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## VOCABULARY

- 1. Astonishing:** A feeling of great surprise or amazement.
  - Synonyms: Incredible, Stunning, Startling, Breathtaking.
  - Antonyms: Ordinary, Common, Predictable, Expected.
  - sentence: The view from the mountaintop was astonishing
  
- 2. Extravaganza:** A lavish, elaborate and grandeur event.
  - Synonyms: Gala, Carnival, Pageant, Festivity.
  - Antonyms: Plainness, Sobriety, Simplicity.
  - sentence: The circus was an extravagant extravaganza of lights, music and acrobatics.
  
- 3. Indelible:** Making marks that cannot be removed or forgotten.
  - Synonyms: Permanent, Lasting, Enduring, Unfading.
  - Antonyms: Fading, Transient, Eradicable, Temporary.
  - sentence: The smell of freshly baked cookies left an indelible memory in her mind.
  
- 4. Mettle:** Someone's ability to cope well with difficulties.
  - Synonyms: Courage, Determination, Tenacity, Endurance.
  - Antonyms: Timidity, Fragility, Passivity, Cowardice.
  - sentence: The team's mettle was evident as they fought fiercely until the very end of the game.

- 5. Springboard:** Something that serves as a starting point or catalyst for further action.
- Synonyms: Prelude, Kickoff, Launchpad, Foundation.
  - Antonyms: Hindrance, Blockade, Obstacle, Barrier.
  - sentence: Her passion for art became the springboard for her journey into the world of creativity.
- 6. Coveted:** Something that is eagerly desired.
- Synonyms: Envious, Longed-for, Aspired, Valued.
  - Antonyms: Undesirable, Disdained, Unpopular, Ignored.
  - sentence: After months of training, she finally got her hands on the coveted trophy.
- 7. Stellar:** Something exceptional or of the highest quality.
- Synonyms: Outstanding, Excellent, Brilliant, Superb.
  - Antonyms: Mediocre, Subpar, Ordinary, Inferior.
  - sentence: The company's stellar performance this quarter exceeded all expectations.
- 8. Promulgating:** To make known a law, decree or idea officially.
- Synonyms: Publicizing, Announcing, Circulating, Disseminating.
  - Antonyms: Concealing, Hiding, Obscuring, Suppressing.
  - sentence: The company is promulgating new policies to improve workplace safety.

- 9. Inevitable:** Something that is certain to happen.
- Synonyms: Predestined, Unavoidable, Inexorable, Unpreventable.
  - Antonyms: Avoidable, Optional, Changeable, Uncertain.
  - sentence: Change is inevitable; it's how we adapt that matters.
- 10. Requisite:** Necessary for a particular purpose.
- Synonyms: Required, Mandatory, Essential, Vital.
  - Antonyms: Dispensable, Voluntary, Unnecessary.
  - sentence: A passport is requisite for international travel.

### IDIOMS AND PHRASES

- 11. Silver lining:** The hopeful or positive aspect of a situation that might seem bleak.
- 12. Light at the end of the tunnel:** Symbolises hope and optimism during difficult times.
- 13. The elephant in the room:** A significant issue or problem that everyone is aware of but no one wants to address.
- 14. Snap back:** To return quickly and forcefully to a previous state after being displaced.
- 15. Perk up:** To become more cheerful, lively or optimistic.

## CURRENT AFFAIRS

30<sup>th</sup> April, 2024

1. In 2023, Indian service sector exports surged by 11.4% to \$345 billion, while Chinese service exports fell by 10.1% to \$381 billion, as per a UNCTAD report. India's service imports slightly decreased by 0.4% to \$248 billion. India ranks 7th globally in service exports, with the US leading.
2. Iraq's parliament has passed a law criminalizing same-sex relationships, with penalties including up to 15 years in prison.
  - The law also targets those who promote homosexuality or prostitution, and punishes gender expression that deviates from one's biological sex.
  - Same-sex sexual acts are legal in more than 130 countries while more than 60 countries have criminalised gay sex.
3. The Gem & Jewellery Export Promotion Council (GJEPC) achieves a major milestone as the Indian government grants Authorized Economic Operator (AEO) status to the gem and jewellery sector.
4. Iran unveils a new kamikaze drone resembling Russia's Lancet, designed for targeted attacks. It boasts flight durations of 30-60 minutes, carries payloads up to 6 kg, and covers distances of 40 km.

5. Indian Air Force's MI 17 V5 helicopter was deployed to extinguish the raging forest fires in Nainitaland the helicopter used a "Bambi Bucket".
6. In a joint operation, the Indian Coast Guard has seized 86 kilogram of drugs worth 600 crore rupees from a Pakistani boat and arrested 14 persons on board the vessel off the Porbandar coast in Gujarat.
  - According to the Official release, the overnight operation in the Arabian Sea was carried out by ICG in coordination with the Gujarat Antiterrorism Squad (ATS) and the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB).
  - The Pakistani boat along with its crew was apprehended and brought to Porbandar for further investigations. This is eleven such successful law enforcement operations in the last three years by ICG and other agencies.
7. Sunil Kumar Yadav, an officer from the Indian Revenue Service (IRS), has been appointed as the Director of the Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs.
8. Gina Justus has been named the regional winner for the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region at the prestigious 2024 Cambridge Dedicated Teacher Awards.

9. Sana clinched the 2024 Global Media Award from the International News Media Association (INMA).
  - Recognized as South Asia's best for AI newsroom innovation, Sana exemplifies cutting-edge use of AI in enhancing customer engagement through its multilingual and versatile reporting capabilities.
  
10. Invest India has forecasted a bright future for India's ecommerce industry, predicting a massive surge to \$325 billion by 2030. This growth coincides with a digital economy expected to reach a staggering \$800 billion in the same timeframe.
  
11. NASA's Sunita Williams and Butch Wilmore set to pilot Boeing's Starliner spacecraft to the ISS, marking Williams's first visit in 12 years.
  - The upcoming Crew Flight Test mission heralds a crucial development in US space travel, aiming to complement SpaceX's Crew Dragon for continuous crew transport to the ISS, stressing a flexible launch target by May 6th.