

Hungary Parliament Approves Sweden's NATO Bid

Why In The News?

- **Hungary's Parliament Approved Sweden's NATO Accession** On Monday, Clearing The Last Hurdle Before The Historic Step By The Nordic Country Whose Neutrality Lasted Through Two World Wars And The Simmering Conflict Of The Cold War.
- Hungary's Vote Ended Months Of Delays In Completing **Sweden's Security Policy Shift** And Followed A Visit By Swedish Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson On Friday During Which The Two Countries Signed An Arms Deal.



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I welcome the Hungarian parliament's vote to ratify #Sweden's membership in NATO. Now that all Allies have approved, Sweden will become the 32nd #NATO Ally. Sweden's membership will make us all stronger and safer.

EXAMS

What Do We Know?

- Sweden's NATO Membership Was Supported By **188 Lawmakers** In The Hungarian Parliament, With 6 Against And No Abstentions. Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban's Government Has Faced Pressure From NATO Allies To Fall In Line And Seal Sweden's Accession To The Alliance.
- Sweden Became The **32nd Member Of NATO Alliance** & Abandoned Its **Non-Alignment Policy** For Greater Safety Within The North Atlantic Treaty Organisation In The Wake Of Russia's Invasion Of Ukraine In 2022.
- With Sweden Following Finland Into NATO, President Vladimir Putin Has Effectively Achieved The Very Thing He Sought To Avert When He Launched His War In Ukraine **An Expansion Of The Alliance**, Western Leaders Have Said.
- While Finland Became A NATO Member Last Year, Sweden Was Kept Waiting As **Turkey And Hungary**, Which Both Maintain Better Relations With Russia Than Other Members Of The Us-led Alliance, Raised Objections.

What Does Sweden Bring To NATO?

- For A Long Time, Swedish Policy Dictated That The Country Needed A Strong Military To Protect Its Neutrality. But After The End Of The Cold War, It Drastically Slashed Its Defence Spending, Turning Its Military Focus Toward **Peacekeeping Operations Around The World.**
- In 1990, Defence Spending Accounted For **2.6 Percent Of Gross Domestic Product**, Shrinking To 1.2 Percent By 2020, According To The Government. Spending Started To Increase Again Following **Russia's 2014 Annexation Of Crimea.**
- In March 2022, After Russia's Invasion Of Ukraine, Sweden Announced It Would Increase Spending Again, **Targeting Two Percent Of GDP "As Soon As Possible".** In Late 2023, Sweden's Government Said Military Spending Would Exceed The **Two Percent Goal In 2024.**
- Swedish Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson Also Said In January That His Country Was Ready To **Contribute Troops To NATO's Forces In Latvia.** Sweden And Finland Joining NATO Also Means That The **Baltic Sea** Becomes Surrounded By Alliance Members, With Some Analysts Dubbing It A NATO Lake.

