



10 July 2024

National and International News

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| <p><b>Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)</b></p> | <p><b>Why in the news?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Senegal's President is suddenly faced with a huge <b>challenge of reuniting the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)</b>, a <b>weakened regional bloc</b> that is older than him.</li> </ul> <p><b>About ECOWAS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Establishment:</b> ECOWAS was established on May 28, <b>1975</b>, with the signing of the <b>Treaty of Lagos</b>.</li> <li><b>Objective:</b> The primary aim is to <b>promote economic integration across the West African region</b>.</li> <li><b>Member States: ECOWAS comprises 15 member states:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Benin</li> <li>Burkina Faso</li> <li>Cape Verde</li> <li>Ivory Coast</li> <li>Gambia</li> <li>Ghana</li> <li>Guinea</li> <li>Guinea-Bissau</li> <li>Liberia</li> <li>Mali</li> <li>Niger</li> <li>Nigeria</li> <li>Senegal</li> <li>Sierra Leone</li> <li>Togo</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>Official Languages:</b> English, French, and Portuguese.</li> <li><b>Headquarters:</b> The ECOWAS headquarters is located in <b>Abuja, Nigeria</b>.</li> <li><b>Key Institutions:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ECOWAS Commission</li> <li>Community Court of Justice</li> <li>ECOWAS Bank for Investment and Development (EBID)</li> <li>West African Health Organisation (WAHO)</li> <li>ECOWAS Parliament</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>Economic Integration:</b> Focuses on <b>creating a single large trading bloc</b> through the <b>removal of trade barriers, establishment of a customs union, and ultimately a single currency</b>.</li> <li><b>Peacekeeping and Security:</b> ECOWAS has a significant role in regional peacekeeping, conflict resolution, and security initiatives, including the establishment of the <b>ECOWAS</b></li> </ul> |
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| <p><b>Birlestik-2024</b></p>            | <p><b>Monitoring Group (ECOMOG).</b></p> <p><b>Why in the news?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Central Asian countries hold joint military drills</b> without Russia, China.</li> </ul> <p><b>About Birlestik-2024:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Objective:</b> The drills aim to <b>enhance military cooperation</b> and <b>readiness among the participating nations.</b></li> <li>● <b>Participants:</b> Central Asian countries conducted joint drills involving <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Kazakhstan,</li> <li>○ Kyrgyzstan,</li> <li>○ Uzbekistan,</li> <li>○ Tajikistan, and</li> <li>○ The Caucasus country of Azerbaijan.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <b>Turkmenistan is absent.</b></li> <li>● <b>Host:</b> Kazakhstan is hosting the drills.</li> <li>● <b>Duration and Location:</b> The exercises are taking place in the <b>Caspian Sea</b> and will last until July 17.</li> <li>● <b>Central Asian countries typically participate in drills with Russia</b> (Collective Security Treaty Organisation) and <b>China</b> (Shanghai Cooperation Organisation).</li> </ul>  |
| <p><b>India-Russia Relationship</b></p> | <p><b>Why in the news?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The <b>Russian President has given instructions to discharge the Indian soldiers serving at the Ukraine war front</b> after the <b>PM's 'direct intervention'</b>.</li> </ul> <p><b>About India-Russia Relationship:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Political Relations:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Treaty of Peace and Friendship (1971):</b> Signed between India and the Soviet Union, marking a watershed moment in relations.</li> <li>○ <b>Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation (1993):</b> Entered after the dissolution of the Soviet Union.</li> <li>○ <b>Strategic Partnership (2000):</b> Acquired during President Putin's visit to India.</li> <li>○ <b>Special and Privileged Strategic Partnership (2010):</b> Elevated status of the relationship.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <b>Defense and Security Cooperation:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Flagship Cooperation:</b> <b>BrahMos Missile System</b>, licensed production of SU-30 aircraft, and T-90 tanks in India.</li> <li>○ <b>Agreements:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Supply of <b>S-400 air defense systems.</b></li> <li>■ Construction of frigates under <b>Project 1135.6.</b></li> <li>■ Joint venture for manufacturing <b>Ka-226T</b> helicopters in India.</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ <b>Military Exercises:</b> Annual exchanges and training</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |



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|                                  | <p>exercises termed <b>INDRA</b>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Trade and Economic Relations:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Bilateral Investment and Trade Targets:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Revised targets: US \$50 billion investment and US \$30 billion trade by 2025.</li> <li>■ <b>Bilateral trade reached \$65.70 billion</b> in FY 2023-24.</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ <b>Oil Trade:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ India buys discounted Russian oil to mitigate the inflationary impact of rising crude prices since the Ukraine war.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>● <b>Nuclear Energy:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Recognition:</b> Russia recognizes India as having advanced nuclear technology with a non-proliferation record.</li> <li>○ <b>Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant (KKNPP):</b> Built in India with Russian cooperation.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <b>Eastern Maritime Corridor:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Proposed sea route</b> between <b>Chennai</b>, India, and <b>Vladivostok</b>, Russia.</li> <li>○ Route passes through the <b>Sea of Japan, the South China Sea, and the Malacca Strait</b>.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <b>Ganga-Volga Dialogue:</b> Initiative for deeper cultural and people-to-people connections between India and Russia.</li> <li>● <b>New Consulates:</b> India will establish new consulates in <b>Kazan</b> and <b>Yekaterinburg</b>, Russia.</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Biosphere Reserves</b></p> | <p><b>Why in the news?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● UNESCO designates 11 new biosphere reserves.</li> </ul> <p><b>About Biosphere Reserves:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Designation:</b> Under the <b>UNESCO's MAB Programme</b> by the <b>Director-General of UNESCO</b> based on decisions of the MAB International Coordinating Council (MAB ICC).</li> <li>● <b>Recognition:</b> Internationally recognized status.</li> <li>● <b>Man and Biosphere (MAB) Programme:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Launched:</b> 1971</li> <li>○ <b>Aim:</b> Foster <b>harmonious relationship between humans and their environment</b>.</li> <li>○ <b>Functions:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Conservation of biodiversity and cultural diversity.</li> <li>■ Socio-culturally and environmentally sustainable economic development.</li> <li>■ Logistic support through research, monitoring, education, and training.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>● <b>Zones of Biosphere Reserves:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Core Areas:</b> Strictly protected zones for conservation of landscapes, ecosystems, species, and genetic variation.</li> <li>○ <b>Buffer Zones:</b> Surround or adjoin core areas, used for activities compatible with ecological practices that</li> </ul> </li> </ul>  |



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|   | <p>support research, monitoring, training, and education.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Transition Areas:</b> Areas where communities foster sustainable economic and human activities.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Biosphere Reserves in India:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Total:</b> 18 biosphere reserves.</li> <li>○ Recognized under MAB Programme: <b>12 reserves.</b></li> <li>○ <b>First Reserve:</b> Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>   |
| <p><b>Copernicus Climate Change Service (C3S)</b></p> | <p><b>Why in the news?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The <b>Copernicus Climate Change Service (C3S)</b> reported that <b>June 2023 was the warmest ever recorded</b>, with the average temperature being 0.67°C above the 1991-2020 average.</li> </ul> <p><b>About C3S:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Thematic Information Service:</b> C3S is one of six thematic information services provided by the <b>Copernicus Earth Observation Programme of the European Union.</b></li> <li>● <b>Foundation:</b> It builds on existing research infrastructures and knowledge available in Europe and beyond.</li> <li>● <b>Objective:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Provides authoritative information about the past, present, and future climate</b> in Europe and globally.</li> <li>○ Supports European climate policies and actions.</li> <li>○ <b>Aims to build a European society more resilient to human-induced climate change.</b></li> </ul> </li> <li>● <b>Implementation:</b> The service is implemented by the <b>European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts (ECMWF)</b> on behalf of the <b>European Commission.</b></li> <li>● <b>Benefits to Society:</b> Supports society by providing vital climate information, aiding in the development of strategies and actions to combat climate change.</li> </ul> |

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