

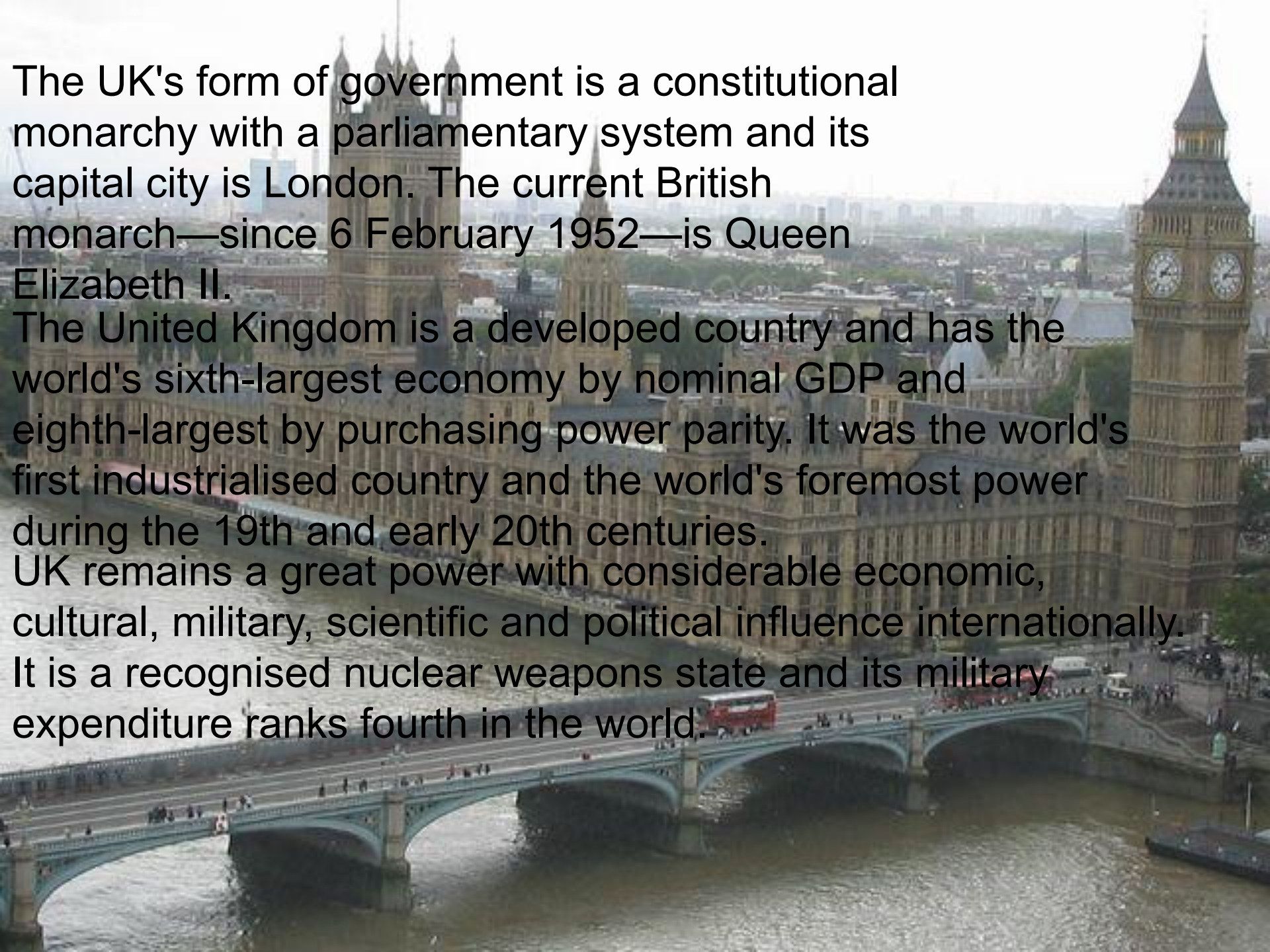
# The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland



**The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, is a sovereign state located off the north-western coast of continental Europe. The country includes the island of Great Britain , the north-eastern part of the island of Ireland, and many smaller islands.**

**The United Kingdom consists of four countries: England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. The latter three have devolved administrations, each with varying powers, based in their capital cities, Edinburgh, Cardiff and Belfast, respectively.**



An aerial photograph of London, England, showing the River Thames, the Houses of Parliament, and the Elizabeth Tower (Big Ben). The city is densely packed with buildings, and a bridge with several arches spans the river in the foreground. A red double-decker bus is visible on the bridge. The sky is overcast.

The UK's form of government is a constitutional monarchy with a parliamentary system and its capital city is London. The current British monarch—since 6 February 1952—is Queen Elizabeth II.

The United Kingdom is a developed country and has the world's sixth-largest economy by nominal GDP and eighth-largest by purchasing power parity. It was the world's first industrialised country and the world's foremost power during the 19th and early 20th centuries. UK remains a great power with considerable economic, cultural, military, scientific and political influence internationally. It is a recognised nuclear weapons state and its military expenditure ranks fourth in the world.



