



Catalonian Unrest

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More than 100 people were detained by Police in Catalonia over controversy sparked by arrest of separatist leaders.

- Catalonia is a semi-autonomous region in **Iberian Peninsula** in the north-eastern Spain.
- It has a distinct history dating back almost 1,000 years and have their own language, parliament, flag and anthem.

Background

- Before the Spanish Civil War(1936-1939), Catalonia enjoyed broad autonomy but that was suppressed under General Francisco Franco.
- Under the military government of Francisco Franco, from 1939-1975, Catalan culture was suppressed.
 - Symbols of Catalan identity such as castells, or human towers, were prohibited and parents were forced to choose Spanish names for their children.
- When Franco died, the region was granted autonomy again under **the 1978 constitution** and prospered as part of the new, democratic Spain.
- A 2006 statute granted even greater powers, boosting Catalonia's financial clout and describing it as a "nation", but Spain's Constitutional Court reversed much of this in 2010.

Demand For Independence

- The Catalan region has long been the industrial heartland of Spain – first for its maritime power and trade in goods such as textiles, but recently for finance, services and hi-tech companies.
 - It has been one of the wealthiest regions of Spain, contributing around 25.6% of exports, 19% of GDP and 20.7% of foreign investment.

- Catalan nationalists have long complained that their region sends too much money to poorer parts of Spain, as taxes are controlled by Madrid and receives much less from Spain.
- They also claims that Spain's changes to their autonomous status in 2010 undermined Catalan identity.

Catalonian Referendum of 2017

- Referendum was held in october 2017 in which 90% of Catalonian voted for independence but the voter turnout was only 43%.
- It was alleged that Spanish National Police tried to stop people from voting which led to widespread violence.
- However, the referendum was declared illegal by Spain's central government as it was marred by wide scale violence.
- The referendum has thrown the country into its worst constitutional crisis.

