

Britain's Queen Elizabeth II dies at 96



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London, September 8 (RHC)-- Queen Elizabeth II, the UK's longest-reigning royal and among the world's longest-ruling monarchs in history, has died at the age of 96. The queen died at Balmoral Castle in Scotland, Buckingham Palace announced on Thursday. The news came just days after the queen appointed her 15th prime minister, Liz Truss.

Her son Prince Charles, grandson Prince William and other royal family members arrived at Balmoral shortly after doctors announced they were 'concerned' for her health.

She had been suffering from what Buckingham Palace has called "episodic mobility problems" since the end of last year, forcing her to withdraw from nearly all her public engagements.

Elizabeth's eldest son Charles, 73, automatically becomes king of the United Kingdom and the head of state of 14 other realms including Australia, Canada and New Zealand. His wife Camilla becomes Queen Consort.

In a statement, he said that his mother's death marks a moment of the greatest sadness. "We mourn profoundly the passing of a cherished Sovereign and a much-loved Mother. I know her loss will be deeply felt throughout the country, the Realms and the Commonwealth, and by countless people around the world," he said.

The 96-year-old marked her Platinum Jubilee on February 6 after ascending to the throne 70 years ago in 1952, following the death of her father King George VI.

Elizabeth was the queen of Britain and more than a dozen other countries, who saw 15 British prime ministers in her record-breaking reign and earlier this year marked her 70th year on the throne.

At her death, she was head of state of: Antigua and Barbuda, Australia, The Bahamas, Belize, Canada, Grenada, Jamaica, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu and the UK.

At the peak, she was queen of 18 countries at the same time, between 1983 and 1987. Since then, Fiji (1987), Mauritius (1992) and Barbados (2021) have become republics.

Her last years as the monarch were marked by a slew of scandals dogging the royal family.

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