Operation London Bridge: Queen Elizabeth II’s death kicked off a detailed plan, put in place in the 1960s, which meticulously lists the procedures that roll out moments after her death and culminate with her funeral 10 days later.

Operation London 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.

According to The Guardian, 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.

Immediately after death

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 proclaiment will only be made a day after the Queen's death. This, according to the BBC, will happen at St James's Palace in London, in front of a ceremonial body known as the Accession Council.

What happens over the next few days

The Queen's coffin is likely to be taken to the Palace of Holyroodhouse, the Guardian says, adding that 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, the same report pointed out.

The Politico report had also mentioned the possibility of the coffin being taken to London by royal train.

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.

As per the Politico reported plan, 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.