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A special edition on British politics
by Zanny Minton Beddoes
Editor-in-chief

After days of high political drama in Britain, Boris Johnson's government has collapsed at last. For months the prime minister wriggled out of one scandal after another with braggadocio and buffoonery. Now, irretrievably rejected by his own MPs, he has agreed first to quit as Conservative Party leader and then to leave office within months. That day cannot come soon enough.

Mr Johnson was brought down by his own dishonesty, so some may conclude that a simple change of leadership will be enough to get Britain back on course. If only. Although Mr Johnson's fingerprints are all over today's mess, the problems run deeper than one man. Unless the ruling Conservatives muster the fortitude to face that fact, Britain's many social and economic difficulties will only deepen.

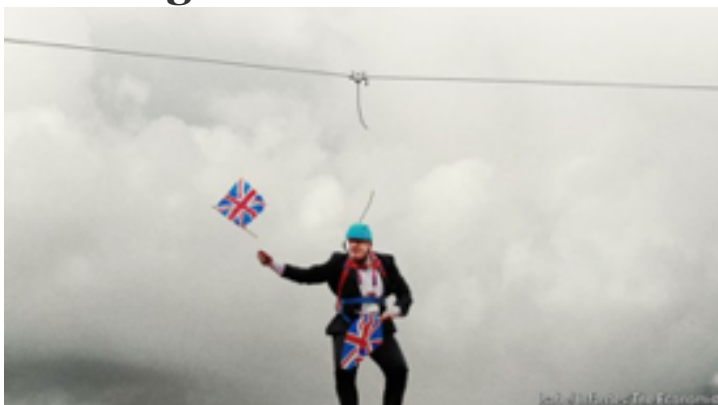
Britain is in a dangerous state. The country is poorer than it imagines. Its current-account deficit has ballooned, sterling has tumbled and debt-interest costs are rising. If the next government insists on raising spending and cutting taxes at the same time, it could stumble into a crisis. The time when everything was possible is over. With Mr Johnson's departure, politics must once more become anchored to reality.



Editor's picks

Our coverage of Boris Johnson's downfall

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[Britain after Boris Johnson](#)

Clownfall

A doomed prime minister and a stricken country

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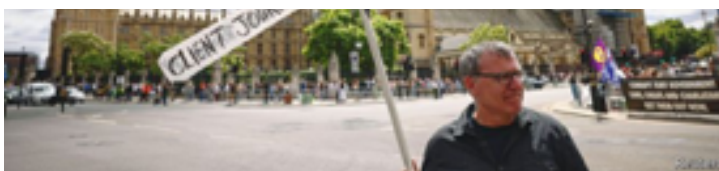
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The toxicity of Boris Johnson

No one's reputation could survive contact with the prime minister

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Fixing the culture of Parliament is not easy



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Dealing with it may be beyond an exhausted Conservative Party

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Is Boris Johnson for real?

Britain's most authentic politician or an actor playing the part?

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“These were standards they were unable to defend”—Boris Johnson’s woes

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