Ireland’s Referendum Against Ban on Abortion

Why in news?

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Ireland recently passed a referendum to remove the constitutional ban on abortion.

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What is the significance of this referendum?

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- The people of Ireland voted for this referendum even when a new law was proposed to be passed by the year end, when a women died after abortion was denied on grounds of constitutional ban.
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- This referendum is seen as a continuation of the quiet revolution taking place for past 2 decades against the invincible Church.
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- Ireland had a long stronghold of Catholic conservatism, and due to various issues, it is moving leftward.
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What is the brief history of Ireland?

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- After Ireland threw off Britain’s yoke in 1922and became a republic,Church became most influential and established its own quasi colonial hold over the state and the people.
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- The President of Ireland in those early decades aligned closely with Archbishop of Dublin, who intervened aggressively in matters of law and policymaking.
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- On issues of specific concern to women, the Irish constitution took a deeply

conservative tone due to interferences from the Church.
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- It recognised family as “a moral institution” and “fundamental unit of society”, and said that without the woman’s “life within the home… common good cannot be achieved”.
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- The contradictions between worldview of the Church and the ideals of a modern society appeared with the economic liberalisation of the 1960s, when women in large numbers joined the workforce.
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- Over the next couple of decades, equal pay was introduced, and Ireland’s traditional large families started to get smaller.
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- An economic downturn in the 1980s triggered a wave of emigration, exposing communities to a range of social and sexual freedoms.
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- Henceforth, quite a few resolutions, amendments have been made to instil more freedom to the people, which were initially against the rules made by the Church.
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Source: The Indian Express

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