up criticism of European defence spending in recent days, stressing how many EU members are failing to meet agreed targets for investments, which has raised fears the NATO summit could lead to another bust-up in the transatlantic alliance.

Speaking at a signing ceremony for a new EU-NATO cooperation agreement, Tusk used the opportunity to send a personal message to Trump, who is due to arrive in the Belgian capital later Tuesday.

"I would like to address president Trump directly who for a long time now has been criticising Europe almost daily," the former Polish prime minister said.

"The US doesn't have and won't have a better ally than the EU. We spend on defence much more than Russia and as much as

China," he added. "Dear America, appreciate your allies, after all you don't have that many."

He concluded with a reminder that European troops had fought and lost their lives alongside Americans in Afghanistan following the September 11, 2001 attacks on the United States. "Please remember this tomorrow when we meet at the NATO summit, but above all when you meet President (Vladimir) Putin in Helsinki. It is always worth knowing who is your strategic friend and who is your strategic problem," he said.

Meanwhile, Trump will meet the Russian leader in the Finnish capital on July 16.

President Trump launched a weeklong Europe trip Tuesday with harsh criticism for NATO allies and predicted the "easiest" leg of his journey would be his scheduled sit-down with Russian President Vladimir Putin.

Trump said Tuesday he "can't say right now" if Putin is a friend or foe, but called him a "competitor." The US intelligence community has concluded that Russia interfered in the 2016 election to boost Trump's candidacy, and

warns of further attempts at interference both in the 2018 midterms and in European elections.

## Also:

**RIGA:** Canadian Prime Minister **Justin Trudeau** on Tuesday urged NATO to send a "clear and firm response" to **Russia** at its summit this week, blaming **Moscow** for a deadly nerve agent attack in **Britain** and other destabilising actions.

Russian President **Vladimir Putin**'s "invasion of **Crimea**, his interference in the Donbass, his actions elsewhere around the world... most notably on UK soil, in **Salisbury**, are things that require a clear and firm response," Trudeau told reporters in the Latvian capital Riga.

A key NATO summit opens in Brussels on Wednesday, with the agenda including US President **Donald Trump**'s demands for extra spending from allies along with the growing threat members see from Russia on its eastern flank.

## Europe

## Toddler among 5 dead:

French firefighters found five people dead, including a toddler, on Tuesday after a suspected domestic dispute in an apartment in the southwestern city of Pau.

The fire service was called to the apartment in the centre of Pau at 6:40 am (0440 GMT) after neighbours saw smoke coming from it.

A neighbour "was concerned after seeing blood running down the edge of one of the apartment's windows" and tried unsuccessfully to open the door of the first-floor apartment, the emergency services said. (AFP)

## Italy stops ship:

Italy has refused to allow a commercial vessel flying an Italian flag to bring ashore rescued migrants, sticking to a hardline policy on new arrivals as it presses European allies to share the burden of hosting an influx of displaced people.

A commercial ship that supplies oil platforms off the coast of Libya pulled 66 migrants to safety on Monday, but it was told not to bring them to Italy, an Interior Ministry source said.

Transport Minister Danilo Toninelli, who oversees the coast guard and the country's ports, said the migrants had been transferred to an Italian coast guard vessel on Tuesday after some of them threatened the lives of the Italian crew. (RTRS)

## PM signals thaw:

Spain's Prime Minister signalled a thaw in relations with Catalonia on Monday, signing up to joint initiatives in a first meeting with the region's leader but again ruling out any moves towards Catalan independence.

In an atmosphere his office described as cordial, Pedro Sanchez spoke with pro-independence Catalan leader **Quim Torra** for more than two hours.

Catalonia unilaterally declared independence in October, prompting the then government of Mariano Rajoy to impose direct rule from Madrid. (RTRS)



Torra



# 24/7

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