

British MPs force Johnson to seek delay

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London

British MPs voted yesterday to force Prime Minister Boris Johnson to ask the European Union to delay Brexit yet again but he insisted Britain must leave on October 31.

In a day of high drama in the House of Commons, MPs declined to give their backing to the divorce agreement Johnson struck with the EU this week until accompanying legislation has been passed.

In doing so, MPs triggered a law requiring Johnson to write to EU leaders asking to delay Brexit to avoid a "no deal" departure in less than two weeks.

The result is a major blow to Johnson, who said he would rather be "dead in a ditch" than prolong the torturous Brexit process that has left Britain in political turmoil since the 2016 EU referendum.

But in a typically defiant response, the Conservative leader refused, sparking outrage among opposition MPs -- and



Demonstrators brandish an effigy depicting Britain's Prime Minister Boris Johnson as a puppet operated by his adviser Dominic Cummings during an anti-Brexit protest



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BRITISH PRIME MINISTER BORIS JOHNSON

fresh uncertainty about what happens next.

"I will not negotiate a delay with the EU and neither does the law compel me to do so," he told MPs, who were sitting on a Saturday for the first time since the 1982 Falklands War.

He said he would tell EU leaders that "further delay would be bad for this country, bad for the European Union and bad for democracy".

The Tory party went further, writing in a tweet: "The Prime Minister will not ask for a delay."

Brussels urged Britain to explain its plan as soon as possible while Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn, whose party opposed the deal, said: "The prime min-

ister must now comply with the law."

'Pointless' delay

Securing the deal at Thursday's Brussels summit was a personal victory for Johnson, a figurehead in the 2016 Leave campaign who has vowed to deliver Brexit on October 31 come what may.

He has spent the last 48 hours frantically trying to persuade MPs to back it, and won support from many of the eurosceptic Conservative MPs who rejected a previous divorce agreement.

But parliament -- like the frustrated public -- is still bitterly divided over how and even if Britain should end four decades

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of integration with its closest neighbours.

Opposition parties and Johnson's own Northern Irish allies rejected the text, and joined together to back an amendment brought by former Conservative minister Oliver Letwin.

This amendment made approval of the deal contingent on parliament passing legislation to ratify the text before Britain leaves the EU.

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If he refuses, he is likely to face a court challenge forcing him to send it.

If EU leaders agree, he must accept, or if they offer an alternative date, he must also accept unless parliament intervenes.

Johnson earlier warned a third Brexit delay was "pointless", adding: "Now is the time to get this thing done."

He said he would introduce legislation next week to implement his Brexit deal, expressing hope that if it passes, Britain could still leave on October 31.

The first vote could come as soon as Tuesday.

Electric Hummer could be part of GM's move into EV trucks, SUVs



A Hummer sits in the parking lot of a dealership in Scottsdale, Arizona

Reuters | Washington/Detroit

General Motors Co plans to build a new family of premium electric pickup trucks and sport-utility vehicles at its Detroit-Hamtramck plant beginning in late 2021, possibly reviving the imposing Hummer brand on some of them, several people familiar with the plans said.

The so-called BT1 electric truck/SUV program is the centerpiece of a planned \$3 billion investment in the Detroit-Hamtramck plant to make electric trucks and vans, and part of a broader \$7.7 billion investment in GM's U.S. plants over the next four years, according to a proposed labor deal between the automaker and the United Auto Workers union.

The investments were made public by the UAW on Friday but no details were provided.

The investment would move the automaker into a part of the EV market that is largely untested and where GM has a higher likelihood of turning a profit, analysts said.

Anti-Brexit activists march to parliament as MPs delay decision

London

Tens of thousands of pro-EU protesters from across Britain wielding banners, placards and flags converged on parliament Saturday, erupting in cheers as MPs forced the government to ask Brussels for another Brexit delay.

Demonstrators rallied near Hyde Park in central London before marching to parliament to call for a second Brexit referendum, in the hope of overturning Britain's planned departure from the European Union.

Walking behind a pink banner proclaiming "together for the final say", they chanted: "What do we want? People's vote! When do we want it? Now."

"The first referendum was jumping on a train without a destination," said Douglas Hill, 35, from Oxford, south central England, with his Es-



British Prime Minister Boris Johnson is seeking a clear-cut vote that either approves or rejects the divorce treaty

tonian wife and their baby daughter.

"Now that we have a destination, we need to have a second referendum."

Another attendee, Theodor Howe, a 20-year-old student in Dundee, eastern Scotland, conceded another poll could be divisive but insisted it was still necessary.

"People should have a say in what is going to happen," he told AFP.

The mood was buoyant when news came through that MPs had voted to delay their decision on whether to accept the deal, although the prime minister vowed again he will not negotiate an extension beyond October 31.

The crowd broke into cheers and applause, with demonstrator Philip Dobson saying: "That's really good, that's one step away from Brexit."

"It could be that the government falls, who knows?"

Thomas Lambert, a rare Brexit supporter wandering among the crowds, said he was "gutted" by the vote, adding: "Another delay is an abomination."

"Last opportunity"

Politicians including John McDonnell, the main opposition Labour Party's finance spokesman, and London Mayor Sadiq Khan, were due to

address the crowds. Organisers from the People's Vote pressure group laid on 172 buses to bring demonstrators to the British capital, with the cost covered by supporters from sport, business and entertainment, it said.

Former prime ministers John Major, a Conservative, and Tony Blair, of Labour, feature in a film set to be broadcast to the crowds in Parliament Square.

"Whatever is the outcome, no deal or bad deal, it should not pass without the final say resting with the people," they said in a statement Friday.

Khan was among those leading the crowd as it snaked its way towards parliament, which was holding its first Saturday sitting since the 1982 Falklands War as the Brit-

Draft Brexit deal



The first referendum was jumping on a train without a destination. Now that we have a destination, we need to have a second referendum

DOUGLAS HILL, WHO WANTS A NEW REFERENDUM

Catalan leaders demand talks



More than half a million people rallied in Barcelona

Barcelona

Separatist Catalan leaders on Saturday called on the Spanish government to enter into talks as Barcelona braced for fresh violence after days of clashes between police and protesters.

Nearly 200 people were hurt in another night of clashes with radical separatists hurling rocks and fireworks at police who responded with tear gas and rubber bullets.

A hardcore movement of young separatists, Arran, called for a new demonstration "against repression" for 1600 GMT in central Barcelona.

"We exhort the head of the government to fix today a day and hour to sit with us for unconditional talks," regional president Quim Torra said in a speech.

His demand for "unconditional" negotiations, addressed to Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez, appeared to be aimed at ensuring that a referendum on independence, currently a non-starter for Madrid, is up for discussion.



Thousands of protesters are calling for a second referendum on Britain's EU membership

