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The Hindu: 11-07-2024

<p>Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)</p>	<p>Why in the news?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. <p>About ECOWAS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. 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>



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	<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).
<p>India-Russia Relationship</p>	<p>Why in the news?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Russian President has given instructions to discharge the Indian soldiers serving at the Ukraine war front after the PM's 'direct intervention'. <p>About India-Russia Relationship:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Political Relations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Flagship Cooperation: BrahMos Missile System, licensed production of SU-30 aircraft, and T-90 tanks in India. ○ Agreements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Bilateral Investment and Trade Targets:



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ India buys discounted Russian oil to mitigate the inflationary impact of rising crude prices since the Ukraine war. ● 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.
<p>Biosphere Reserves</p>	<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. ● 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.



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● 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.
Copernicus Climate Change Service (C3S)	<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.