

Trump-Russia 'collusion': Democrats file lawsuit

The Democratic Party in the US is suing Russia, the Trump campaign and the whistle-blowing website Wikileaks for conspiring to disrupt the 2016 presidential election.

Documents filed in court allege that the campaign “gleefully accepted Russia’s help” to win the election.

President Donald Trump has repeatedly denied collusion, and Russia has also denied the allegations.

Several investigations are already under way.

US intelligence agencies previously concluded Moscow had tried to sway the election in Mr Trump’s favour.

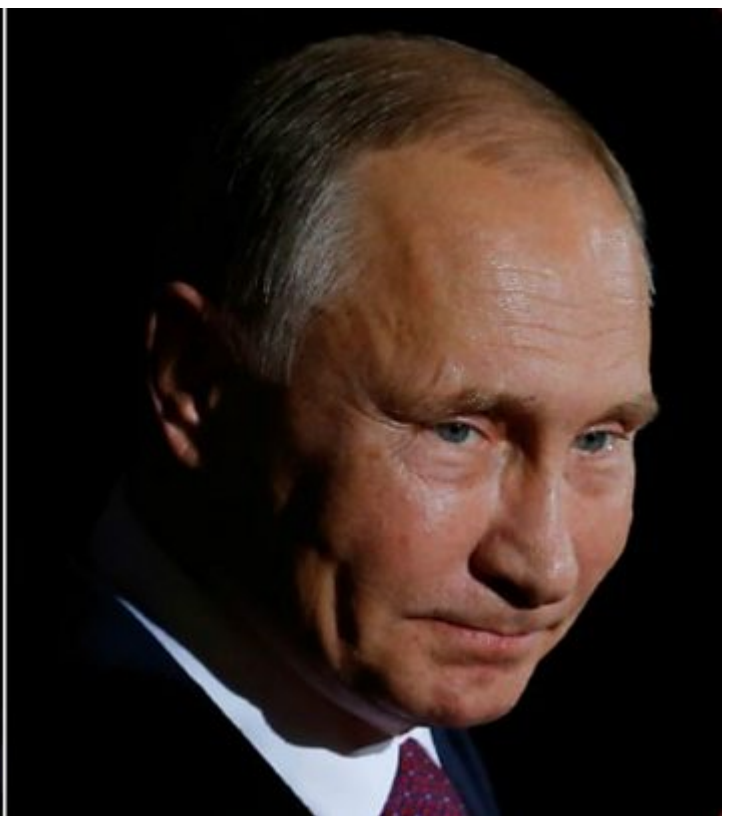
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- [Who’s who in the drama to end all dramas?](#)

The BBC’s Nick Bryant in Washington says the lawsuit by the DNC is seen as a publicity stunt by many there, as it may not unveil anything that is not already being examined in other investigations – but could keep the matter in the public eye.

The lawsuit, filed in a federal court in Manhattan, names senior Trump aides including his son-in-law Jared Kushner, strategist Roger Stone and former campaign chairman Paul Manafort as defendants, as well as the Wikileaks founder, Julian Assange.

Democratic National Committee chairman Tom Perez said in a statement that the alleged hacking was “an act of unprecedented treachery” and “an all-out assault on our democracy”.

[The Washington Post reports that foreign nations usually have immunity from US lawsuits](#), but Democrats argue the rule should not apply in this case because Russia trespassed on private party servers.



Media captionAll you need to know about the Trump-Russia investigation

In May 2016 the first reports emerged of hackers targeting the Democratic Party. Over the next two months, the reports suggested US intelligence agencies had traced the breaches back to Russian hackers.

In July, on the eve of the Democratic National Convention, Wikileaks published 20,000 internal emails stolen by the hackers.

US intelligence officials said they believed with “high confidence” that Russia had been behind the operation but the Trump campaign publicly refused to accept the findings.

Earlier on Friday, [memos by ex-FBI director James Comey detailing his conversations with Donald Trump were published](#).

He writes that he was asked by Mr Trump to drop an inquiry into links between his former national security advisor, Michael Flynn, and Russia.

Mr Trump sacked Mr Comey last year while he was leading an FBI investigation into allegations of Russian interference in the 2016 presidential election.

[Skip Twitter post by @realDonaldTrump](#)

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Mr Trump tweeted that the memos showed there was no “collusion and no obstruction”.

Political telenovela: Peruvians captivated by Fujimori sibling rivalry

Still reeling from the [abrupt resignation of its president last month](#), Peru is now captivated by a new political drama: the sibling rivalry between the children of the former authoritarian leader Alberto Fujimori, as they battle over his controversial legacy.

The power struggle between Keiko and Kenji Fujimori has all the intrigue, melodrama, plots twists and cliffhangers of an over-the-top Latin American soap opera or telenovela – and it has Peruvians hanging on the edge of their seats.

Keiko Fujimori, the leader of the majority opposition party, played a key role in the toppling of Pedro Pablo Kuczynski , as her party released a series of secretly filmed videos showing his allies offering to buy the votes of opposition lawmakers to avoid impeachment.

In releasing the videos, however, she also implicated her brother Kenji and his political allies in the alleged vote-buying, which could see him face criminal charges.

He has vowed revenge, and on Friday is due to testify to prosecutors investigating allegations that Keiko received \$1.2m in campaign donations from the scandal-plagued Brazilian firm Odebrecht in 2011.

The long-simmering sibling rivalry erupted spectacularly – and now threatens to wipe out both their political futures.

Keiko, a two-time presidential candidate, tweeted her regret that “her own brother had become involved in practices which had done so much damage to us as Peruvians and as a family”. She was referring to [videos which showed her father’s intelligence chief Vladimiro Montesinos](#) bribing politicians, judges and army chiefs – which ended her father’s decade-long regime in 2000.

The former president was jailed in 2009 for authorising death squads, overseeing rampant corruption and vote-rigging. He was pardoned by Kuczynski in December, but his children could both now face criminal charges.

Ironically, the father's pardon may have aggravated the split between the children, said Gustavo Gorriti, a Peruvian journalist who was kidnapped by Fujimori's regime in the 1990s.

"Kenji remains completely faithful to his father and did everything possible to secure his release," he says. "While Keiko realised it was better that he was in prison."

Thrown into politics aged 19, Keiko became her father's first lady in 1994 when her parents separated. Now aged 42, a seasoned politician and twice presidential candidate, she cuts a strikingly different image from Kenji, 37.

While Keiko is seen as cold and vengeful, Kenji is indulged as a spoilt youngest son, and won the highest number of votes in Congress when he was re-elected in 2016

Styling themselves as The Avengers, Kenji and a band of dissident lawmakers from his sister's Fuerza Popular party, split the *Fujimorista* support base by abstaining from an impeachment vote against Kuczynski in December saving him from being ousted.

For a while the tactic worked. Kenji, a self-confessed comic-book geek depicted himself as hammer-wielding Thor or dressed in the Bruce Lee-style yellow jumpsuit of the heroine of Quentin Tarantino's Kill Bill films.

But then, Keiko got her own back entangling Kenji and his group in the incriminating videos.

In giving evidence against his sister in the Odebrecht investigation "Kenji has shown he is prepared to go down the kamikaze way, taking his sister with him," says Gorriti.

Facing expulsion from Peru's congress, Kenji has lost that political capital, says Giovanna Peñaflor, director of pollster Imasen.

"By the same token, it's been a pyrrhic victory for Keiko," she adds, saying the dirty tactics used in the feud have worn down public sympathy for both siblings.

That has done nothing to diminish Peruvians' fascination with the ongoing Fujimori saga, says Jorge Bruce, a psychoanalyst and newspaper columnist.

"Peruvians love telenovelas and this is a real life soap opera," he says.

"We are a Latin American country where family is still what matters above everything else. The Fujimoris are a particularly complicated, dysfunctional family," he adds.

"Years passed by and we are still under the spell of the Fujimori story – which says more about us than it does about them."



In what is potentially one of the most significant blasphemy lawsuits of recent times, 35 individuals have been accused of having “offenses against religion” in Bangladesh. In accordance with Bangladesh Penal Code 295, C. R. case number 273/18 was filed with the Judicial Magistrate Court this past 16th of April 2018.

The plaintiff, one Mr. Shamim, has named 36 individuals in this lawsuit, and accused them of writing abusively about religion, in particular, Islam. The other accused are Nazmul Hossain Ghatok as the main accused, Editor Arifur Rahman, Roosevelt Halder, Adnan Saqib, Suranjoy Sarker, Sharmin Khan, Tahera Sultana, Syed Sunvy Anick Hossain, Syed Mohammad Sajeeb Abed, Saiful Islam, Faysal Hossain Onik, Pinaki Deb Apu, Miltan Kumar Dey, Sujan Chandra Dey, Abu Taher Muhammad Mustafa, Enyetul Huda, Husni Mubarak, Syed Isteak Hossain Shawon, Tofail Hossain, Naymul Hossain, Ashef Abrar Titu, MD Abdullah Al Hasan, Tamzid Hussain, Siddikur Rahman, Reana Trina, Hussain Muhammad Parvez, Shahadat Hosain, Syed Samun Ali, Abdul Ahad Shanto, Saiful Islam, Shipon Ahmed, Zubayer Ahmed and Kamrunnaher Shahana.

The primary defendant, one [Mr. Nazmul Hossain A.K.A “Ghatok”](#), and a magazine called “Atheist In Bangladesh”, who published an article he wrote, seem to be at the center of this lawsuit.

Our court correspondent reports that the plaintiff Mr. Shamim came across Mr. Hossain’s article first in this particular magazine. The abusive content he found in the said article, prompted him to go through the entire magazine which he found to be inundated with crude, offensive and vehemently demeaning words towards religion as a whole.

We launched a small investigation in an attempt to uncover the history of this magazine. It appears “Atheist in Bangladesh” have been publishing such obscene content about religion, Islam in particular, for a good while now. Alongside that, it has also been endorsing and facilitating several individuals, particularly those accused in the lawsuit, who devote themselves towards producing such obscene, rude content.

This lawsuit comes of course on the back what is currently rather a fragile environment in

Bangladesh. On one side we have a society readily embracing and accepting fundamentalism. And on the other, we have a government and law enforcement authorities currently engaged in an almighty tussle with bouts of terrorism, militancy that have plagued the nation in recent times.



Nevertheless, we were unable to get in touch with Mr. Shamim. Unsurprisingly our correspondent was not able to get in touch with any of the accused. However, he did manage to track down Mr. Nazmul Hossain's house in his hometown of Kalkini, Madaripur but found it to be devoid of living souls. When he queried some of the neighbors they revealed that the house has been empty for some time now and no one knows the whereabouts of its previous inhabitants.



Reactions towards the lawsuit have been generally mixed. Social media platforms which have been rife ever since news of the lawsuit broke in, are a perfect indicator of that. There were several users on Facebook for instance who claimed that "justice had been served". Some stated that 'Kafir's Munafiks and Indian agents like that' should be hanged till death. Some claimed that the accused should be grateful that they are even getting a chance at

fair trial, instead of being shot dead.

Meanwhile, several writers, bloggers, and online activists have firmly criticised Mr. Shamim for his actions. They described the Bangladesh Penal code 295 as the nation's excuse for stifling freedom of speech. Some claimed that it encourages individuals like Mr. Shamim, who do not even have the required depth to understand religion and its roots, to take up arms against free-thinking souls at will.

We spoke to Mufti Babunagari, spokesperson of Hefajat E Islami Bangladesh, He condemned the accused for their actions, lauding Mr. Shamim meanwhile as a true Muslim. He claimed that Kafirs, Munafiks like that should either be stripped of their rights or deported to India.

The Police Bureau of Instigations (PBI) meanwhile has taken charge of this incident. One of their spokespersons, who wished to remain anonymous, revealed that the PBI is hard at work on investigating the claims made in this lawsuit. With time he promised all the details will be revealed, but for now, there is nothing to report.

Pakistan seeks \$70 million from India for unplayed cricket series

Karachi: Pakistan has kicked off a legal battle against India for not honouring a bilateral cricket series agreement, the sport's governing body confirmed Thursday.

The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) is seeking \$70 million in compensation from the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) after the country failed to attend two series in 2014 and 2015 as part of a memorandum of understanding signed between the two boards.

The International Cricket Council (ICC) confirmed receiving the notice.

"The ICC has received a Notice of Dispute from the PCB's lawyers, which will be forwarded to the chairman of the Dispute Resolutions Committee next week," a spokesman of the ICC said.

The ICC Dispute Resolution Committee is headed by Michael Beloff QC who will appoint independent adjudicators to hear the case.

The PCB sent a legal notice to their counterparts earlier this year but Indian officials rejected the memorandum as "a piece of paper".

The arch-rivals have not played a full bilateral series since 2007.

New Delhi halted all bilateral sports with Pakistan in the wake of 2008 Mumbai attacks, which India blamed on militants based in Pakistan.

Those attacks, which left eight people dead and seven Sri Lanka players and their staff injured, suspended international cricket in Pakistan and forced them to play at neutral venues of United Arab Emirates (UAE).

The two planned series between India and Pakistan were due to take place at a neutral venue.

Seven killed in adverse weather; depression moving away

At least seven persons were killed and five person has gone missing due to the adverse weather conditions prevailing in the country as the deep depression was moving away from Sri Lanka, authorities said today.

The Police said three fishermen from Ambalangoda and Dodanduwa were among the deceased and another fishermen from Dodanduwa was reportedly went missing.

The other two deceased were identified as residents of Kiribathgoda and Madolsima. Police said five more persons were injured due to the adverse weather condition.

Meanwhile, the Meteorology Department said that the deep depression in the Arabian Sea was now located at 300 km to the west of Colombo.

Issuing the weather report for the next 12 hours at 10.00 am, the department said that the deep depression would likely to develop in to a cyclonic storm within next few hours and move west-northwest ward direction.

“Showery and windy condition about 60-70 kmph are expected over the island particularly in the South-Western part. Heavy falls about 100-150mm can be expected at some places in the Southern, Sabaragamuwa, Central, Uva and Western provinces,” it added.

Meanwhile, the Irrigation Department said that the water levels of Pitabeddara, Panadugama and Sapugoda areas in Nilwala River and Thawalama area in the Gin river are reaching the spill level.

Issuing a statement, the Department said that Nilwala, Gin and Kalu Rivers had received high rainfalls during the past 24 hours and advised that people living downstream areas should to be vigilant in this regard.

“Minor flood situations could be occurred around the said reservoirs if the heavy rain continues,” it added.

Meanwhile, holding a press conference in Colombo, Disaster Management Minister Anura Priyadarshana Yapa said though the current deep depression was moving away from the country, another atmospheric depression likely to be developed at the Bay of Bengal.

However, he said according to the present data, the Meteorology Department cannot predict its behaviour this early.

“We advise the public to be vigilant even in the next couple of days,” he added. **(Thilanka Kanakarathna)**

GDP growth rebounds to 6.3% in September quarter

Recovers from 5.7% in last quarter; Infrastructure output grew 4.7% in October from a year ago, driven by higher refinery production.

Reversing five quarters of slowing GDP growth, the Indian economy expanded by 6.3% in July-September on the back of a pick-up in manufacturing.

The gross domestic product (GDP) growth had hit a three- year low of 5.7% in the first quarter of 2017-18. It was 7.5% in the September quarter of 2016-17.

According to the Central Statistics Office (CSO) data, the economic activities that registered growth of over 6% in the second quarter are manufacturing, electricity, gas, water supply, other utility services and trade, hotels, transport and communication, and services related to broadcasting.

The agriculture, forestry and fishing sector is estimated to have grown by 1.7%.

Infrastructure output grows 4.7%

Eight core sectors grew at a slower pace of 4.7% in October, chiefly due to subdued performance of cement, steel and refinery segments.

The eight infrastructure sectors – coal, crude oil, natural gas, refinery products, fertilisers, steel, cement and electricity – had clocked a growth of 7.1% in October 2016.

Meanwhile, the Industry Ministry has revised downwards September growth print of these eight sectors to 4.7% from the earlier estimate of 5.2%.

Official data released this evening showed that cement production contracted by 2.7% as against an expansion of 6.2% in October 2016.

Output growth in the steel segment too slowed to 8.4% in the last month compared to 17.4% in the year-ago period.

Similarly, there was slowdown in refinery output, whose growth was 7.5% in October 2017. This compares with 12.6% expansion in the same month in 2016.

Electricity generation, too, was slower on an annual basis.

Meanwhile, the coal segment has shown significant improvement as it expanded by 3.90%. It witnessed a decline of 1.9% in the year-ago period.

The fertiliser sector grew by 3% as against 0.7% last year.

Crude oil production and natural gas output have shown improvement, too.

Cumulatively, the growth in the eight core sectors slowed down to 3.5% as against 5.6% in the comparable period of the last fiscal.

The eight core industries constitute 40.27% of weight of items in the index of industrial production (IIP).

Francis is the second pope to visit Bangladesh

Bangladesh rolled out the red carpet as Pope Francis, the leader of the world's 1.2 billion Catholics, arrived at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport in Dhaka on a three-day state visit.

A 21-gun salute heralded the arrival of the 80-year-old Pope Francis when he alighted from a VVIP flight of Biman Bangladesh Airlines Thursday afternoon, wrapping up his three-day Myanmar visit, at around at 3:05pm.

President M Abdul Hamid received the Pope near the VVIP Tarmac of the airport, while two tiny tots presented him a bouquet.

Also Read- [Pope to meet 15 Rohingyas during his Bangladesh trip](#)

A smartly turned out contingent drawn from Bangladesh Army, Navy and Air Force gave a guard of honour and state salute to the highest catholic priest while accompanied by the president Pope Francis he took the salute from a makeshift "Saluting Dais" after inspecting the guard.

Francis is the second pope to visit Bangladesh. Pope John Paul II visited Bangladesh back in 1986.

Pope Francis arrived in Dhaka at the invitation of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and Catholic Bishop's Conference of Bangladesh.

Thereafter, Abdul Hamid introduced cabinet members and other dignitaries to Pope Francis at the presentation line.

Finance Minister Abul Maal Abdul Muhith, Commerce Minister Tofail Ahmed, Agriculture Minister Begum Matia Chowdhury, Foreign Minister AH Mahmood Ali, and Law Minister Anisul Haque, were also present at the airport to welcome the Pope.

Besides, Cabinet Secretary M Musharraf Hossain Bhuiyan, the chiefs of three services, PM's senior secretary Suriya Begum, Vatican City Ambassador to Bangladesh George Kocherry and Inspector General of Police (IGP) M Sohikul Haque were, among others, present.

From the airport, Pope is scheduled to visit National Martyr's Memorial at Savar to pay his rich tribute to the memories of the 1971 martyrs at 4pm and also Farther of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman by placing wreaths at his portrait at the Bangabandhu Memorial Museum at 32 Dhanmondi.

Also Read- [What would Jesus do?](#)

In the evening, Pope will meet with President Hamid at Bangabhaban where he will join a meeting with Speaker, Chief Justice, ministers, politicians, civil society members and diplomats at Darbar Hall.

He will also sign a visitor's Book at the Credential Hall in the President's palace. Meanwhile, an intensified security measures were taken centering the visit of the Catholic priest to Bangladesh.

IS capital put on emergency

US military officials are monitoring reports that Islamic State have declared a state of emergency in Raqqa.

Social media and news reports that suggest IS may have come under siege in its self-declared capital in Syria are being closely watched by the US-led anti-IS coalition.

Col Steve Warren, spokesman for the coalition said: "We have seen this declaration of emergency in Raqqa, whatever that means."

"We know this enemy feels threatened, as they should," he told CNN on Friday,

Media reports have indicated that the terrorist group is moving personnel around the city and attempting to put up covers to shield potential targets from airstrikes and ground attacks.

Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), who are fighting to liberate IS-occupied land, Spokesman Tajir Kobani announced earlier this week that commanders of the SDF-affiliated groups in Northern Syria had coordinated plans for a joint final operation for liberating Raqqa from the IS.

Meanwhile, Lebanese Shia militant group Hezbollah yesterday blamed Sunni extremists for killing its top military commander in Syria and vowed to keep fighting to defend President Bashar al-Assad's regime.

The IS jihadist group, meanwhile, overran a government-controlled hospital in the eastern city of Deir Ezzor, killing 20 members of pro-regime forces and taking medical staff hostage, a monitor said.

Badreddine, who was on a US terror sanctions blacklist and wanted by Israel, was killed in a blast on Thursday night near Damascus international airport.

In Deir Ezzor, IS attacked Al-Assad hospital yesterday as it pressed an advance aimed at controlling all of the oil-rich city and its vital airbase, the Observatory said.

The attack sparked clashes with regime forces providing security for the hospital in which six jihadists were also killed, the monitor said.

Meanwhile, Turkey state-run Anadolu Agency yesterday said the Turkish military and US-led coalition forces killed 45 Islamic State militants in shelling and an air strike north of the Syrian city of Aleppo.¹¹

Sadiq Khan wants to 'educate' Trump on Islam

As a response to Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump's comment on a ban on Muslim in the United States, London's new mayor Sadiq Khan says he would welcome Trump to London to "educate" him about Islam and its compatibility with Western values.

In an interview with NBC News on Friday, the son of a Pakistani immigrant bus driver said Trump's "ignorant" views on Islam were "inadvertently playing into the hands of extremists" who prey on young Muslims.

"To suggest that it's incompatible to be Western and to be Muslim is, I think, really, really risky," Khan said during a visit to a London elementary school.

Real-estate mogul and reality TV star Trump in December suggested a temporary ban on all Muslims entering the US after a deadly mass shooting in San Bernardino that officials said was inspired by ISIS.

Trump's proposal triggered widespread criticism and condemnation from global political and religious leaders.

"I want Donald Trump to come to London so I can introduce myself to him as a mainstream Muslim, very, very comfortable with Western liberal values, but also introduce him to hundreds of thousands, dare I say millions of Muslims in this country, who love being British, love being Western."

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“I want Donald Trump to come to London so I can introduce myself to him as a mainstream Muslim, very, very comfortable with Western liberal values, but also introduce him to hundreds of thousands, dare I say millions of Muslims in this country, who love being British, love being Western.”

“I want to educate Donald Trump. I want to show him that you can be Muslim and be Western,” said Khan, who was sworn-in on May 7.

Trump this week said his proposed ban on Muslims entering the US was “only a suggestion” and told the New York Times that he was “happy” about Khan’s election.

He also told the Times that the Khan could be an exception to the ban.

Khan has rejected Trump’s exemption, and said he will try to visit the US before the November presidential election.

A member of Britain’s opposition center-left Labour party, Khan is now Europe’s highest-profile Muslim politician after winning last week’s London mayoral election, trouncing his Conservative opponent Zac Goldsmith by a hefty margin after a ferocious contest.

Goldsmith, a member of Britain’s ruling Conservative party, has been accused of running a divisive campaign that aimed to link Khan to religious extremists.

Khan has condemned Goldsmith’s campaign as coming “straight out of the Donald Trump playbook” and said his election could provide lessons for Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton.

He thanked Americans for their messages of support, including former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and New York Mayor Bill de Blasio, who were quick to congratulate Khan on his election win.

Khan also made clear his preference for the next president.

“As a proud feminist at City Hall, as someone who’s a father of two daughters, I think Hillary Clinton being the president of the USA would send a loud and clear message, but also she’s competent, she’s got gravitas, she’s got huge experience,” he said. “So you won’t be surprised to know I want Hillary to be president.”

Source: NBCNews

'EU trying to copy Hitler-like superstate'

Former London mayor Boris Johnson has claimed the European Union was behaving like German Nazi dictator Adolf Hitler by trying to create a superstate, in a newspaper interview yesterday.

Johnson is one of the leading figures campaigning for Britain to leave the EU in closely-fought referendum being held on June 23.

His comments drew swift criticism from opponents, who said they were “offensive” and showed a

“lack of judgement”.

Johnson said the last two thousand years of European history had featured repeated efforts to bring the continent together under a single government, emulating the Roman empire.

“Napoleon, Hitler, various people tried this out, and it ends tragically. The EU is an attempt to do this by different methods,” Johnson told The Sunday Telegraph.

“But fundamentally what is lacking is the eternal problem, which is that there is no underlying loyalty to the idea of Europe.

“There is no single authority that anybody respects or understands. That is causing this massive democratic void.”

Johnson is a leading member of the ruling Conservative party of Prime Minister David Cameron, who is leading the campaign to keep Britain in the EU.
