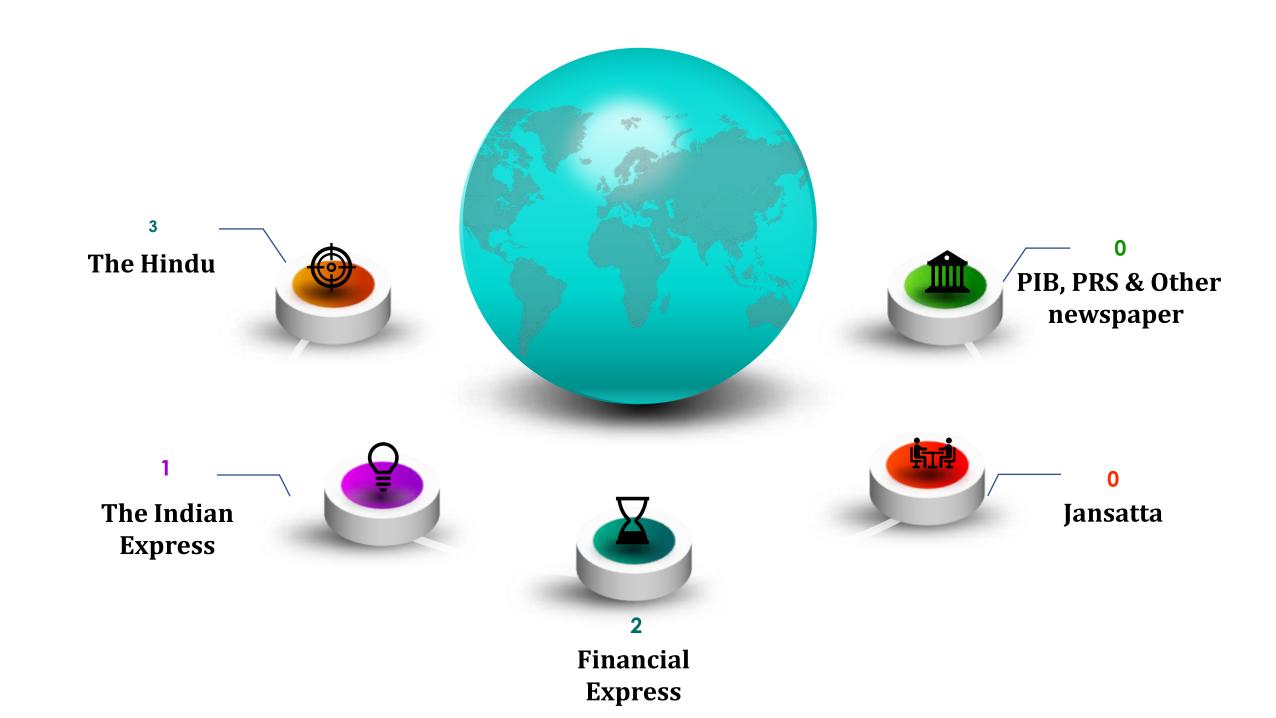
Daily Current Affairs



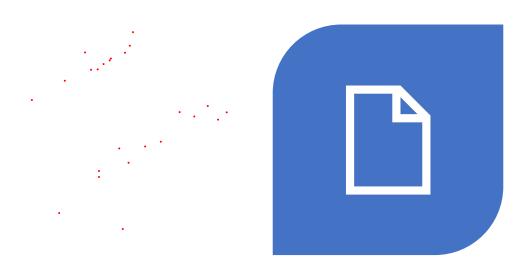








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PDF

10 MCQ QUIZ

• "Real education makes us humble, not arrogant." — Swami Vivekananda



HARRAS CORPUS PLEA Wangchuk's wife moves SC over his detention HEWE IS PAGE 2





Church of England gets first woman head

In Karur, where no way out What led to the death of 41 at TVK's rally



Jurel, Jadeja and Rahul flay WI attack

ENNERDE



Bussia launches largest attack on Ulcraine gas sites

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Pak. lost several jets in Operation Sindoor: IAF chief

NEW DELMI Air Chief Marshal Arror Freet Singh on Friday and that sodia inflicted extension darrogs on Palaisan's appears; including U.S.—matte F-16s and Chinese JF-17 fighter jets, during Operation Stridens. Breaking a the Strick Air Force Day celebration in Delfe, the Mr Authoritum in Delfe, the Mr chief presented the account a the strikes, whose outlining the Air Forse's future plans unde Businsap 2047, is past a

Court rejects bail petitions of TVK leaders

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Nations must prepare to deal with stablecoins: Sitharaman

innovations in cryptocurrency are transforming landscape of money and capital flows, and they may force nations to adapt o new monetary architectures or risk exclusion, says Finance Minister, India's economic leverage is evolving, Minister adds

T.C.A. Sharad Baghayan

inting at a possible shift in India's cryptocurrency policy, Union Finance Mi-nister Numala Sitharaman on Priday said countries would have to "prepare to engage" with stablecoins whether they welcome the clunge or not.

change or not.
"Innovations like stable-coins are transforming the landscape of minusy and capital flows." Ms. Sithara-man said in her inaugural address at the Kautilya-Economic Conclave here.

Scale of transformation "These shifts may force na-tions to make binary choic-es: adapt to new monetary architectures or risk exclu-sion," she said.

Nature beckons

What is a stablecoin? A stablection is a crypta search that allow to materials a making whose relative to a specified asset, or a good of assets

tempt to maintain stable prices as they are pegged to an underlying asset, such as a basket of curren-

"Such developments the undersease the scale of the transformation under way. They also remind us that no nation can insulate itno nation can insulate it-self from systemic change. Whether we welcome these shifts or not, we must prepare to engage with them."

as virtual digital assets.
India has not legalised these products in terms of regulation, but it does tax transactions that involve them.

them.
The RBI, on the other hand, has lobbled hand to ban virtual digital assets outright, while simultane ously launching pilot pro jects of its own Central Bank Digital Currency OCBDC).

Legal backing

Legal backing
GBDEs are cryptocurrencles issued by central
banks and have the same
legal backing as official
currency.

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ed, and new coalitions are emerging. For India, these dynamics highlight both vulnerability arrel However, despite this reliance, she also cau-

tioned that there was no time for complacency. "Just as eternal vigilance is the price of liberty, eternal performance is the price of strategic independence," she said.

whe said.
"There is no room for complacency or self-con-gravilation beyond a quiet confidence in our abilities to take the right decisions and essentie them," the Fi-nance Minister added.

EC briefs Central observers for Bihar polls

The Hindu Bureau

The Election Comm The Election Commission on Prishay organised a brief-ing for general, police, and expenditure observers to be deployed as Cantral ob-servers for the upcoming Bihar Assembly election and by elections in certain States.

States.

It was attended by 267 IAS and 58 IPS officers and 80 Officers from other services. Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar, along with Election Com-missioners Sukhbir Singh Sandhu and Vivek Joshi, adfresped the participants.

India accuses Pak. and Bangladesh of systematic abuse of marginalised

Kallol Rhattacherjee



natural consequence of Pa-kistan's oppressive ap-proach and its systemic plundering of resources hom these territories, which remain under its forcible and filegal occupa-tion. Pakietan must be held securitable for its borrifle human rights violations; External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Bandhir Jais

spokesperson Barullit Jais-wal said. He was respond ing to reports of police crackshown and Internet shutdown in Pakistan-oc-tupind Kashmir.

Protents have been con-tuning in the region under the banner of Awami Ac-tion Committee, demand-ing political referens, subst-lienticity bells. Free others. electricity hills, free educa-tion, and health facilities. The protests have re-

portedly brought life to a standatill in capital Muzaf-farabad. According to the Pakistant newspaper Drive, at least 10 people had died and several were injured in police firing.

shifting the blame' 'Shifting the blame' Rojecting claims by a fian-gladesh interim govern-ment adviser that bulla was extending support to protesiors in the Cittia-gong Hill Tracts, Mr. Juli-sed and Dhalon was 'un-able to maintain low are "commissioned to during the "commissioned to during the "commissioned to during the "commissioned to during the commissioned the commissioned to during the commissioned the commissioned to during the commissioned to during the commissioned to during the commissioned to during the commissioned the commissioned to during the commissioned to during the commissioned the commissioned to during the commissioned the com "routinely sought to shift the blame elsewhere".

"We categorically reject these false and baseless al-legations. The interim go-vernment, which is smable to maintain law and order

We believe that it is a natural consequence of Pakistan's oppressive approach and its resources from these territories. MANUFER JASSWAL

by smaght to shift the blamelsewhere, it would do well to introspect and conduct serious investigations into the action of local extreagainst the minurity com-munities in the Chittagong Hill Tracts," Mr. Jaiswal and. The situation in the

persons belonging to the indigenous Marma and Army personnel, prompting calls for international intervention to protect the rights of the indigenous pe-opls in the region, where armed groups had signed a pact for sutonomy and de-wdopment with the pre-vious Shelich Hasina led gr-

vernment in 1997.
Speaking to presspersons in Dhaka on Tuesday, thome adviser Li. General Jehangir Alam Choudhury freed.) beid 'India and facilist groups' responsible for the unreat in Chitta gong Hill 'Fracts and said, "We are taking all mit measurement be successful."

"A weeted sharter is tro"A weeted sharter is tro-

ing to create unrest to dis rupt the peaceful atmosph ere of Durga puja of the Hindu community Thi

Trump sets Sunday night deadline for Hamas to accept Gaza peace plan

Trump has given Hamas until 2200 GMT (3:30 a.m. his 20-point plan for peace in Gasa, warning the Poles tinian militant group ficed "all hell" if it did not agree

the terms.

The U.S. leader set the deadline - which would fall at 1:00 a.m. Monday in Goza - after an official for Gaza - after an official for the falamist movement and earlier on Fricher that the groups still seeded time of the group still seeded time out mearly two years of de-vastating war in the Falesti-nian services. "If this LAST CHANCE I'll this LAST CHANCE all HELL, like no one has year seen before, will break our against Harnas," Mt. Trump posted on his

Truth Social platform.
The propostal, backed by brazel Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, calls for a cassefire, the release of hostages within 72

hours, Hamas's disarma-ment and a gradual Israeli withdrawal from Gasa. That would be followed by a post-war transitional authority headed by Mr. Trump himself.

"Hamas is still continuing consultations regarding Trump's plan... and has informed mediators that the

official said.

Mohammud Nagsal, a
member of Harman's political bureau, said in a statement on Priday that the
"plan has points of concern, and we will announce our position on it
seem". on the ground on Fri-

<mark>kafari surga</mark>r Topinsts at the Turkoha Andhari Tigor Reserve in Mahanushtro on Priday. The park in Chandraput elektric respensed on October 1 after a gap of three months. More than 90% of safari slots are booked for the nast three months. As cornes

ing eight in Gaza City. The Israeli milita waging an air and ground offensive on the territory's largest urban centre, from which hundreds of thousands have been forced to

'No safe place in Gaza' The UN on Friday resterat-The UN on Frishay rettermed there was monthly place in Capa and that forare signated some in the south were "places of death". "The notion of a suff wone in the south is forcical," UNICAF spinkenman juries (Edec said from the Gora Rete.



Armesty International condemned a "calastrophic wave of mass displace-

ic wave of mass displace-ment" as brasel interestinal its classa City offensive. The rights group said fundreds of thousands of ralestinass, many of whem had already been displaced multiple times, were being forced into "powers woulded entiagree in

to clean water, food, medi-cal care, shelter and lifecal care, shelter and literature instanting infrastructure.

As the war nears the two-year mark and the death toll continues to rise, protesters around the world have railed at lensely interception of a florital currying pre-lydestinian activities and aid for Gasa.

On Friday, the organisers of the Global Sumud Flotills said its last remaining boat had been inter-cepted and israel's Foreign Ministry said it had deported four Italian

Trump's peace plan this week, a Palestinian source close to the group's leader-ship told APP on Wednesday that the Islamist movement wanted to amend some clauses, including the one on disarmament

Humas leaders also want "international gua-rantees" for a full brasili rantees." for a full brauk withdrawal and that in air sasaination attempts would be made inside or outside disea, the source added. Another source said that the group was split over Mr. Trump's plan. Structurally, the group's leastership is divided bet

ween officials based in the Gaza Xirip and Hose abreaul, particularly in Qatar. Misch of Hamar's leader-ship has also been wiped out in Intaelli attacks throughout the Attacks throughout the wait that "the first (notinged) aut-"the first topinion! sup-ports unconditional appro-val, as the priority is a coa-sifire under Trump's guarantees, with media-

tors ensuring taraet imple-

"The second has serious reservations regarding key classes... They favour conditional approval with characteristics reflecting Hadinary and the serious factions, demanda," the source added.
Hugh Lovatt, a semior policy follow at the furn-pean Casucit on Foureign Relations, and "ultimately to the high serious conditions, and "ultimately to the had allowed conveniences." "The second has sertous

ing Hamas leadership in Doha, but also the leader-obly in Gazu, on well as Ha-mas members and fighters in Gaza".

"Additionally. Hamas must then be able to con-vince other factions in Ga-ditional and the con-traction of the con-tracti

The war was triggered by Hamae's Getober 7, 2023 attack on Israel, which resulted in the deaths of 1,219 people, to an AFP tally of isrueli o

Nations must prepare to deal with stablecoins: Sitharaman

Innovations in cryptocurrency are transforming landscape of money and capital flows, and they may force nations to adapt to new monetary architectures or risk exclusion, says Finance Minister; India's economic leverage is evolving, Minister adds

T.C.A. Sharad Raghavan NEW DELHI

inting at a possible shift in India's cryptocurrency policy, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Friday said countries would have to "prepare to engage" with stablecoins whether they welcome the change or not.

"Innovations like stablecoins are transforming the landscape of money and capital flows," Ms. Sitharaman said in her inaugural address at the Kautilya Economic Conclave here.

Scale of transformation

"These shifts may force nations to make binary choices: adapt to new monetary architectures or risk exclusion," she said.

What is a stablecoin?

A stablecoin is a crypto asset that aims to maintain a stable value relative to a specified asset, or a pool of assets

- These assets could be a monetary unit of account such as the dollar or euro, a currency basket, a commodity such as gold, or unbacked crypto assets
- This stability can also be achieved only if a centralised institution is in charge of issuing (minting) and redeeming (burning) these crypto assets



SOURCE: IMF

"Such developments underscore the scale of the transformation under way. They also remind us that no nation can insulate itself from systemic change. Whether we welcome these shifts or not, we must prepare to engage with them."

Stablecoins are a type of cryptocurrency that at-

tempt to maintain stable prices as they are pegged to an underlying asset, such as a basket of currencies or precious metals.

The remarks come at a time when the Finance Ministry and the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) have both voiced their reservations about private cryptocurrencies, also referred to as virtual digital assets.

India has not legalised these products in terms of regulation, but it does tax transactions that involve them.

The RBI, on the other hand, has lobbied hard to ban virtual digital assets outright, while simultaneously launching pilot projects of its own Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC).

Legal backing

CBDCs are cryptocurrencies issued by central banks and have the same legal backing as official currency.

The Finance Minister said India's capacity to absorb external shocks was strong and that its economic leverage was evolving. "Wars and strategic rivalries are redrawing the boundaries of cooperation and conflict," Ms. Sitharaman said.

"Alliances that once appeared solid are being tested, and new coalitions are emerging. For India, these dynamics highlight both vulnerability and resilience."

However, despite this reliance, she also cautioned that there was no time for complacency. "Just as eternal vigilance is the price of liberty, eternal performance is the price of strategic independence," she said.

"There is no room for complacency or self-congratulation beyond a quiet confidence in our abilities to take the right decisions and execute them," the Finance Minister added.

What is a stablecoin?

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- This stability can also be achieved only if a centralised institution is in charge of issuing (minting) and redeeming (burning) these crypto assets



SOURCE: IMF

3. About Stablecoins

- Defined as crypto assets that maintain a stable value relative to an asset or pool of assets.
- Pegged to:
 - Is Fiat currencies (USD, Euro)
 - @ Commodities (Gold, Silver)
 - W Currency basket
- Stability ensured by a central institution managing issuance and redemption.

4. Policy Position in India

- <u>m</u> India hasn't legalized stablecoins but taxes transactions involving them.
- A RBI's stance:
 - Opposes private cryptocurrencies (including stablecoins).
 - Supports CBDC (Central Bank Digital Currency) initiatives.

5. Global Dynamics

- Stablecoins and crypto-assets are redrawing financial boundaries.
- They are reshaping:
 - Monetary systems
 - Capital flows
 - Sovereign control over currency
- Challenge: Balancing innovation with financial stability and regulation.

6. Strategic Implications for India

- India's economy is strong and capable of absorbing shocks.
- Sitharaman stressed:
 - No complacency.
 - Need for strategic independence in financial systems.
- Quote: "Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty, and eternal performance is the price of strategic independence."

- Legal & Regulatory Aspects
- CBDCs (issued by central banks) have legal backing as official currency.
- Private stablecoins lack such legitimacy.

- 8. Broader Economic Message
- India must:
 - Adapt to financial innovations.
 - Duild regulatory frameworks.
 - Remain vigilant to maintain economic sovereignty.

Topic

Detail

Stablecoin

A cryptocurrency designed to minimize price volatility by pegging to a reserve (e.g., USDT, USDC).

CBDC (Central Bank Digital Currency)

Legal tender issued by the central bank in digital form.

RBI's e₹ (Digital Rupee)

India's pilot CBDC project launched in 2022.

Risks of Stablecoins

Financial instability, loss of monetary control, illicit finance.

Global Examples

Tether (USDT), USD Coin (USDC), Diem (Meta's failed project).

Global Historical Evolution (Stablecoins, Crypto & Digital Currencies)

| Time Period / Milestone | Event / Innovation | Significance / Insights |
|-------------------------|---|--|
| 2009 | Launch of Bitcoin | First decentralized cryptocurrency; inspired interest in digital money alternatives. fticonsulting.com +1 |
| January 2014 | Launch of Tether (USDT) | One of the first major fiat-backed stablecoins pegged to USD. Bank for Internati |
| Mid-2010s | Rise of other stablecoins & interest in algorithmic stablecoins | Efforts to combine blockchain innovation with price stability. Bank for Internati +2 |
| 2018 | The Libra / Diem proposal by Facebook | Created global debate on a "global stablecoin," prompting regulatory attention worldwide. Bank for Internati |
| 2020 | BIS Working Paper on stablecoins | Analysed risks, regulatory challenges, "embedded supervision" proposals. Bank for Internati |
| 2023–2025 | Regulatory shifts, e.g. GENIUS Act (US, 2025) | The US passed legislation clarifying issuer rules, oversight, reserve requirements. State Street +1 |
| 2025 | IMF / policy analysis reports | Stressing that stablecoins have reached a critical junction, impacting cross-border payments, financial stability. |

India: Historical Context & Developments

| Time Period / Milestone | Event / Initiative | Details & Significance |
|-------------------------|--|--|
| 2017 | Government forms high-level committee on virtual currencies | Recommended exploring digital fiat currency (CBDC). Wikipedia |
| Apr 2018 | RBI issues circular banning banks from dealing with crypto | Directed regulated entities not to provide services for cryptocurrency trades. Wikipedia +1 |
| Mar 2020 | Supreme Court strikes down RBI crypto banking ban | Court rules RBI's circular was disproportionate. Wikipedia |
| 2021 | Proposal in Parliament for crypto ban + RBI's digital rupee authority | Bill proposed to ban private cryptocurrencies, empower RBI for CBDC. Wikipedia +1 |
| Dec 2022 | Pilot launch of Digital Rupee / e ₹ | Two streams: e₹-W (wholesale) and e₹-R (retail) in select cities and institutions. Wikipedia |
| 2023-2024 | CBDC adoption & expansion of pilot | Retail digital rupee usage grows, test cases in payments, offline transactions considered. Wikipedia |
| 2025 | Policy cautious stance on stablecoins | India resists a full crypto framework, cautious of systemic risks. |

MANCHESTER

U.K. police say it 'may' have shot a victim killed in synagogue attack



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Pakistan-Saudi pact has potential to be like NATO alliance, says Dar



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Russia is regularly targeting U.K. satellites: space command chief



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MONCOW

Taliban Foreign Minister Muttagi to meet Lavrov next week



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Russia launches largest ever attack on Ukraine gas production facilities

Accessed 35 missiles and 90 drongs were fixed at Ukraine's facilities in the northeastern Kharkiv region and central Polkava region, there were power cuts in several regions, Ukraine's Energy Ministry says, without providing further details



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network amid Russia tension

Poland to join NATO's fuel

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Four killed in strike by U.S. forces on 'drug-smuggling boat'

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Pak. government team holds talks with PoK protest leaders

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Mullally appointed first woman to lead the Church of England

Agency Phancy Press.

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Poland to join NATO's fuel network amid Russia tension

Agence France-Presse WARSAW

A quarter of a century after it joined NATO and amid rising tension on its eastern frontier, Poland will finally join the alliance's fuel pipeline network, the government said on Friday.

The Western allies operate a 10,000-km network of European pipelines, bringing fuel and lubricants for tanks and aircraft to where troops might need them in time of war.

But the system was set up during the Cold War, when Poland was still a member of the opposing Warsaw Pact, and NATO's pipelines still do not reach its bases closer to the borders with Russia and Belarus.

Poland has been consi-



Cezary Tomczyk

dering joining the NATO Pipeline System (NPS) for many years, and on Friday, the Defence Ministry and national pipeline operator PERN unveiled a €4.7-billion to do so.

"This is one of the largest investments in the security of the Polish state in the last 30 years," Deputy Defence Minister Cezary Tomczyk told reporters at the signing ceremony.

Warsaw, the Minister said, plans to build a 300-km pipeline from Germany to its military base in Bydgoszcz, in north-central Poland and home to NATO's "joint force training centre" and several support units.

The alliance has helped fund the studies underlying the planning of the extension, but Poland and PERN will build and operate their section of the project once all 32 allies give the go-ahead.

Poland is NATO's leading military spender in terms of proportion of GDP assigned to military and security programmes and a staunch ally of neighbouring Ukraine, which suffered an all-out Russian invasion in February 2022.





- On September 1, 1939, Nazi Germany invaded Poland, starting World War II.
- On September 17, Soviet Union invaded from the east (under the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact).
- Poland was divided between Germany and the USSR.
- Millions of Poles, especially Jews, died during Nazi occupation (Holocaust).
- Warsaw Uprising (1944) a major resistance movement brutally crushed by Nazis.
- By 1945, Poland was "liberated" by the Soviet Red Army, but fell under Soviet influence.

Communist Era (1945–1989)

- After WWII, Poland became a communist state officially the Polish People's Republic.
- Controlled by the Soviet Union, part of the Eastern Bloc and Warsaw Pact.
- Private property and political opposition were restricted.
- The Catholic Church and workers' movements became symbols of resistance.
- 1980: Formation of Solidarity (Solidarność), a trade union led by Lech Wałęsa, challenged communist rule.
- 1989: Following protests and economic crisis, free elections were held → end of communist rule.

Democratic Poland (1989–Present)

- 1989: Poland became a democratic republic.
- 1990: Lech Wałęsa became the first freely elected president.
- 1999: Joined NATO.
- 2004: Joined the European Union (EU).
- Today: A democratic, high-income economy, but with political debates over judiciary, media freedom, and relations with EU.

Modern Profile

- Capital: Warsaw
- Government: Parliamentary Democracy
- Alliances: EU , NATO
- Economy: One of the fastest-growing in Central Europe
- Key Issues: Rule of law disputes with EU, support to Ukraine, energy independence

- NATO Membership: Poland joined NATO in 1999, after the fall of the Soviet Union and dissolution of the Warsaw Pact in 1991.
- Warsaw Pact Past: During the Cold War (1955–1991), Poland was a member of the Warsaw Pact, the Soviet-led military alliance opposing NATO.
- Post-1991 Transformation: Poland transitioned from a Soviet satellite to a Western ally, joining NATO (1999) and the European Union (2004).
- **Defence Spending:** Poland now spends >3.9% of GDP on defence, the highest in NATO after the US, surpassing the NATO guideline of 2%.

Ukraine Conflict Impact: Since Russia's invasion of Ukraine (Feb 2022), Poland has become a frontline state, hosting US troops, Patriot missile systems, and NATO battlegroups.

- NATO Pipeline System (NPS): Background
- Origin: Established in the 1950s–60s during the Cold War to ensure fuel supply for NATO forces in Western Europe.
- Coverage:
 - **10,000+ km** of pipelines
 - Operates across Belgium, Germany, France, the Netherlands, and Southern Europe
- Purpose: Supplies fuel, lubricants for tanks, aircraft, and military vehicles in times of war or crisis.
- Management: Overseen by NATO Support and Procurement Agency (NSPA).
- **Poland's Late Entry:** Though a NATO member since 1999, Poland was not integrated into NPS until now due to its Warsaw Pact legacy and geopolitical geography.

Current Strategic Drivers

Russia Threat:

- Proximity to Belarus and Kaliningrad (Russian exclave).
- Direct support hub for Ukraine's war effort.

Energy Security:

- Russia previously supplied over
 70% of Poland's oil and gas before 2022.
- Post-Ukraine
 war, Poland
 shifted to
 Norwegian
 pipelines and
 LNG imports.

Pipeline Expansion:

- New 300 km link from Germany to Bydgoszcz, NATO's Joint Force Training Centre.
- €4.7 billion
 project by PERN
 (Polish national pipeline operator).

- Cold War Era:
- NATO and Warsaw Pact maintained separate logistics networks.
- Western Europe was reliant on the **NATO pipeline grid**, while the Eastern bloc had its **Soviet-controlled** infrastructure.
- Post-Cold War Integration:
- After 1991, NATO expanded eastward (Poland, Czech Republic, Hungary 1999).
- However, infrastructure integration lagged due to legacy systems and funding gaps.
- Post-2022 Ukraine War:
- NATO's eastern flank (Poland, Romania, Baltic States) is being militarily reinforced.
- Infrastructure (pipelines, bases, logistics) now reflects frontline readiness.

- India's Position (Comparative Insight)
- Not a NATO member, but part of QUAD and Indo-Pacific security partnerships.
- India is developing its own **strategic fuel reserves and supply chains**, including:
 - Strategic Petroleum Reserves (SPR) at Visakhapatnam, Mangaluru, Padur.
 - Partnerships with UAE, US, and Japan for energy security.
- India's interest: Lessons in **logistics resilience** and **collective defence** frameworks.

•

Mullally appointed first woman to lead the Church of England

Agence France-Presse LONDON

A 63-year-old former nurse, Sarah Mullally, was named as the first female Archbishop of Canterbury on Friday, pledging to improve safety at the Church of England following an abuse scandal that ousted her predecessor.

The former midwife becomes the first woman to lead the centuries-old mother church of the world's 85-million strong Anglican community.

Her nomination by a committee tasked with finding a successor to Justin Welby, who stepped down earlier this year, was approved by King Charles III, the U.K. government said.

Ms. Mullally acknowledged the "huge responsibility" of her new role and vowed to "confront the dynamics of power" that had led the church to cover up the abuse of dozens of boys and young men several decades ago.

Tough road

She cautioned that it would "not be easy", due to a "history of safeguarding failures" that has "left a legacy of deep harm and mistrust" in the Church of England, which can trace its origins back to the Roman Empire. "We must all be willing to have light shone on our actions, regardless of our role in the church," she said during an appearance at Canterbury Cathedral in southeast En-



Sarah Mullally

gland following her appointment.

"As Archbishop, my commitment will be to ensure that we continue to listen to survivors, care for the vulnerable, and foster a culture of safety and wellbeing for all," Ms. Mullally added.

The Church of England

became the country's state establishment church following King Henry VIII's split from the Roman Catholic Church in the 1530s.

The British monarch is its supreme governor, while the Archbishop of Canterbury is seen as the spiritual leader of Anglicans worldwide.

Ms. Mullally, who is married with two children, will become the 106th Archbishop of Canterbury, the first having been appointed in the late sixth century, when she officially takes up the role following a ceremony due in January.

She worked in Britain's state-run National Health Service for more than three decades, rising to become its chief nursing officer for England in 1999.

Ordained a priest in 2002, she became the first female Bishop of London in 2018, only four years after the church began allowing women bishops following years of bitter factional wrangling.

Assisted dving Bill

Ms. Mullally has reportedly described herself as a feminist and called the decision to finally allow priests to bless same-sex couples in 2023 as "a moment of hope for the church", although she recognised that differences remained.

As one of 26 archbishops and bishops who sit in parliament's unelected House of Lords Upper Chamber, Ms. Mullally has been a vocal opponent of plans to legalise assisted dying in England and Wales.

In June she called the Bill "unworkable and unsafe", adding "the potential for abuse and uninformed or coerced decisions is enormous".

Ms. Mullally will also have to grapple with falling church attendance numbers.

The Church of England has some 20 million baptised members, but the number of regular churchgoers is estimated at just under one million, according to figures for 2022.

Ms. Mullally was appointed by King Charles following a lengthy selection process under a former head of the MI5 domestic security service.

- Appointment: Sarah Mullally, a 63-year-old former nurse and midwife, has been appointed as the
 first female Archbishop of Canterbury, the head of the Church of England and spiritual leader of
 Anglicans worldwide (~85 million).
- Significance: This marks a historic moment for gender equality in one of the world's oldest Christian institutions.
- Mandate: She pledged to improve safety in the Church after past abuse scandals that led to her predecessor's resignation.

Background:

- Former chief nursing officer for England's NHS.
- Ordained as a priest in 2002.
- Became Bishop of London in 2018, only four years after women were allowed to become bishops.

Challenges:

- Addressing safeguarding failures and church attendance decline.
- Navigating debates on same-sex marriages and assisted dying laws.
- Appointment Authority: Approved by King Charles III after a committee recommendation.

Historical Context

W Church of England Evolution:

- Founded: 1534, by King Henry VIII after breaking from the Roman Catholic Church.
- Role: State church with the British monarch as Supreme Governor.
- Archbishop of Canterbury: Established as the spiritual head of global Anglican Communion.
- Reforms:
 - 1992: Women allowed as priests.
 - 2014: Women allowed as bishops.
 - 2024: First woman Archbishop (Sarah Mullally).

Gender Equality Milestones in Christianity:

- Anglican Church: Gradually opened leadership roles to women.
- Catholic Church: Still prohibits female priests.
- Protestant Churches: Many (e.g., Methodist, Lutheran) already have female bishops and leaders.

Global Context

- Female Church Leaders Globally:
 - United States: Episcopal Church elected Katharine Jefferts Schori as its first female presiding bishop (2006).
 - Nordic Countries: Female bishops common (e.g., Church of Sweden).
- Trend: Growing push for inclusivity and transparency post-sexual abuse scandals across denominations.

Abuse Scandals Context:

- Widespread across Catholic and Anglican Churches in the UK, Australia, and the US.
- Reports exposed systemic cover-ups; forced leadership to introduce safeguarding reforms.

Declining Attendance:

- UK Church attendance has fallen from 1.6 million (2000) to under 1 million (2022).
- Many churches shifting focus to community service and inclusivity to revive relevance.

- Spanish govt. seeks to enshrine abortion as constitutional right

Agence France-Presse MADRID

Spain's leftist government on Friday proposed anchoring the right to abortion in the constitution following a move by Madrid city hall to inform women about a supposed "postabortion syndrome".

The controversy erupted on Tuesday when Madrid city hall, controlled by the conservative Popular Party (PP), approved a farright proposal to require medical services to notify women seeking abortions about this alleged syndrome. The proposal claimed the syndrome could lead to alcohol and drug suicidal use, thoughts, and an increased risk of cancer.

It claimed information about the syndrome was



Protesters outside Spain's top court in 2010 as the scope of law broadened allowing abortion on demand in the first 14 weeks. AP

being "deliberately hidden" and argued abortion is "big business" promoted by feminist ideology.

The PP initially defended the measures but following an outcry Madrid's PP mayor Jose Luis Almeida acknowledged on Thursday that post-abortion syndrome is not a "recognised scientific catego-

ry". He also said informing women about it would not be mandatory.

Socialist Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez on Friday accused the PP on X of "deciding to merge with the far right" and announced plans to submit a proposal to parliament to protect the right to abortion in the constitution.

Constitutional reform in Spain is difficult, requiring a three-fifths majority in Parliament, which would require support from lawmakers from the conservative opposition.

Spain decriminalised abortion in 1985 in cases of rape, if a foetus is malformed, or if a birth poses a serious physical or psychological risk to the mother. The scope of the law was broadened in 2010 to allow abortion on demand in the first 14 weeks of pregnancy. Even so, Spanish women still face obstacles, with many doctors in the public sector refusing to carry out the procedure.

France last year became the first country in the world to enshrine the right to terminate a pregnancy in its constitution.

1. Constitutional Amendment Proposal

- Spain's leftist government under PM Pedro Sánchez announced a proposal to anchor the right to abortion in the Constitution.
- The move came after Madrid's city hall (controlled by conservative Popular Party PP) approved a
 controversial measure on "post-abortion syndrome."

2. Reason Behind the Proposal

- PP's proposal aimed to notify women seeking abortions about "health risks" such as:
 - Alcohol/drug use,
 - Suicidal thoughts,
 - Increased cancer risk.
- Critics argued it was scientifically unfounded and politically motivated to stigmatize abortion.
- Government labeled it "merging with far right" and "anti-women."

3. Scientific Clarification

- Post-abortion syndrome is not recognized by scientific or medical institutions.
- · Feminist groups accuse the PP of using misinformation to undermine reproductive rights.

4. Constitutional Reform Process

- Requires three-fifths majority in Parliament → hence opposition support needed.
- Difficult to pass due to strong conservative resistance.

5. Current Abortion Law in Spain

- Decriminalized in 1985 for:
 - Rape,
 - Foetal malformation,
 - Threat to mother's health.
- 2010 Reform: Abortion on demand allowed up to 14 weeks of pregnancy.
- Despite legality, access issues remain:
 - Many doctors, especially in public hospitals, refuse to perform abortions (conscientious objection).

6. Comparison with France

- France (2023) became the first country to enshrine abortion rights in its Constitution.
- Spain follows similar path to protect rights against political rollback.

Global Perspective:

- Abortion rights have become a polarizing issue worldwide:
 - USA: Roe v. Wade overturned (2022), giving states power to restrict abortion.
 - Latin America: Several nations (e.g. Argentina, Colombia) recently liberalized abortion laws.
 - Europe: Most Western nations allow abortion; Eastern Europe shows restrictive trends.

Indian Context:

- India's Medical Termination of Pregnancy (MTP) Act, 1971 (amended 2021):
 - Allows abortion up to 24 weeks in special cases.
 - Recognizes women's autonomy within medical and legal safeguards.

Serbia's youth revive spirit of resistance 25 years after Slobodan Milosevic

Agence France-Presse

BELGRADE

Every Serbian knows the clenched fist of Otpor – it was stencilled on city walls, over government propaganda, and on flags above the mass protests that brought an end to strongman Slobodan Milosevic's rule.

Twenty-five years on, one of Otpor's founders, Srdja Popovic, sees a connection to the "brave, intelligent and highly creative" new generation marching under another emblem – the bloodied hand – in some of the largest demonstrations ever witnessed in the Balkan nation.

"Otpor arose as a cry of a generation against wars, economic collapse and

CM COM

growing repression," Mr. Popovic said from the United States, where he teaches at the University of Virginia and Colorado College.

The current protesters, on the streets since November, call for justice and fresh elections over "an attempt to cover up corruption" linked to the collapse of a train station roof in Novi Sad that killed 16 people, he said.

"Both generations realised that it was not enough simply to march, chant slogans and carry banners – a whole new system of values has to be created," Mr. Popovic added.

When hundreds of thousands marched on Serbia's parliament on October 5, 2000, it was "the crown of a generational struggle", the 52-year-old said. In a country scarred by NATO bombardment and economic collapse, Otpor helped build Belgrade's uprising through years of protest, alongside the political opposition.

"For me, October 5 is above all a symbol – proof that even the harshest regimes can fall if people unite, organise and persist in non-violent struggle."

'Enemy number one'

Otpor's campaign of peaceful resistance and stunts, often laced with satire and parody, targeted a nationalist government marked by war and sanctions. When Otpor left a barrel with Milosevic's face plastered on it in central Belgrade, people queued to batter it.

Police eventually inter-



Protesters during a march marking 11 months since the tragedy of the Novi Sad railway station on Wednesday in Belgrade. AFP

vened, seizing the barrel.

"Such actions shattered fear and gave people back a sense of power. And the more the regime got irritated, the more mistakes it made."

But the cost was high.

"Otpor became Milosevic's enemy number one," Mr. Popovic said.

More than 2,500 members were detained in 2000 alone, many beaten and tortured.

Hope restored

After Milosevic's fall, Serbia held its first democratic elections since the Second World War, electing reformist Prime Minister Zoran Djindjic.

"The period from 2000 to 2003 was perhaps the greatest renaissance of Serbia in its bleak recent history," Mr. Popovic said.

For Mr. Popovic, those three years pulled Serbia out of an economic and diplomatic abyss, as Belgrade partially confronted war crimes, restored free elections, and gave the people back hope.

"Hope that carried the country until the assassination."

Djindjic was shot dead in 2003. His killers were from a special police unit linked to organised crime and the secret service.

Within five years, Milosevic's party – and many of his close associates – would return to power as part of a coalition government.

It has been part of every government since.

Today's nationalist government, led by Milosevic-era minister Aleksandar Vucic – faces a new wave of student demonstrations, some drawing hundreds of thousands.

"Could I have imagined such a scenario in 2000? Honestly, at that time we – obviously naively – thought we were opening a long chapter of normality," Mr. Popovic said.

'Fresh air'

Based on his activist experience, he has penned a book, 'Blueprint for Revolution,' and taught non-violent resistance to pro-democratic movements

around the world.

The new Serbian protesters are "a true breath of fresh air".

Though many were born after Milosevic's fall, Mr. Popovic sees many similarities with Otpor.

Their symbolic 16 minutes of silence in memory of the Novi Sad victims has, he says, become "as widely recognised as the clenched fist was in the late 1990s".

It took eight years of learning from mistakes for his movement to overthrow Milosevic, and now the future is hard to predict.

But, he said, one thing is

"Eleven months of protests have shattered fear and apathy in the broadest layers of society. And that's not nothing."





Serbia is witnessing renewed youth protests in 2024, reminiscent of the Otpor (Resistance) movement that toppled authoritarian ruler Slobodan Milosevic in 2000.

Current protests are triggered by allegations of corruption, electoral manipulation, and state repression.

2. Historical Background

(a) Milosevic Era (1989-2000)

- Slobodan Milosevic rose to power on nationalist rhetoric, leading Serbia and Yugoslavia into:
 - The Yugoslav Wars (1991–1999),
 - Ethnic cleansing and war crimes (Bosnia, Kosovo),
 - NATO bombings (1999) and international sanctions,
 - Severe economic collapse and isolation.

(b) Otpor Movement (1998-2000)

- Founded by Serbian students in 1998; symbol: * clenched fist.
- Used non-violent civil resistance and satirical protest tactics.
- United public discontent; mobilized youth across the nation.
- Helped topple Milosevic after the October 5, 2000 revolution.

(c) Post-Milosevic Transition

- Democratic reforms under PM Zoran Djindjic (2000–2003).
- Serbia joined international organizations, began EU accession talks.
- Djindjic assassinated in 2003 → resurgence of nationalist politics.

3. Current Scenario (2024)

- New protests demand:
 - Justice for victims of corruption,
 - Free and fair elections,
 - Transparency in government.
- Inspired by Otpor's non-violent methods, using social media and symbolism.
- Represents frustration with authoritarian tendencies under President Aleksandar Vucic.

4. Symbolism & Tactics

- Bloody hand replaces Otpor's clenched fist.
- 16-minute silence honors victims of Novi Sad train station collapse (16 dead).
- Echoes of civil disobedience movements globally (e.g., Ukraine's Maidan, Arab Spring).

X World War II (1939 - 1945)

- In 1941, Nazi Germany invaded the Kingdom of Yugoslavia.
- Serbia came under German occupation; a puppet government was formed in Belgrade.
- Meanwhile, two resistance groups emerged:
 - Partisans (led by Josip Broz Tito, communist)
 - Chetniks (royalist nationalists)
- Tito's Partisans eventually defeated Axis forces with Allied help.

Post-War Yugoslavia (1945 – 1991)

- After WWII, Serbia became one of six republics in Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY)
 under Tito.
- It remained communist but independent of the Soviet bloc.
- Serbia included two autonomous provinces: Kosovo (mostly Albanian) and Vojvodina.
- For decades, the federation was stable and relatively prosperous.

Collapse of Yugoslavia (1991 – 2006)

- After Tito's death (1980), ethnic tensions rose.
- In the 1990s, Yugoslavia broke apart; Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia, Macedonia became independent.
- Serbia + Montenegro remained together as Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY).
- Serbia, led by Slobodan Milošević, was involved in Balkan wars (Bosnia 1992-95, Kosovo 1998-99).
- NATO bombed Serbia in 1999 to stop Kosovo conflict.

Modern Serbia

- 2003: FRY renamed as Serbia and Montenegro.
- 2006: Montenegro voted to separate → Serbia became independent on June 5 2006.
- 2008: Kosovo declared independence (still disputed by Serbia).
- Serbia now aims for EU membership, maintains ties with Russia, balances between West and East.

Today

- Capital: Belgrade
- · System: Parliamentary Republic
- . Goal: EU integration, economic growth
- · Challenge: Kosovo issue, balancing foreign policy

