



26 March 2024

National & International News

Operation Indravati



Context:

- In response to the recent turmoil in **Haiti**, the **Indian government** has launched **Operation Indravati** to evacuate its citizens from the violence-stricken country to the neighboring Dominican Republic.

Key points:

- Haiti has been grappling with a state of emergency triggered by recent violent attacks.
- Haiti, a **Caribbean country**, has plunged into chaos due to gang warfare.
- Gang control in Haiti's capital has **reached 80%**, **according to the UN**, with fighting ongoing in the remaining areas.
- Capital:** Port-au-Prince

PUSHPAK Viman



Context:

- The Pushpak, also known as the **Reusable Launch Vehicle Technology Demonstrator (RLV-TD)**, is India's **first uncrewed flying testbed** for this ambitious project that **aims to significantly reduce payload delivery costs to low Earth orbit**.
- The **Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)** has announced a successful landing experiment as part of its ongoing efforts to develop **reusable space launch vehicles**.

Project Cost:

- The **total cost of the Pushpak (RLV-TD) project** was **approximately ₹95 crore**.

Objectives of the Project:

- Primary Objective:** Develop a TSTO reusable launch vehicle to achieve an 80% reduction in payload delivery costs to low Earth orbit.
- Testing Objectives:** Evaluate key technologies such as hypersonic flight, autonomous landing, powered cruise flight, and air-breathing engine propulsion.

Exchange-traded funds

Context:

- The **Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)** has instructed mutual fund companies to halt new investments in **schemes that invest in overseas exchange-traded funds (ETFs)** from **April 1, 2024**.



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- SEBI's decision stems from investments in these foreign ETFs nearing the **mandated limit of \$1 billion**.

About:

- An exchange-traded fund (ETF) is a type of **security that tracks an index, commodity, bonds, or a basket of assets, similar to an index fund**.
- Unlike regular mutual funds, **ETFs are traded like common stocks on stock exchanges**.
- The price of an ETF changes throughout the day as it is bought and sold on the stock exchange.
- The trading value of an **ETF is based on the net asset value of the underlying stocks it represents**.
- ETFs are known for their **high daily liquidity and low fees compared to mutual fund schemes**, making them appealing to individual investors.
- They are **also considered more tax efficient**.
- There are **five main types of ETFs: equity ETFs, bond ETFs, commodity ETFs, international ETFs, and sectoral/thematic ETFs**.

1.29 by 2050: Impact of India's falling fertility rate



Context:

India is facing a concerning birth rate decline, as indicated by the **Lancet's forecast of a fertility rate drop to 1.29 by 2050**.

Key points:

- By 2050**, one in five Indians will be a senior citizen, posing challenges as fewer younger individuals will care for the aging population.
- The **declining total fertility rate (TFR) in India**, currently at **1.29**, well below the replacement rate of **2.1**, is a **major factor driving this trend**.
- Globally, the TFR has decreased significantly over the last 70 years, from around five children per woman in **1950 to 2.2 children in 2021**.
- In India specifically, the **TFR has dropped from 6.18 in 1950 to 1.91 in 2021**, reflecting a diminishing working-age population.
- Factors contributing to this decline in fertility rates **include family planning programs, behavioral changes promoting smaller families, economic factors influencing family size decisions, increased female literacy and workforce participation, and urban influences on rural trends**.



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The declining trend in fertility rates is not unique to India, as it is a global phenomenon:

- Worldwide, researchers estimate that by 2050, about 76% of countries (155 out of 204) will have fertility rates below replacement level.
- Looking ahead to 2100, this trend is expected to continue, with 97% of countries and territories (198 out of 204) projected to have fertility rates below replacement level.
- Without intervention, populations in these locations are predicted to shrink, highlighting the need for measures such as ethical and effective immigration to offset the decline.

Enforcement Directorate

Context:

Arvind Kejriwal has been detained by the Enforcement Directorate (ED).

ED:

- The ED is a government agency in India tasked with enforcing economic laws and combating economic crimes.
- It operates under the Department of Revenue, Ministry of Finance, Government of India.
- The ED's focus includes investigating and prosecuting cases involving money laundering, foreign exchange violations, corruption, and economic offenses.
- Its primary goal is to reduce the generation and circulation of black money and ensure compliance with laws related to foreign exchange and prevention of money laundering.
- The agency was originally established as an "enforcement unit" within the Department of Economic Affairs on May 1, 1956, to handle violations under the Foreign Exchange Regulation Act, of 1947.
- In 1957, this unit was officially renamed the Enforcement Directorate.

The main objective of the Enforcement Directorate is to enforce three key Acts of the Government of India:

- the Foreign Exchange Management Act, 1999 (FEMA); the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002 (PMLA); and the Fugitive Economic Offenders Act, 2018 (FEOA).



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- The Enforcement Directorate is **headquartered in New Delhi** and is headed by the Director of Enforcement.
- It has regional offices in **Mumbai, Chennai, Chandigarh, Kolkata, and Delhi**, each headed by a **Special Director of Enforcement**.

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