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- Saint-Domingue (Haiti’s colonial name) officially became the “republic of Haiti” on Jan 1 1804 after more than two centuries of slavery. A second republic and only state in the world to be founded on the basis of antislavery movement.
- The land of Haiti was first colonized by the Spaniards after it had been discovered by Christopher Columbus in 15th century.
- In the 17th century control over the land was ceded to French buccaneers who had occupied the western third of island and who named the island Saint-Domingue.
- Towards the late 18th century, Saint-Domingue was the richest colony in the world for their production of sugar and coffee. It was famously known as the “Pearl of Antilles” and “Eden of Western World.” They produced about half of all the sugar and coffee consumed in Europe and America.
- The prosperous economy of the land was the result of forced labor of African slaves and the natives of Haiti. The natives were Tainos Indians whose population reduced in great number as a result of cruel treatment.
- In 1791, Haitian revolution ignited by French revolution in 1789 exploded against slavery forcing National Convention of Paris to put an end to slavery in all France’s colonies.
- Under Haitian umbrella there were more than one movement for independence of Saint-Domingue. France had made mandatory for planters (wealthy whites) to import and export only to France at decided low price. Planters pushed their own independence movement to get rid of France’s strict laws since they illegally traded goods with British and later Americans at much higher price.
- Free people of color who were denied citizenship or status equal or higher then planters started demanding their deserved right from France.
- Slave rebels had always wanted to break chains of imprisoned life, but different groups of slaves finally joined hands together in 1791 to stand up against slavery and for an independent state.
- During the war, about 1000 whites were killed, plantations and other goods were destroyed.
- In 1793, France declared the war on Britain and due to insufficient attention towards Haiti their control over the land weekend.
- Rebellion were increasingly gaining control over more land that by 1796, Toussaint ‘L ouverture was sole ruler of Haiti. He was a former slave and ruthless general of the army. Under his, rule Dominion republic was captured.
- Napoleon, French’s new emperor commanded Gen Charles Leclerc to Haiti for regaining the land with 12,000 troops in 1803.
- General initially face strong resistance but eventually ended up capturing the coast where the defenders had destroyed every bit of plantation and burned down buildings. Toussaint was captured and a year later died in the prison.
- Jean Jacques Dessalines was the new commander of slave rebels and continued fighting the French. He was also supported with arms and weapons by the British.
France was getting emerged in war with Britain that Napoleon turned his attention from Saint-Domingue. French for the second and last time evacuated the island in November and Haiti declared its independence on Jan 1 1804.

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