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VOCABULARY

- 1. Non-starter** : An idea or plan that is unlikely to succeed.
 - Synonyms : Doomed, hopeless, unworkable.
 - Antonyms : Viable, feasible, promising.
 - Sentence : The peace talks were a non-starter from the beginning.

- 2. Slant** : A biased or prejudiced point of view.
 - Synonyms : Bias, prejudice, distortion.
 - Antonyms : Objectivity, fairness, neutrality.
 - Sentence : The article had a clear anti-government slant.

- 3. Overtly** : In a way that is obvious and not hidden.
 - Synonyms : Openly, frankly, undisguised.
 - Antonyms : Subtly, implicitly, covertly.
 - Sentence : The company was accused of overtly misleading investors.

- 4. Hawkish** : Aggressive or belligerent in policy or attitude.
 - Synonyms : Aggressive, assertive, confrontational.
 - Antonyms : Dovish, conciliatory, peaceful.
 - Sentence : The central bank adopted a hawkish stance to combat inflation.

5. Imponderables : Things that are difficult to predict or estimate.

- Synonyms : Uncertainties, unknowns, intangibles.
- Antonyms : Certainties, knowns, tangibles.
- Sentence : The future of the economy is full of imponderables.

6. Belying : To prove something to be false or untrue.

- Synonyms : Contradicting, belying, giving the lie to.
- Antonyms : Confirming, corroborating, substantiating.
- Sentence : The strong export figures belied fears of a slowdown in the economy.

7. Shore up: To strengthen or support something that is weak or failing.

- Synonyms : Bolster, reinforce, solidify.
- Antonyms : Weaken, undermine, erode.
- Sentence : The government is taking steps to shore up the banking sector.

8. Repercussions : The negative consequences of an action.

- Synonyms : Consequences, ramifications, repercussions.
- Antonyms : Benefits, rewards, positive outcomes.
- Sentence : The company is facing serious repercussions for its data breach.

- 9.** Prop up : To support or sustain something that is weak or failing.
- Synonyms : Bolster, shore up, underpin.
 - Antonyms : Undermine, weaken, erode.
 - Sentence : The government is taking steps to prop up the struggling airline industry. (Note: "Prop up" is similar to "shore up" explained earlier, but with a slightly different nuance.)
- 10.** Sluggish : Slow, inactive, or lacking in energy.
- Synonyms : Slow, sluggish, lethargic.
 - Antonyms : Brisk, lively, energetic.
 - Sentence : The economy is experiencing sluggish growth.

IDIOMS AND PHRASES

- 11.** Pull yourself together : Calm down
- 12.** Give someone the cold shoulder : Ignore someone
- 13.** Lead someone by the nose : To dominate someone
- 14.** Butterflies in the stomach : Being nervous
- 15.** Out of the woods : No longer in trouble

CURRENT AFFAIRS

18th June, 2024

1. The winners of the 2024 Kavli Prize were announced on Wednesday. Eight winners were awarded for their contributions to astrophysics, neuroscience and nanoscience.

- **ASTROPHYSICS:**

This year's prize for astrophysics has been awarded to David Charbonneau, and Sara Seager for discoveries of exoplanets, and the characterisation of their atmosphere.

- **NANOSCIENCE:**

Robert Langer, Armand Paul Alivisatos, and Chad Mirkin were given the prize for nanoscience for biomedical applications breakthroughs.

- **NEUROSCIENCE:**

The prize in neuroscience has been awarded to Nancy Kanwisher, Winrich Freiwald, and Doris Tsaofor their collective effort over decades to map the linkage between facial recognition and the brain.

- 2.** Mumbai and Delhi's luxury real estate markets have shown remarkable growth, ranking 3rd and 5th globally in Knight Frank's prime global cities index.
 - Outperformed by Manila and Tokyo, with notable growth rates of 11.5% for Mumbai and 10.5% for Delhi. While Mumbai and Delhi soared, Bengaluru saw a decline in luxury home prices, demonstrating varied regional dynamics.
- 3.** On June 17th, the world celebrates the World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought. This important day aims to raise awareness about the pressing issue of land degradation and its devastating effects on the environment and communities around the globe.
 - This year's theme, "United for Land. Our Legacy. Our Future," emphasizes the critical importance of land stewardship as a shared responsibility for all. It highlights the urgency of preserving our land resources for future generations and ensuring the stability and prosperity of billions of people worldwide.
- 4.** India is set to join an elite group of nations with the launch of its ambitious Deep Sea Mission, making it the sixth country to embark on such a groundbreaking endeavor.

5. Punjab Police in association with the Border Security Force (BSF) and Village Defence Committees (VDCs) will carry out a one-week drive against drugs in Fazilka district.
6. On Sunday, a group of eighty nations demanded that any peace agreement to end the Russia-Ukraine war must be based on Ukraine's "territorial integrity." However, some significant developing countries attending a summit in Switzerland chose not to support this position.
 - The joint statement concluded a two-day meeting at the Swiss resort of Burgenstock, which was notable for the absence of Russia—which many attendees had hoped could contribute to a peace roadmap—despite Russia's lack of invitation.
7. India, the third-largest emitter of greenhouse gases, has found itself among the lowest-ranked countries for air quality, projected emissions, and biodiversity in the 2024 Environmental Performance Index (EPI) released on June 5.
 - In the overall index, India placed 176th out of 180 countries, surpassing only Pakistan, Vietnam, Laos, and Myanmar. This is a modest improvement from the previous EPI, where India was at the very bottom.

- 8.** Global energy access gap worsens as population growth outpaces new connections: 685 million people living without electricity access in 2022, 2.1 billion people continue to rely on damaging cooking fuels globally.
- A new report by the International Energy Agency (IEA), the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD), the World Bank, and the World Health Organization (WHO), released today, finds that the world remains off course to achieve the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 7 for energy by 2030.
- 9.** “Enriched with the Red Flag exercise experience, the IAF keenly looks forward to hosting the participating contingents from other countries during Tarang Shakti-2024, which is the first ever Indian multinational air exercise to be held later this year,” the IAF said on Sunday in a statement on the just concluded Red Flag exercise hosted by the U.S. Air Force.
- The Indian Air Force’s first multinational air exercise, Tarang Shakti-2024, will be held in August, and is likely to see the participation of ten countries, in addition to a few others acting as observers.

- 10.** Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has been awarded the prestigious "Risk Manager of the Year Award 2024" by Central Banking, a renowned publication headquartered in London.

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