

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 is 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 opportunity**- 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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