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VOCABULARY

1. **Formidable:** Inspiring fear or respect through being impressively large, powerful, intense, or capable.
 - Synonyms: Intimidating, imposing, powerful
 - Antonyms: Insignificant, feeble, weak
 - Example: The army faced a formidable challenge as they approached the heavily fortified enemy stronghold.
2. **De Facto:** In fact, whether by right or not; actual or existing.
 - Synonyms: In practice, actual, real
 - Antonyms: De jure (by law), nominal, theoretical
 - Example: Despite not having an official title, she was the de facto leader of the community, as everyone naturally looked to her for guidance.
3. **Palpable:** Able to be touched or felt; easily perceived or obvious.
 - Synonyms: Tangible, evident, noticeable
 - Antonyms: Intangible, hidden, imperceptible
 - Example: The tension in the room was palpable as the final moments of the intense game unfolded.

4. **Inundated:** Overwhelmed or flooded with an abundance of something.
 - Synonyms: Swamped, deluged, saturated
 - Antonyms: Depleted, scarce, emptied
 - Example: After the heavy rainfall, the streets were inundated with water, causing widespread flooding.

5. **Pernicious:** Having a harmful effect, especially in a gradual or subtle way.
 - Synonyms: Destructive, damaging, detrimental
 - Antonyms: Beneficial, harmless, innocuous
 - Example: The pernicious effects of the unhealthy lifestyle became evident as he struggled with various health issues.

6. **Ostentatious:** Characterised by vulgar or pretentious display
 - Synonyms: Showy, flamboyant, flashy
 - Antonyms: Modest, unassuming, humble
 - Example: The millionaire's mansion was incredibly ostentatious, with gold-plated fixtures and extravagant decorations.

7. **Conflate:** To combine two or more things into one, often creating confusion.
 - Synonyms: Merge, blend, amalgamate
 - Antonyms: Separate, distinguish, divide

- Example: It's important not to conflate two distinct issues, as doing so can lead to confusion and misunderstanding.
8. **Entwined:** Twisted or woven together; closely connected or involved.
- Synonyms: Intertwined, interwoven, linked
 - Antonyms: Detached, separate, isolated
 - Example: Their lives were entwined from an early age, and they remained inseparable throughout the years.
9. **Duality:** The quality or condition of being dual, consisting of two parts or elements.
- Synonyms: Dichotomy, twofold nature
 - Antonyms: Singularity, unity, oneness
 - Example: The duality of the character's personality was depicted through their conflicting thoughts and actions.
10. **Strides:** Significant steps or progress made in a particular direction.
- Synonyms: Progress, advancement, improvement.
 - Antonyms: Regression, setback, stagnation.
 - Example: The company made significant strides in technological innovation, revolutionising the industry.

11. **Foreseeable**: Capable of being predicted or anticipated.
- Synonyms: Predictable, expected, anticipated.
 - Antonyms: Unforeseen, unexpected, unpredictable.
 - Example: The consequences of the decision were foreseeable, yet they proceeded with it, resulting in the predicted outcome.

Phrasal Verbs and Phrases

12. **Breeding grounds**: A place where a particular set of conditions favours the development or occurrence of something.
13. **Advocate for**: Publicly support or recommend a particular cause or policy.
14. **Grapple with**: Struggle to deal with or overcome a challenge or problem.
15. **Paint a rather bleak picture**: This is an expression used to describe a situation in a negative or pessimistic light.
16. **In the face of**: This idiom means dealing with or confronting a challenging situation or difficulty.

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CURRENT AFFAIRS

8th FEBRUARY, 2024

1. A small but powerful Chinese rocket capable of carrying payloads at competitive costs delivered nine satellites into orbit on Saturday, Chinese state media reported, in what is gearing up to be another busy year for Chinese commercial launches.
 - The Jielong-3, or Smart Dragon-3, blasted off from a floating barge off the coast of Yangjiang in southern Guangdong province, the second launch of the rocket in just two months.
2. The Indian government has recently announced plans to fence the entire 1,643-kilometer-long Indo-Myanmar border. This decision effectively ends the free movement regime (FMR) that allowed people on both sides to venture 16 kilometers into each other's territory without any documents.
3. In a groundbreaking discovery, scientists at NASA have found a 'super-Earth,' a planet that could potentially support life. This planet, called TOI-715 b is 137 light-years away from us and is about one and a half times as wide as Earth.
 - It revolves around its parent star in the conservative habitable zone, which could "give the planet the right temperature for liquid water to form on its surface."

4. Union Culture Minister G. Kishan Reddy on Monday laid the foundation stone for India's digital National Museum of Epigraphy at the SalarJung Museum. Spearheaded by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), this museum will house approximately one lakh ancient writings spanning various times and languages.
5. Nayib Bukele secured a decisive win in recent elections, with strong support stemming from his tough stance against long-standing gang violence in El Salvador.
6. Governor of Rajasthan, Kalraj Mishra, administered the oath of office to Manindra Mohan Srivastava, who took the oath in Hindi, as the Chief Justice of Rajasthan High Court at Raj-Bhavan.
 - Justice Augustine George Masih has been replaced by Justice Manindra Mohan Srivastava as the new Chief Justice of the Rajasthan High Court, making him the 42nd Chief Justice of the court.
7. Union Minister of State for Science & Technology, Dr. Jitendra Singh, unveiled the theme for NSD 2024 - "Indigenous Technologies for Viksit Bharat".

- 8.** Union Minister for Youth Affairs and Sports, Anurag Singh Thakur, on Tuesday (6th Feb 2024) inaugurated the BIMSTEC Aquatics Championships 2024 in New Delhi. This marks the first time such an event is being held.
- 9.** At a time when dwindling population of vulture species is a cause for concern for wildlife managers and ornithologists in the country, Wayanad Wildlife Sanctuary (WWS), the only protected area in the State which harbours the avian population, is turning out to be a major habitat of the bird species.
 - As per the data from the first-ever tri-State synchronised vulture survey that was released recently, a total of 320 individual vultures were counted in the seven-protected areas, including 51 individual vultures in WWS, spread over Kerala, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu.
- 10.** The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has announced the appointment of Mio Oka as its new Country Director for India, succeeding Takeo Konishi.
- 11.** Baramunda ISVT to be named after B R Ambedkar.