

Operation London Bridge

September 9, 2022

In news— Queen Elizabeth II, Britain's longest-reigning monarch, 96-year-old monarch died at her remote Highlands residence, Balmoral, in Scotland. Her death kicked off a detailed plan termed Operation Long Bridge.

What is Operation Long Bridge?

- The plan to **deal with the death of the head of state in Britain was termed Operation London Bridge**, and first reported by The Guardian in 2017, and later by Politico in 2021.
- It put in place in the 1960s, the **plan meticulously lists the procedures that roll out moments after her death** and culminate with her funeral 10 days later.
- The London Bridge plan, factored in the eventuality of her passing at Balmoral. **The part of the plan for her death at her favourite castle in Scotland was codenamed 'Operation Unicorn'.**
- These protocols are actually a detailed script for key logistical matters and procedures, including the funeral procession.
- The plan terms the day after her death as D+1 and the day of her funeral as D+10 (D-day plus 10 days).
- During this period, the British parliament will suspend business for these 10 days after relaying a condolence message.
- **As per the plan, after informing the British PM, the information about the Queen's death** has already been conveyed to other governments where she was the head of state, and **then to 38 other nations of the Commonwealth.**
- Also, **Queen's death means that Prince Charles immediately becomes King** and head of state for 14 Commonwealth realms.
- However, an official proclamation will only be made a day

after the Queen's death. **This will happen at St James's Palace in London, in front of a ceremonial body known as the Accession Council.**

- **The Queen's coffin is likely to be taken to the Palace of Holyroodhouse,** the plan also includes a ceremonial procession to St Giles's Cathedral on the Royal Mile in Edinburgh. The coffin will then be flown to London.
- On D+5 – D-day plus five days – a ceremonial procession through London will take the coffin from Buckingham Palace to the Palace of Westminster. A service will be held at Westminster Hall.
- From D+6 to D+9, the Queen will lie in state at Westminster Hall, where people will be allowed to pay their respects.
- With the Queen lying in state, the rehearsal for the detailed funeral plans will be held.

Queen Elizabeth II-

- Elizabeth II (Elizabeth Alexandra Mary) was **Queen of the United Kingdom from 6 February 1952 until her death in 2022.**
- **Her reign of 70 years and 214 days was the longest of any British monarch** and the second-longest recorded of any monarch of a sovereign country.
- At the time of her death, Elizabeth was also Queen of 14 other Commonwealth realms in addition to the United Kingdom.
- Elizabeth was born in Mayfair, London, as the first child of the Duke and Duchess of York (later King George VI and Queen Elizabeth).
- Her father acceded to the throne in 1936 upon the abdication of his brother, King Edward VIII, making Elizabeth the heir presumptive.
- When her father died in February 1952, Elizabeth—then 25 years old—became queen regnant of seven independent Commonwealth countries: the United Kingdom, Canada,

Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Pakistan, and Ceylon (known today as Sri Lanka), as well as Head of the Commonwealth.

- Elizabeth reigned as a constitutional monarchy through major political changes such as the Troubles in Northern Ireland, devolution in the United Kingdom, the decolonisation of Africa, and the United Kingdom's accession to the European Communities and withdrawal from the European Union.
- The number of her realms varied over time as territories have gained independence and some realms have become republics.