

HAITI PRONE TO DEVASTATING EARTHQUAKES



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Issue

A devastating earthquake in Haiti has killed a large number of people and damaged infrastructure of the country.

Background

This is second such large earthquake in the country after the 2010 earthquake that had pushed the country into oblivion.

Details

- The earthquakes of high magnitude are not new in Haiti. This is because the country sits at the intersection of two tectonic plates.
- Movement of tectonic plates causes friction, resulting in occurrences of earthquakes. The high population density makes Haiti even more vulnerable.
- The majority of Haitian infrastructure is designed to withstand strong hurricane winds but they cannot sustain earthquake tremors.

Earthquake prone nature

- The North American plate and Caribbean plate intersect over Haiti. Multiple fault lines exist near the country's territory.
- The recent earthquake occurred along the Enriquillo-Plantain Garden fault zone. This fault line was the major reason for large earthquakes that had occurred in 1751 and 1860.

High impact of earthquake

The impact can be due to a combination of factors such as high intensity tremors, high population density and also the low quality of infrastructure.

Tectonic plates

- The crust and upper mantle of Earth's lithosphere is broken into smaller fragments known as tectonic plates.
- The plates can be divided into Oceanic crust, made up of silicon and magnesium and continental crust is made of silicon and aluminum.

NOTES

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