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10 July 2024

National and International News

Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)

Why in the news?

- Senegal's President is suddenly faced with a huge **challenge of reuniting the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)**, a **weakened regional bloc** that is older than him.

About ECOWAS:

- **Establishment:** ECOWAS was established on May 28, **1975**, with the signing of the **Treaty of Lagos**.
- **Objective:** The primary aim is to **promote economic integration across the West African region**.
- **Member States:** **ECOWAS comprises 15 member states:**
 - Benin
 - Burkina Faso
 - Cape Verde
 - Ivory Coast
 - Gambia
 - Ghana
 - Guinea
 - Guinea-Bissau
 - Liberia
 - Mali
 - Niger
 - Nigeria
 - Senegal
 - Sierra Leone
 - Togo
- **Official Languages:** English, French, and Portuguese.
- **Headquarters:** The ECOWAS headquarters is located in **Abuja, Nigeria**.



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Key Institutions:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ ECOWAS Commission○ Community Court of Justice○ ECOWAS Bank for Investment and Development (EBID)○ West African Health Organisation (WAHO)○ ECOWAS Parliament● Economic Integration: Focuses on creating a single large trading bloc through the removal of trade barriers, establishment of a customs union, and ultimately a single currency.● Peacekeeping and Security: ECOWAS has a significant role in regional peacekeeping, conflict resolution, and security initiatives, including the establishment of the ECOWAS Monitoring Group (ECOMOG).
<p>Birlestik-2024</p>	<p>Why in the news?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Central Asian countries hold joint military drills without Russia, China. <p>About Birlestik-2024:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Objective: The drills aim to enhance military cooperation and readiness among the participating nations.● Participants: Central Asian countries conducted joint drills involving<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Kazakhstan,○ Kyrgyzstan,○ Uzbekistan,○ Tajikistan, and○ The Caucasus country of Azerbaijan.● Turkmenistan is absent.● Host: Kazakhstan is hosting the drills.● Duration and Location: The exercises are taking place in the Caspian Sea and will last until July 17.● Central Asian countries typically participate in drills with Russia (Collective Security Treaty Organisation) and China (Shanghai Cooperation Organisation).



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India-Russia
Relationship

Why in the news?

- The **Russian President has given instructions to discharge the Indian soldiers serving at the Ukraine war front** after the **PM's 'direct intervention'**.

About India-Russia Relationship:

- **Political Relations:**
 - **Treaty of Peace and Friendship (1971):** Signed between India and the Soviet Union, marking a watershed moment in relations.
 - **Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation (1993):** Entered after the dissolution of the Soviet Union.
 - **Strategic Partnership (2000):** Acquired during President Putin's visit to India.
 - **Special and Privileged Strategic Partnership (2010):** Elevated status of the relationship.
- **Defense and Security Cooperation:**
 - **Flagship Cooperation: BrahMos Missile System,** licensed production of SU-30 aircraft, and T-90 tanks in India.
 - **Agreements:**
 - Supply of **S-400 air defense systems.**
 - Construction of frigates under **Project 1135.6.**
 - Joint venture for manufacturing Ka-226T helicopters in India.
 - **Military Exercises:** Annual exchanges and training exercises termed **INDRA.**
- **Trade and Economic Relations:**
 - **Bilateral Investment and Trade Targets:**
 - Revised targets: US \$50 billion investment and US \$30 billion trade by 2025.
 - **Bilateral trade reached \$65.70 billion** in FY 2023-24.
 - **Oil Trade:**
 - India buys discounted Russian oil to mitigate the inflationary impact of rising crude prices since the Ukraine war.



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Nuclear Energy:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Recognition: Russia recognizes India as having advanced nuclear technology with a non-proliferation record.○ Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant (KKNPP): Built in India with Russian cooperation.● Eastern Maritime Corridor:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Proposed sea route between Chennai, India, and Vladivostok, Russia.○ Route passes through the Sea of Japan, the South China Sea, and the Malacca Strait.● Ganga-Volga Dialogue: Initiative for deeper cultural and people-to-people connections between India and Russia.● New Consulates: India will establish new consulates in Kazan and Yekaterinburg, Russia.
Biosphere Reserves	<p>Why in the news?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● UNESCO designates 11 new biosphere reserves. <p>About Biosphere Reserves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Designation: Under the UNESCO's MAB Programme by the Director-General of UNESCO based on decisions of the MAB International Coordinating Council (MAB ICC).● Recognition: Internationally recognized status.● Man and Biosphere (MAB) Programme:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Launched: 1971○ Aim: Foster harmonious relationship between humans and their environment.○ Functions:<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Conservation of biodiversity and cultural diversity.■ Socio-culturally and environmentally sustainable economic development.■ Logistic support through research, monitoring, education, and training.



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



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