

Boris Johnson leads UK premiership race by large margin



London, June 14 (RHC)-- In the UK, Boris Johnson has won by a large margin in the first round of voting to replace outgoing Prime Minister Theresa May, gaining by far the most support from Conservative lawmakers.

In the vote held in London on Thursday, Johnson won the support of 114 out of 313 Conservative lawmakers who voted to whittle down the number of candidates vying to become the leader of the party and next prime minister. Johnson's closest rivals in the vote were far behind him: Jeremy Hunt, the foreign minister, garnered 43 votes; Michael Gove, environment minister, had 37 votes and Dominic Raab, the former Brexit minister, received 27 votes.

A former foreign minister and mayor of London, Johnson has campaigned on a pledge to bring Britain out of the EU by the end of October. He has been one of the main critics of May and her Brexit strategy since resigning from the cabinet last summer.

Johnson had been expected to easily make it to the last round of the Tory Party leadership race, which is due in late July. He was delighted after winning the first round and said there was still a long way to go.

Three out of 10 conservative lawmakers were knocked out of the leadership race on Thursday. They were Andrea Leadsom, former leader of the House of Commons, Mark Harper and Esther McVey. The

second, third and fourth round of the internal party votes are due on June 18th thru 20th. The final vote on the two remaining candidates will be held with votes from around 150,000 Conservative Party members.

The leadership race was triggered when May announced her resignation as Tory leader on June 7th after failing to win the support of the parliament for her EU withdrawal agreement on three occasions. Johnson has vowed that he would implement Brexit on its deadline of October 31 with or without a deal.

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