

# **UK PM RACE: RISHI SUNAK FRONTRUNNER, BORIS JOHNSON BOWS OUT**

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After Johnson's bow out, Penny Mordaunt will be attempting to woo his backers. It is only when she sails past the 100-mark by Monday, 2 p.m., that she

can go head to head with Sunak.

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Yesterday, on October 23rd, Rishi Sunak officially entered the race to become the UK's next prime minister. Having gotten the nod from 147 Tory MPs at the time of writing, the former chancellor is well over the needed 100-vote threshold; MP Penny Mordaunt, who [made her bid last Friday](#), trails at 24 votes.

The aspiring PM tweeted out on Sunday that the UK is a “great country” facing a “profound economic crisis,” which he seeks to fix as its next prime minister, while he—as its new leader—will unite a fractured Tory party.

<https://twitter.com/RishiSunak/status/1584114970723512321>

Notable backers of Sunak include former Home Secretary Suella Braverman—who [brooked no “fantasies”](#) about a possible comeback by former PM Boris Johnson—and her successor Grant Shapps.

Should no other declare a bid, with the backing of one hundred MPs by Monday's deadline, Sunak will be pronounced the winner that same day. This scenario is now more than likely.

Late Sunday, Boris Johnson [released a statement](#) in which he said he was initially “attracted” by the prospect of returning to No. 10.

According to the former PM, he had "cleared the high hurdle" of nominations with 102 supporters, emphasizing that if he wanted to, he "could indeed be back in Downing Street on Friday." Before his latest announcement, 57 Tory MPs had publicly voiced their support.

Yet, aware he might prove too controversial to take on the job again, he had decided it was not the right thing to do, as you "can't govern effectively unless you have a united party in parliament."

Fearing that its dysfunction might trigger a general election (which Labour is bound to win soundly), he found himself to be "uniquely placed" to avert one. He viewed it as a "further disastrous distraction just when the government must focus on the economic pressures faced by families across the country."

He went on to note that he had "reached out to both Rishi (Sunak) and Penny (Mordaunt)" in the hope of coming together in the national interest, but commented that "sadly, [they had] not been able to work out a way of doing this."

Johnson concluded that he would commit his support "to whoever succeeds," believing he had "much to offer," but regretted that "this is simply not the right time."

With Johnson's bow out, Penny Mordaunt will be wooing his backers double-quick. Only when she skates past the 100-mark by Monday, 2 p.m., will she be able to go head-to-head with Sunak.

Currently, only 228 out of 357 Tory MPs have made known their vote—which still leaves a rich pool of the 'uncommitted' to draw from.

Whoever does ultimately win will face a daunting, thoroughly unenviable, task. Not only would he or she have to lead an economically fraught UK, burdened by a historic cost-of-living crisis, but a Tory party that has seemingly lost its direction—as well as the trust of

much of the electorate. Ever since the [outgoing PM Liz Truss](#) debacle, poll ratings for the Conservative Party have taken a nosedive; [only 21% of those queried](#) professed they would vote Tory, should a general election take place now.