

Protesters plan virtual march to mark Julian Assange's year in UK custody



London, April 9 (RHC)-- A worldwide march in support of Julian Assange will be held on-line due to the coronavirus pandemic. Apart from disrupting support efforts, the dreaded virus is also directly threatening the jailed WikiLeaks co-founder.

The "World's First Virtual March" is set to take place on Saturday, April 11th -- exactly one year after Assange was dragged out of the Ecuadorian Embassy in London by British police and taken into custody. As the coronavirus pandemic has seen restrictions and outright bans imposed on mass gatherings across many countries, the march will be held on-line.

Event organizers promised to provide participants with "virtual banners" which will become available for sharing on Saturday. The WikiLeaks co-founder's supporters are free to show up with 'banners' of their own as well -- the only condition is not to unleash your prime pro-Assange memes before April 11.

While the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic has forced Assange's followers to adopt more unconventional means of showing support, it is also threatening the very life of the WikiLeaks co-founder. The maximum-security Belmarsh Prison, where Assange is being held, reported its first COVID-19 death

this week, and his supporters fear the disease may spread rapidly through the facility.

Assange is fighting extradition to the United States, where he faces multiple charges of conspiring to hack government computers and breaking espionage laws. If convicted, he could spend the rest of his life behind bars.

Assange's health has already suffered throughout his years inside the Ecuadorian Embassy, where he sought asylum in 2012. Numerous activists, officials, doctors and public figures -- including a UN rapporteur on torture -- have repeatedly pointed to his deteriorating health, warning that he might die in the UK prison.

WikiLeaks Editor-in-Chief Kristinn Hrafnsson told RT that Assange is at high risk from COVID-19, given the poor state of his health even before being sent to Belmarsh and how quickly such a virus can spread through the "petri dish" prison environment.

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