



## 'Free Assange NOW' Trends on Twitter as UK Approves Extradition To US

### Description

**UK: The UK government ordered the extradition of WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange to the United States to face spying charges on Friday — leaving Assange 14 days to appeal or face a potential life imprisonment term in the US.**

British Home Secretary Priti Patel signed the order authorizing Assange's extradition to the US, where he faces charges over WikiLeaks' publication of a huge trove of classified documents.

The decision was referred to Patel after a British court ruled in April that Assange could be sent to the US, where he faces trial on 17 charges of espionage and one charge of computer misuse.

However, the decision has proved wildly unpopular, with Assange hashtags trending on Twitter and supporters arguing that he was acting as a journalist and is entitled to First Amendment protections of freedom of speech for publishing verified documents that exposed wrongdoing in various corridors of power.

9 News [report](#): American prosecutors say Assange unlawfully helped US Army intelligence analyst Chelsea Manning steal classified diplomatic cables and military files that WikiLeaks later published, putting "lives at risk".

The Home Office said in a statement that "the UK courts have not found that it would be oppressive, unjust or an abuse of process to extradite Mr Assange," and so the government had to approve the extradition.

"Nor have they found that extradition would be incompatible with his human rights, including his right to a fair trial and to freedom of expression, and that whilst in the US he will be treated appropriately, including in relation to his health," it said.

Supporters and lawyers for Assange, 50, argue that he was acting as a journalist and is entitled to First

Amendment protections of freedom of speech for publishing documents that exposed US military wrongdoing in Iraq and Afghanistan.

They argue that his case is politically motivated and that he cannot get a fair trial in the US.

“Today is not the end of the fight. It is only the beginning of a new legal battle,” said Assange’s wife, Stella Assange.

She said the UK decision marked “a dark day for press freedom and for British democracy.” “Julian did nothing wrong,” she said.

“He has committed no crime and is not a criminal. He is a journalist and a publisher, and he is being punished for doing his job.”



Julian Assange and his ankle monitor

Julian Assange’s father John Shipton called for the support the Australian Government.

“Julian’s life is literally in the hands of the Australian government,” he said.

“We know from independent medical reports that his mental state is very poor.

“This is exacerbated by the harsh conditions of his current imprisonment and the knowledge that he will never receive a fair trial if he is extradited to the United States.

by Baxter Dmitry

**Category**

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2. Main
3. Politics-Geopolitics-Gov.-Events

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