Liz Truss: The New Conservative Regime Begins

Why in news?

In a fierce fight between former U.K. Foreign Secretary Liz Truss and former Chancellor Rishi Sunak, Truss has become the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom.

Who is Liz Truss?

- Liz Truss is a former accountant who has been an MP since 2010.
- Truss hails from north of England, a region that is traditionally a stronghold of the opposition Labour Party.
- She became more inclined towards Conservative ideals of reduced role of the government, and greater role of the private sector in the economy.
- Truss is inspired by the United Kingdom's former Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, a Conservative.
- In 2016, she was appointed as Secretary of State for Justice and Lord Chancellor, becoming the first woman to hold either position and the first female Lord Chancellor in the thousand-year history of the office.
- She has been in the post of Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs from September 2021.

Woman Prime Minister's of UK

1. *Theresa May*
2. *Margaret Thatcher*
3. *Liz Truss*

Why did Boris Johnson resign as prime minister?

- Boris was elected on July 24 2019 as the Prime Minister of Britain.
- A number of factors ultimately led Boris to lose the support and confidence of his fellow MPs in the lead up to his exit.
- **Chris Pincher affair issue**- Johnson's deputy chief whip was accused of groping two men, a complaint Boris claimed to be unaware of which later turned out to be untrue.
- **Partygate issue**- It was discovered the PM and a number of MPs attended gatherings despite strict lockdown rules during the coronavirus pandemic.
- **Economic issues**- The cost of living crisis and tax rises also clouded his leadership.

How is PM elected in the UK?

- The UK generally holds elections every 5 years and people vote for the representative in their constituency.
- This time, the election process of the new Prime Minister of the UK was not one where all citizens of the country cast their vote
- Since Boris Johnson resigned in the middle of his term and the Conservatives have the majority, the voting was done by the ruling Conservative Party.
- After the outgoing prime minister has left, the incoming prime minister arrives and is formally asked by the Queen to form a government. This audience is known as '**kissing hands'**.
- The Queen's role in appointing a prime minister is one of her prerogative powers.

What about her association with other countries?

- **European Union**- In the 2016 referendum, she campaigned for the UK to remain in the EU but later supported the Brexit.
- She has also been in-charge of negotiating with the EU over Brexit.
- **Russia-** Truss, as a foreign secretary, strongly condemns Russian President Vladimir Putin for the ongoing war in Ukraine.
- **China**- Truss was closely involved in the decision to ban Chinese telecoms firm Huawei from involvement in Britain's 5G network, over national security concerns.
- **U**.S. - U.S. President Joe Biden is looking forward to deepen the special relationship between the two countries to work on global challenges, including continued support for Ukraine.
- **India**- It was Ms. Truss as International Trade Secretary who signed off on the India-U.K. Enhanced Trade Partnership (ETP), the starting point of the ongoing free trade agreement (FTA) negotiations.
- She has repeatedly flagged enhanced defence and security cooperation with the Indo-Pacific region as a counter-balance to the aggression of Russia and China.

What's in her policy in-tray?

- **Economy**- Truss s committed to cut taxes and dramatically increase defence spending to tackle a wider cost of living crisis in the UK and rising inflation.
- **Energy**- Truss is expected to respond with a major intervention to a crisis around surging energy bills which could include freezing energy bills.
- **Health**- Truss has pledged to put the National Health Service on a firm footing.
- **Equal oppurtunity**- She aims to transform Britain into an aspiration nation with high-paying jobs, safe streets in such a way that everyone everywhere gets the opportunity they deserve.

Liz Truss on international reforms - "United with our allies, we will stand up for freedom and democracy around the world. Recognising that we can't have security at home without having security abroad."

References

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