

More Than 1.5 Million and Rising Sign UK Petition for New EU Referendum

LONDON - A petition to parliament calling for a second referendum on Britain's EU membership gathered more than one million signatures Saturday.

The referendum was started just 24 hours earlier, with the rate of support the fastest ever since the British government introduced the ability of citizens to protest to parliament.

So many people were clamouring to sign the petition, at one point the government's IT system crashed.

By midday Saturday 1.2 million people had added their names, mostly in London, but with strong support in Manchester, Oxford and Cambridge.



The petition demands a change in the law to pave the way for a re-run of Thursday's national vote. It calls for a major-

ity of 60 percent and a turnout of 75 percent before any change in Britain's EU membership can take place. The pe-

tion was gaining pace at a rate of thousands of signatures every hour. The petition was started by British citizen Wil-

liam Oliver Healey, and reads: "We the undersigned call upon HM Government to implement a rule that if the

Remain or Leave vote is less than 60 per cent based a turnout less than 75 per cent there should be another referendum."

It was started by Healey following shockwaves after 17.5 million Britons voted to leave the EU. That represented 51.9 percent of voters, compared to 48.1 percent who opted to remain part of the bloc.

The popularity of the petition means it must be considered for a Parliamentary debate in the House of Commons, but that does not mean its sentiments will carry any legal weight.

Constitutional experts will have to decide whether such a measure ...*(More on P4)...(19)*

UN Chief Names new Human Rights Official

UNITED NATIONS - UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon on Friday appointed Andrew Gilmour of the United Kingdom as UN assistant secretary-general for human rights and head of the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in New York, a UN spokesman announced here.

Gilmour succeeds Ivan Simonovic of Croatia to whom the secretary-general is deeply grateful for his exceptional leadership and advice on human rights issues and the integration of human rights in peace and security matters, Farhan Haq, the deputy UN spokesman, said at a daily news briefing here.

Gilmour is currently director for political, peace-keeping, humanitarian and human rights affairs in the Executive Office of the secretary-general, a position he has held since April 2012. "During this

time, he has been responsible for spearheading the implementation of the Human Rights up Front initiative," Haq said. The OHCHR Office in New York (OHCHR-NY) works for the effective integration of human rights norms and standards in the decision-making and operational activities of inter-governmental and inter-agency bodies based at UN headquarters in New York. OHCHR-NY is headed by an assistant secretary-general representing in New York the UN high commissioner for human rights, who is based in Geneva. The assistant secretary-general assists the high commissioner in advancing the human rights agenda among policy-making bodies, permanent missions of member states, UN departments and agencies, non-governmental organizations, professional groups and the media. (Xinhua)

SCO Leaders Vow to Lift Cooperation to "Qualitatively New Level"

TASHKENT - Leaders of the member states of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) vowed on Friday to raise the regional cooperation to a qualitatively new level.

The heads of state of the SCO signed the Tashkent Declaration of the 15th Anniversary of the SCO at the 16th meeting of the Council of Heads of State of the SCO, a two-day summit in Tashkent.

The leaders noted that the SCO cooperation has produced fruitful results and that "all preconditions are in place now" to upgrade the cooperation, according to a report on the outcomes of the meeting.

The new level of cooperation will be "characterized by increasing the efficiency of cooperation in the spheres of politics, security, economy, development of cultural and



humanitarian ties," said the report.

The leaders at the meeting also reaffirmed that the organization, currently grouping China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, is open for accession by interested states which meet the criteria and conditions.

PAIRING OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

The leaders noted that the world economy is still suffering from the effects of the global financial and economic crisis.

The SCO member states should "strive for a profound transformation of the global economy through large-scale, structural reforms, diversified and improving competitiveness of economies and innovative development on a long-term basis,"

they said.

The significant potential for trade and economic relations and investment cooperation within the SCO framework, accumulated over the past 15 years, provides for the expansion of the cooperation, they said. The member states vowed to seek the pairing of their national development strategies and strengthen the cooperation in their ...*(More on P4)...(20)*

Russian Airstrikes Pound Aleppo As Government Forces Advance

ALEPPO - Russian and Syrian warplanes pounded rebel-held areas of divided second city Aleppo Saturday as government forces closed in on the rebels' sole remaining supply line, a monitoring group said.

An AFP correspondent in the rebel-held east of the city said the air strikes lasted throughout the night into the morning.

Aleppo, which was Syria's commercial and manufacturing hub before civil war broke out in 2011, has been a key battleground ever since rebels seized eastern neighborhoods of the city the following year.

A two-day truce bro-



kered by Moscow and Washington earlier this month in a bid to rescue a wider ceasefire expired without renewal and Russia warned it would press ahead with its air campaign, saying the rebels had failed to deliver on

promises to break ranks with Al-Qaeda loyalists. The Russian strikes focused on the Castello Road, the only remaining route out of the rebel-held east of the city, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said.

"Russian planes are backing a Syrian regime ground offensive on the northern edges of the city, while Syrian planes bomb the eastern neighborhoods," Observatory head Rami Abdel Rahman ...*(More on P4)...(21)*

British Residents in Brussels Rush to Apply for Belgian Nationality: Report

BRUSSELS - Within hours of the UK voting to leave the EU, the mayors of several towns around Brussels reported a surge in British residents asking how to apply for Belgian nationality, Le Soir newspaper reported on Saturday.

In Waterloo, a suburb to the south of the Belgian capital with 450 registered Britons, mayor Florence Reuter told Le Soir that five people had submitted the paperwork to begin the procedure on Friday morning. She said dozens of others had called in to ask for information.

"The registry office has dealt with nothing else

this morning," she added. The Brussels district of Woluwe-Saint-Pierre received three submissions on Friday, Le Soir added, having received none at all from British residents in the past four months.

In another part of the city, Ixelles, 15 Britons sought information on becoming Belgian by lunchtime on Friday.

Olivier Deleuze, mayor of the Brussels district of Watermael-Boitsfort, said he had three Britons on Friday morning asking to begin the procedure to become Belgian. "It's exceptional," he told Le Soir. "Normally we never get this sort of request. ...*(More on P4)...(22)*

At Least 14 Dead in Flooding in Eastern U.S. State of West Virginia

WASHINGTON - At least 14 people including an eight-year-old boy died in sudden flooding in eastern U.S. state of West Virginia, state governor Earl Ray Tomblin said Friday, calling the flooding "among the worst in a century for some parts of the state."

Damage is widespread and devastating, while the death toll could rise, Tomblin told reporters, putting search and rescue missions still a top priority.

A state of emergency has already been declared in 44 of the state's 55 counties, according to an ABC News report.

Rescue efforts are still underway to save some 500 people, including employees and customers, who have been stranded inside a mall since Thursday afternoon after a bridge connecting the shopping center to a main road ...*(More on P4)...(23)*

Six EU Foreign Ministers Urge Quick Exit Procedure of Britain



BERLIN - After Britain voted to leave the European Union (EU) in a historic referendum, foreign ministers from six founding countries of the EU met here on Saturday, pushing for a speedy exit procedure of Britain.

"This process should start as

soon as possible," said German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier after a meeting with his counterparts from France, Italy, the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg on Saturday in Berlin.

The aim must be "not to fall into a prolonged ...*(More on P4)...(24)*

Mother Slain as IS-inked Saudi Twin Brothers Attack Own Families

RIYADH - Saudi Interior Ministry announced on Friday that Saudi two Islamic State (IS) members attacked their families and killed the mother, Saudi Press Agency reported.

The two brothers, Khalid and Saleh, launched the attack on Friday morning at their house in Riyadh, in which the father and another brother were seriously injured.

The police revealed that the twins trapped their mother at the storeroom and stabbed her to death.

The two were arrested at dawn and until now the reason behind the attack is unknown.

Similar cases as IS members attack their relatives have occurred in Saudi Arabia in recent years. (Xinhua)

Neighbour News

Nearly 190,000 Arrested for Narcotic Crimes in China

BEIJING - Police arrested 189,313 suspects involved in narcotics-related crimes over the last 17 months, the Supreme People's Procuratorate revealed Saturday.

There were 217,503 prosecutions for drug offences from the beginning of 2015 to the end of May this year, it said.

"Despite the prosecutions and arrests, drug-related crimes have risen each year, with new drugs springing up and criminals changing their methods," the SPP said in a statement.

The Internet has emerged as a major channel for such crimes, it said. Criminals buy the raw materials and sell the final products online, and they

use apps such as QQ or WeChat to contact buyers and sellers, and Alipay to pay. They also send products via courier services, in a bid to avoid law enforcement checks. The SPP ordered heightened monitoring of narcotics-related transactions on WeChat and Alipay, and improved courier management, including the real names of senders and receivers. It suggested authorities improve supervision over drug market, with particular focus on the wholesale of psychiatric medicines, which

can be used in the production of narcotics. The police will also inspect hotels and entertainment venues regularly, it said. (Xinhua)

Pakistani Startup for Special Children Wins Big in US Competition

ISLAMABAD - A Pakistani startup that develops games for children with special needs has won third prize at a competition held at Stanford University.

WonderTree, which develops interactive, augmented reality-based games for children with special needs using Microsoft Kinect technology won the third prize at the Global Innovation through Science and Technology (GIST) Tech-I Startup Competition held at Stanford University.

The WonderTree team includes renowned psychologists and special

teachers.

The company has also partnered with several institutions such as the Institute for Personal Psychology, DOW University of Health Sciences, Special Olympics Pakistan and the Karachi Vocational and Training Center, all of which help it develop games with a focus on home-based physical therapy, biofeedback and tracking.

WonderTree games use the concept of augmented reality, making the child interact using movements and gestures.

Their games provide an ...*(More on P4)...(25)*

Summit in Uzbekistan Strengthens Eurasian Integration

TASHKENT - The states at the summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) have reinforced their commitment to Eurasian integration and the processes of economic consolidation in the region.

In the final declaration of the forum, the leaders of the SCO emphasized that immense economic, trade and investment potential leads a positive trend towards the strengthening of the organization's links and cooperation mechanisms.

The presidents of China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan - full members, the observer countries - Afghanistan, Belarus and Mongolia

and other partners of the dialogue agreed that harmonious development in the SCO area responds to the interests of balanced growth throughout the region.

They also noted that the global economy is still experiencing the consequences of the financial crisis which has caused a decline in demand and sharp fluctuations in major products and commodities markets.

Together, these factors have led to a slowdown in global economic growth and other negative effects.

The president of Belarus, Alexander Lukashenko defended the need for close interconnection ...*(More on P4)...(26)*

Iranian Forces Kill Dozen of Terrorists in Kurd-Populated Region

TEHRAN - Iranian forces have killed a number of terrorists in the Kurd-populated region of Iran's West Azarbaijan province, Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) said Saturday in a statement, reported state IRIB TV.

The clashes "erupted on Friday night between IRGC forces and the counter-revolutionary terrorist groups," said the statement issued by the public relations of IRGC's Hamzeh Seyed al-Shohada headquarters. The terrorists were killed "at the border point of Sarvabad and Mahabad region in the province of West Azarbaijan," said the statement.

Operations to track the armed terrorists are underway, and further details about the clashes will be announced later, it added. On June 16, IRGC said that its forces had smashed two terrorist cells in the northwestern country and had killed twelve terrorists. Three members of the IRGC also died in the clashes with "counter-revolutionary terrorist groups," it said. Reports said that the "terrorists" belonged to the members of outlawed "counter-revolutionary terrorist groups," including the Kurdish Democrat Party, who had crossed the northwestern borders into the country. (Xinhua)