

Brexit: Johnson to visit European capitals

London, United Kingdom

Boris Johnson will visit European capitals this week on his first overseas trip as British leader, as his government said yesterday it had ordered the repeal of the decades-old law enforcing EU membership.

Johnson's Downing Street office confirmed he will travel to Berlin on Wednesday for talks with German Chancellor Angela Merkel and on to Paris Thursday for discussions with French President Emmanuel Macron, amid growing fears of a no-deal Brexit in two-and-a-half months.

The meetings, ahead of a two-day G7 summit starting Saturday in the southern French resort of Biarritz, will be his first diplomatic forays abroad since replacing Theresa May last month.

He is expected to push for fresh negotiations over the terms of Brexit or warn that the EU faces Britain crashing out of the bloc on October 31 -- the latest delayed date for its departure.

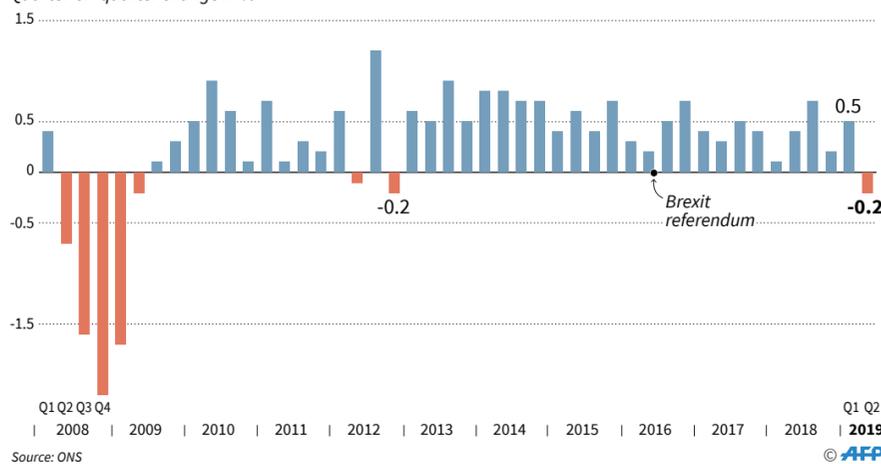
European leaders have repeatedly rejected reopening an accord struck with May last year but then rejected by British lawmakers on three occasions, despite Johnson's threats that the country will leave then without an agreement.

'Political move'

In an apparent show of intent, London announced yesterday that it had ordered the scrapping of the European Communities Act, which took Britain into the

British GDP

Quarter-on-quarter change in %



Source: ONS

© AFP

forerunner to the EU 46 years ago and gives Brussels law supremacy.

The order, signed by Brexit Secretary Steve Barclay on Friday, is set to take effect on October 31.

"This is a landmark moment in taking back control of our laws from Brussels," Barclay said in a statement.

"This is a clear signal to the people of this country that there is no turning back -- we are leaving the EU as promised on October 31, whatever the circumstances."

However, analysts said the move was largely symbolic and could be undone.

"If parliament was to force the government to pass an ex-

pression, it can easily change the date again," said Maddy Thimont-Jack, a senior researcher at Institute for Government.

"You don't need to do it now... it's just a political move."

'National emergency'

The moves come as Johnson faces increasing pressure to recall MPs from their summer holidays so parliament can debate Brexit.

More than 100 lawmakers, who are not due to return until September 3, have demanded in a letter that he reconvene the 650-seat House of Commons and let them sit permanently until October 31.

"Our country is on the brink of an economic crisis, as we career

towards a no-deal Brexit," said the letter, signed by MPs and opposition party leaders opposed to such a scenario.

"We face a national emergency, and parliament must be recalled now."

Parliament is set to break up again shortly after it returns, with the main parties holding their annual conferences during the September break.

Main opposition Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn wants to call a vote of no confidence in Johnson's government after it returns and, if successful, take over as a temporary prime minister.

He has vowed to seek an extension to Britain's EU departure date to stop a no-deal Brexit, and then call a general election.

But Corbyn has so far failed to win the backing of other opposition parties for him to lead any new unity government.

Brexit shortages: report

Meanwhile, the *Sunday Times* reported that Britain could face food, fuel and medicine shortages and chaos at its ports in a no-deal Brexit, citing a leaked government planning document.

There would likely be some form of hard border imposed on the island of Ireland, the document implied.

The leaked document, compiled this month by the Cabinet Office ministry and dubbed "Yellowhammer", spells out the likely ramifications of a disruptive EU departure, the newspaper claimed.

But Michael Gove, the minister responsible for no-deal Brexit planning, said it envisaged a "worst case" scenario.

"We don't normally comment on leaks -- but a few facts -- Yellowhammer is a worst case scenario -- v significant steps have been taken in the last 3 weeks to accelerate Brexit planning," he said on Twitter.



Boris Johnson

Ferrari will expand its lineup of road cars

Reuters | Pebble Beach, Calif.

Italian premium sports car maker Ferrari NV will expand sales of easier-driving grand touring cars, but will not try to chase rival Porsche's annual sales volume, Ferrari Chairman John Elkann told an audience of classic car enthusiasts gathered at this storied golf resort on the Pacific coast.

Elkann also reiterated that Fiat Chrysler Automobiles NV, of which he is chairman, re-

mains open to opportunities to combine with other automakers, but is positioned to remain independent. Fiat Chrysler in May proposed a merger with French automaker Renault SA, but the deal fell apart after the French government intervened and Elkann withdrew the proposed merger.

Fiat Chrysler Chief Executive Mike Manley sent the same message to Renault and other would-be partners earlier this month.

Saudi stocks pressured by banks



Traders on the floor of Saudi Stock exchange (file)

● Saudi index eased by 0.3 per cent

Reuters | Dubai

Saudi shares ended lower yesterday, hit by weakness in banking stocks, while the Qatari index snapped a three-day losing streak as Industries Qatar's rebounded after steep declines on its first-half results.

The Saudi index eased by 0.3 per cent, with Saudi British Bank dropping about 1.3pc and Samba Financial Group falling 1.3pc. The Riyadh market had resumed trade after closing last week for the Eidul Adha religious festival.

Banking stocks have come under pressure in recent weeks

from the Saudi central bank's decision to follow the U.S. Federal Reserve in cutting interest rates, which analysts expect to squeeze lenders' profit margins.

Qatar shares ended their losing run thanks to market heavyweight Industries Qatar's 4.3pc jump after six sessions of declines.

"IQ went down so much last week that it became a compelling valuation despite the poor results," said Talal Samhour, head of asset management at Amwal, adding that the index was also buoyed by gains on international markets.

US and European stocks surged on Friday on expectations that the European Central Bank will cut interest rates, but the dollar pared gains against the euro after a newspaper report said the German govern-

Closing Bell

SAUDI	▼ 0.3 pc to 8,527 pts
ABU DHABI	▼ 0.3pc to 5,039 pts
DUBAI	▲ to 2,797 pts
QATAR	▲ 1.7pc to 9,782 pts
EGYPT	▲ 0.7pc to 1,4400 pts
BAHRAIN	▼ 0.3pc 1,530 pts
OMAN	▲ at 3,862 pts
KUWAIT	▼ 1.7 at 6,572 pts

ment was prepared to take on new debt to provide economic stimulus.

The Abu Dhabi market slipped 0.3pc, with First Abu Dhabi Bank (FAB) dipping 0.8pc.

Kuwaiti stocks fell 1.7pc, hurt by a 2.2pc drop in Kuwait Finance House.

About 3,000 homeless as fire consumes Bangladesh slum

Reuters | Dhaka

About 3,000 people in Bangladesh were left homeless after a massive fire consumed several hundred shanties in a slum on the northern outskirts of the capital city of Dhaka, government officials said yesterday.

Three people were injured in the blaze that struck a congested slum in Mirpur town on Friday night.

Video footage showed heavy plumes of smoke billowing all around the slum area, just a few kilometres from the country's main cricket stadium.

Fire officials scrambled to get access to enough water and struggled for three hours to douse the flames, said Anwar Hossain, senior station manager of Mirpur fire station.

"According to our investigation committee 1,200 shanties were damaged and out of this 750 shanties burnt totally," said Enamur Rahman, junior minister for Disaster Management and Relief. There were no fatalities as most residents were away celebrating the festival of Eid al-Adha, officials said.

Rahman said the government will initially provide a total of 500 tonnes of rice and 1.3 million taka (\$15,476) for everyone affected and authorities were looking into the reason for the fire.

White House says 'no recession in sight' despite market turmoil

Reuters | Washington

White House officials pushed back yesterday against concerns that economic growth may be faltering, saying they saw little risk of recession despite a volatile week on global bond markets, and insisting their trade war with China was doing no damage to the United States.

"There is no recession in sight," White House economic adviser Larry Kudlow said on *"Fox News Sunday."* "Consumers are working. Their wages are rising. They are spending and they are saving...I think we are in pretty good shape."

Trade adviser Peter Navarro dismissed last week's warning signs, saying "good" economic dynamics were encouraging investors to move money to the United States. "We have the strongest economy in the world and money is coming



White House chief economic adviser Larry Kudlow

here for our stock market. It's also coming here to chase yield in our bond markets," Navarro told ABC's "This Week."

That sort "flight to safety" is typically driven by concerns of global economic trouble - in this case the possibility that the Trump administration's tariff battle with China may dampen business investment and growth worldwide.

The tariffs on Chinese goods, Navarro said, "are not hurting anybody here."