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VOCABULARY

1. Vilest: Extremely unpleasant.

- Synonyms: Wickedest, Loathsome, Despicable, Odious.
- Antonyms: Admirable, Virtuous, Noblest, Respectable.
- sentence: The vilest criminals often try to justify their actions.

2. Contention: Heated disagreement between individuals or groups.

- Synonyms: Strife, Dispute, Conflict, Discord, Clash.
- Antonyms: Accord, Consensus, Harmony, Unity.
- sentence: Despite their contention, they managed to find a compromise.

3. Conflate: To combine two or more different things into one.

- Synonyms: Merge, Blend, Fuse, Consolidate.
- Antonyms: Segregate, Isolate, Disassemble, Divide.
- sentence: Let's not conflate his opinion with factual information.

4. Dire: Extremely serious or urgent.

- Synonyms: Grave, Serious, Acute, Grim, Critical.
- Antonyms: Trivial, Insignificant, Benign, Pleasant.
- sentence: The situation became dire when they ran out of food.

5. Endeavour: Concerted effort or attempt to achieve a goal.
- Synonyms: Initiative, Venture, Undertaking, Enterprise.
 - Antonyms: Inactivity, Indolence, Neglect, Inertia.
 - sentence: He always approaches each task with great endeavour and enthusiasm.
6. Plaguing: To cause continual trouble to someone or something.
- Synonyms: Tormenting, Pestering, Afflicting, Bothering.
 - Antonyms: Comforting, Soothing, Alleviating, Relieving.
 - sentence: Invasive species are plaguing the local ecosystem.
7. Slashed: A rapid or drastic reduction in something.
- Synonyms: Decreased, Trimmed, Cutdown.
 - Antonyms: Augmented, Enhanced, Expanded, Amplified.
 - sentence: The budget for the project was slashed due to financial constraints.
8. Onset: The beginning or start of something.
- Synonyms: Commencement, Inception, Initiation.
 - Antonyms: End, Finish, Conclusion.
 - sentence: The onset of winter brought heavy snowfall to the region.

IDIOMS AND PHRASES

9. Jump on the bandwagon: To join or support something popular or successful.
10. A dime a dozen: Something that is very common or easy to find.
11. Burning the midnight oil : Working late into the night or putting in extra effort to complete a task.
12. Tossed around: To be discussed or considered casually or without much seriousness.
13. Ramp up: To increase or escalate something.

CURRENT AFFAIRS

20th April, 2024

1. Bisket Jatra is an eight-day celebration that culminated with a huge celebration in the district of Bhaktapur. Thousands of people gathered in Bhaktapur Durbar Square to witness the celebration.
 - People assembled and pulled the chariot of Bhairava and Bhadra Kali in opposite directions in the city lanes. In the tug of war, people pulled an unequal number of ropes which were biased toward the forward direction.
2. In what would seem to be a real-world Star Wars like situation if Earth ever counters aliens, an 'on-orbit space domain awareness' (SDA) program which is being developed by US might prove to be one of the potential defenses. The US Space Systems Command (SSC) has collaborated with two vendors in the space equipment sector for a demonstration mission titled 'Victus Haze'.
3. A state-of-the-art Submersible Platform for Acoustic Characterization and Evaluation (SPACE) was inaugurated at Kerala's Idukki.
 - Samir V Kamat, Secretary, Department of Defence-- Research and Development (R&D)-- and Chairman, DRDO, inaugurated the platform at Underwater Acoustic Research Facility in Kulamavu in Idukki.

4. In October 2023, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) stopped Bank of Baroda from onboarding new customers on its mobile app 'BoB World' citing material supervisory concerns. The bank said in response that it had already carried out corrective measures to address the concerns.
5. Vice Admiral Dinesh K Tripathi has been appointed as the next Chief of the Naval Staff as present Naval chief Admiral R Hari Kumar retires from service. Tripathi who is currently serving as Vice Chief of the Naval Staff, will take charge on April 30, 2024.
6. Hamad International Airport (DOH) has again secured its position as the "World's Best Airport" by the prestigious 2024 Skytrax World Airport Awards held at the Passenger Terminal Expo 2024 in Frankfurt, Germany.
7. The 16th World Future Energy Summit has commenced in Abu Dhabi, drawing together global leaders, policymakers, and experts in sustainable energy and climate initiatives. The summit aims to foster dialogue on key issues like global climate action, renewable energy, energy security, and sustainable development.

- 8.** In a significant development, two iconic products from the historic city of Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh, have been granted the coveted Geographical Indication (GI) status. On April 16, 2024, the GI Registry Office based in Chennai announced that the Tiranga Barfi of Varanasi and the Dhalua Murti Metal Casting Craft have been included in the prestigious GI category.
- 9.** In a significant stride towards advancing India's rail infrastructure, the country is gearing up to launch an indigenous bullet train capable of reaching speeds exceeding 250 kilometres per hour (km/h). This groundbreaking initiative is set to revolutionize high-speed rail travel in India, showcasing the nation's engineering prowess and commitment to cutting-edge technology.