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VOCABULARY

1. Earnestly: With sincere and intense conviction.
 - Synonyms: Seriously, sincerely, passionately
 - Antonyms: Indifferently, casually, lightly
 - Sentence: The students worked earnestly on their science projects to win the competition.

2. Bolster: Support or strengthen; prop up.
 - Synonyms: Support, strengthen, reinforce
 - Antonyms: Weaken, undermine, diminish
 - Sentence: The government plans to bolster the economy with new trade policies.

3. Slump: A sudden severe or prolonged fall in the price, value, or amount of something.
 - Synonyms: Decline, decrease, drop
 - Antonyms: Rise, increase, boom
 - Sentence: The company experienced a slump in sales during the economic recession.

4. Exacerbated: Make (a problem, bad situation, or negative feeling) worse.
 - Synonyms: Worsen, aggravate, intensify
 - Antonyms: Alleviate, improve, reduce
 - Sentence: The lack of rain exacerbated the drought conditions in the region.

5. Debilitating: Making someone very weak and infirm.
- Synonyms: Weakening, exhausting, draining
 - Antonyms: Strengthening, invigorating, energizing
 - Sentence: The disease had a debilitating effect on her physical health.
6. Redundancies: The state of being not or no longer needed or useful.
- Synonyms: Surplus, excess, superfluity
 - Antonyms: Necessity, essential, requirement
 - Sentence: The company introduced redundancies in the workforce to cut costs.
7. Cognisant: Having knowledge or being aware of.
- Synonyms: Aware, conscious, mindful
 - Antonyms: Unaware, ignorant, oblivious
 - Sentence: She was cognisant of the risks involved in the project.
8. Piecemeal: Characterized by unsystematic partial measures taken over a period of time.
- Synonyms: Gradual, step-by-step, fragmented
 - Antonyms: Whole, complete, entire
 - Sentence: The renovations to the old house were done in a piecemeal fashion.

9. Rudiment: The first principles of a subject.

- Synonyms: Basics, fundamentals, essentials
- Antonyms: Details, complexities, intricacies
- Sentence: Understanding the rudiments of mathematics is essential for advanced study.

IDIOMS AND PHRASES

10. Riding a High Horse: to start talking angrily about Something
11. Dark Horse: an unexpected winner
12. Dog Days: the hottest days of the summer
13. Black Sheep: a disfavored or disreputable member of a group
14. Thinking outside the box: to think differently

CURRENT AFFAIRS

22nd July, 2024

1. The Ministry of Education and the University Grants Commission (UGC) launched the ASMITA project to develop 22,000 books in Indian languages over the next five years.
 - This initiative, in collaboration with the Bharatiya Bhasha Samiti, aims to promote Indian languages in education.
 - The project includes three key components: ASMITA, Bahubhasha Shabdkosh, and Real-time Translation Architecture.
 - These initiatives are expected to enhance learning in Indian languages, empower students, and preserve linguistic traditions, aligning with the National Education Policy (NEP).
2. The annual Kataragama Esalafestival is being celebrated in Sri Lanka. Devotees who started their Pada Yatra in May have reached Kataragama completing a journey of over 500 kilometres across difficult terrain on foot from as far afield as Jaffna in Sri Lanka's northern peninsula.
3. Ivory Coast joined the United Nations Water Convention, becoming the 10th African nation to do so.
 - In 2024, at least three more African nations, which include Sierra Leone, Zambia and Zimbabwe, are in the final stages of accession and joining the convention.

4. Superstar Ram Charan is the guest of honour at the Indian Film Festival of Melbourne (IFFM) where he will also be awarded the Ambassador for Indian Art and Culture for his stellar contributions to Indian cinema. The festival, hosted by the Victorian State Government annually, will organise a retrospective of the actor's films to celebrate his journey in the film industry. It runs from August 15 to 25.
5. The historic wagh nakh, the tiger claw-shaped weapon reportedly used by Maratha warrior king Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj to kill Bijapur Sultanate general Afzal Khan in the 1659 Battle of Pratapgarh. It has been put on display at the Satara Museum on July 19, for the next seven months.
6. Manoj Soni, the chairman of the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC), has tendered his resignation from the post, five years before his tenure is supposed to end. In his resignation letter, Soni said that he is stepping down from the post due to "personal reasons", reported PTI.
7. Vinay Mohan Kwatra, a retired Indian Foreign Service diplomat and former Foreign Secretary, has been appointed as India's next Ambassador to the United States.

8. On this day, July 22nd, we honour the tricolor flag, which was adopted in 1947 as the emblem of our nation's identity, values, and aspirations. The saffron represents courage and sacrifice, the white symbolizes peace and truth, and the green stands for faith and chivalry.
9. Belarus has announced a new visa-free regime allowing citizens from 35 European countries to stay in the country for up to 90 days per year. This policy, effective from July 19, 2024, is seen as an attempt by Minsk to ease tensions with the West, following recent geopolitical shifts and ongoing sanctions.
- 10.** The Malayan tiger is a symbol of national heritage. But despite government policies and plans for protection, the feline's population has plummeted from around 3,000 in the 1950s to fewer than 150 today, according to the World Wide Fund for Nature. The Malayan tiger was recognised as a subspecies in 2004.