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Assasination of Haiti's President

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Why in News

Recently, Haiti's President Jovenel Moise was **assassinated at his private residence in Port-au-Prince, Haiti.**



Key Points

- **About Haiti:**

- Haiti is a country in the **Caribbean Sea** that **includes the western third of the island of Hispaniola** and such **smaller islands as Gonâve, Tortue (Tortuga), Grande Caye, and Vache**. The **capital is Port-au-Prince**.
- Its population is almost entirely descended from African slaves, **won independence from France in 1804**, making it the **second country in the Americas, after the United States, to free itself from colonial rule**.
 - It is the **world's first independent Black-led republic**.
 - The nation underwent about **two centuries of Spanish colonial rule and more than a century of French rule**.
- Over the centuries, however, **economic, political, and social difficulties** as well as a number of **natural disasters** have beset Haiti with chronic poverty and other serious problems.
- It is the **Western Hemisphere's poorest country**, has a painful history of **foreign interventions, economic exploitation and dictatorial rule**.

- **Recent Instability:**

- Haiti's latest instability revolves around a **dispute over Jovenel Moïse's presidency**. He was elected in 2016 to a five-year term, but **because of contention over election results, he did not take office until the next year**.
 - Under Jovenel Moïse's administration, the political and **economic situation in Haiti further deteriorated**.
- Jovenel Moïse insisted that it entitled him to another year in power — a **claim that Haiti's opposition rejected**.
- In February 2021, when Moïse's opponents said his term ended, they declared their Supreme Court Judge as interim president. Jovenel Moïse called it a **coup attempt, and 23 opponents were arrested**.
- At the same time there has been a **surge in kidnappings, rapes and killings as rival gangs battle each other** and the police for control of Haiti's streets.
- The human rights activists have accused Jovenel Moïse's government of having ties to the gangs.
 - So far this year, at least **278 Haitians have been killed** in gang-related violence.
- The unprecedented level of **violence and subsequent displacements is creating a host of secondary issues**.

India- Haiti Relations

- **Political:**

- India's relations with Haiti have been **friendly, though interaction between the two countries has been limited.**
- India established **diplomatic relations with Haiti in September 1996.** Haiti appointed a Honorary Consul in New Delhi in October 2014.
- India had sent a 140 member **Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF)** troop to Haiti on a **peace mission under the auspices of the United Nations (UN)** in August 1995.
- In October 2008, a 140-member **Formed Police Unit (FPU)** from India joined the **UN's Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH)** to help with international efforts to ensure a safe environment in Haiti.

The last units of **FPU stationed in Haiti left in July 2019** on completion of assignment.

- At the multilateral level, the Government of Haiti has supported Indian candidatures in the elections for various international organizations, including elections for **International Court of Justice (ICJ)**, **UNESCO**, **International Maritime Organization** and **World Customs Organization (WCO)** in the recent past.

- **Commerce:**

- India's trade with Haiti is small but **Indian exports to the country have been growing in recent years.**
- Two way trade between the two countries was at **USD 93.10 million by the end of 2018-19.**
- The main items of **exports to Haiti are pharmaceutical goods, textiles, rubber products, cosmetics, and plastic and linoleum products.**
- India has granted **duty free access to Haitian products** as a special gesture to a **Least Development Country.**

- **Educational:**

- India has been offering assistance to Haiti under **Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) programme.**

The **ITEC programme** provides for organizing training courses in India, deputation of Indian experts abroad, aid for disaster relief, gifting of equipment, study tours and feasibility studies/consultancy services.

- Haitian diplomats have also been taking advantage of **Professional Course for Foreign Diplomats (PCFD) courses at regular intervals.**

PCFD affirms the commitment of India to its friendly countries in sharing the knowledge and expertise acquired in the field of diplomats' training.

- Haitian illiterate women received **training at the Barefoot College in Rajasthan in harvesting solar power.**

- **Disaster Relief:**
 - India **donated medicines worth USD 50,000/-** as humanitarian assistance to Haiti for the damage caused by **Hurricane Noel in November 2007**.
 - Another **USD 5 million relief assistance was given in January 2010**. A relief of **USD 5,00,000 annually for three years till 2011 was also provided**.
 - India also provided **emergency financial aid of USD 2,50,000** to Haiti in the aftermath of **Hurricane Mathew in October 2016**.
- **Indian Community:**
 - Indian community in Haiti is small. It **comprises approximately 70 members. Almost all of them are Indian passport holders**.
 - Several of them are professionals, – **doctors, engineers, technicians. Some are into private businesses**.

Source: TH