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VOCABULARY

1. **Vulnerable:** Capable of being physically or emotionally harmed.
 - Synonyms: Defenseless, Weak, Susceptible
 - Antonyms: Strong, Protected, Invulnerable
 - Sentence: The elderly and children are more vulnerable to health issues during the winter.
2. **Melee:** A confused fight or struggle involving many people.
 - Synonyms: Chaos, Brawl, Fray
 - Antonyms: Calm, Peace, Order
 - Sentence: A melee broke out among the crowd when the fire alarm went off unexpectedly.
3. **Upkeep:** The process of maintaining or taking care of something.
 - Synonyms: Maintenance, Care, Preservation
 - Antonyms: Neglect, Decay, Deterioration
 - Sentence: Regular upkeep of the hospital facilities is essential to ensure patient safety.
4. **Uncanny:** Strange or mysterious, especially in an unsettling way.
 - Synonyms: Eerie, Supernatural, Weird
 - Antonyms: Ordinary, Normal, Natural
 - Sentence: The uncanny silence in the room made everyone feel uncomfortable.
5. **Fireproofing:** The process of making a structure resistant to fire.
 - Synonyms: Fire resistance, Fire retardant, Fire safety
 - Antonyms: Flammable, Combustible, Vulnerable
 - Sentence: The fireproofing of the hospital building saved many lives during the fire.

6. Licences: An official permission or permit to do something.
 - Synonyms: Permit, Authorization, Certification
 - Antonyms: Prohibition, Ban, Disallowance
 - Sentence: The hospital's fire safety licenses were expired, contributing to the tragedy.

7. Implicitly: In a way that is understood without being stated clearly.
 - Synonyms: Unquestionably, Unreservedly, Indirectly
 - Antonyms: Explicitly, Clearly, Directly
 - Sentence: The staff followed the fire safety protocols implicitly to avoid any mishaps.

8. Slacking: Being lazy or negligent in performing tasks.
 - Synonyms: Lazing, Neglecting, Procrastinating
 - Antonyms: Diligence, Hardworking, Efficiency
 - Sentence: The hospital staff were not slacking in their duties during the emergency.

9. Inferno: A large and dangerous fire.
 - Synonyms: Blaze, Conflagration, Wildfire
 - Antonyms: Calm, Peace, Tranquility
 - Sentence: The inferno engulfed the entire building before the fire department could respond.

10. Prowess: Skill or expertise in a particular area.
 - Synonyms: Expertise, Mastery, Competence
 - Antonyms: Incompetence, Ineptitude, Clumsiness
 - Sentence: The doctor's medical prowess saved countless lives during the crisis.

CURRENT AFFAIRS

19th December, 2024

1. On December 17, 2024, the government referred the One Nation One Election (ONOE) bills to a Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) for wider consultations. Union Home Minister Amit Shah announced in the Lok Sabha that Prime Minister Narendra Modi recommended detailed discussions at every level before proceeding with the bills.
 - This followed the introduction of the Constitution (One Hundred and Twenty-Ninth Amendment) Bill, 2024, and the Union Territories Law (Amendment) Bill, 2024 by Union Law Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal, which aim to enable simultaneous elections for the Lok Sabha and State Assemblies. Opposition leaders objected to the bills, but Meghwal described the opposition as political and reiterated the government's readiness to involve the JPC.
 - The JPC is a temporary parliamentary committee comprising members from both Houses and political parties. It examines specific bills or issues in detail, gathers evidence from experts, and consults stakeholders. Its recommendations are advisory, and the government is not obligated to implement them. The JPC is dissolved after completing its examination.
2. International Migrants Day, observed annually on December 18, serves as an important reminder to honor the contributions of migrants around the world and the role they play in shaping societies.
 - In 2024, the day will be observed under the theme, "Honouring the contributions of migrants and respecting their rights." This day also sheds light on the challenges migrants face, including their rights, integration, and exploitation, while emphasizing the need for fair and inclusive migration policies.

3. Israel launched a powerful airstrike on northwestern Syria, near the city of Tartus.
- The bomb was reportedly so massive that it measured 3.0 on the Richter scale.
 - The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights described it as the heaviest strike in Syria's coastal region since 2012.
 - The strikes reportedly targeted air defense units and surface-to-surface missile depots.
4. Goa Liberation Day 2024 will be celebrated on December 19, 2024. The day also marks the success of Operation Vijay, which led to Goa becoming an integral part of India. Goa Liberation Day 2024 will mark the 63rd anniversary of this historic event.

History of Goa Liberation Day

- Goa was under Portuguese rule for over 450 years, beginning in 1510. Unlike other Indian territories, Goa remained a Portuguese colony even after India's independence in 1947. The fight for Goa's independence gained momentum in the mid-20th century, with both diplomatic and military efforts undertaken by the Indian government.
 - On December 19, 1961, India launched Operation Vijay, a 36-hour military operation involving land, sea, and air forces to liberate Goa, Daman, and Diu from Portuguese control. The operation was successful, and Goa was integrated into India as a Union Territory. It remained a Union Territory until 1987 when it achieved statehood.
5. China is constructing what will be the world's largest artificial-island airport, the South China Morning Post (SCMP) reported, to enhance Dalian's position as a regional transportation hub.
- The Dalian Jinzhouwan International Airport, currently under construction, will cover an impressive 20 square kilometers (7.72 square miles), as per the Liaoning provincial government's official website.

6. Moldova has recently become a member of the International Solar Alliance (ISA), as announced by the Ministry of External Affairs.
 - This decision reflects Moldova's commitment to promoting sustainability and renewable energy.
7. In Madhya Pradesh, the 10th International Forest Fair is taking place in Bhopal from today till 23 December. The fair will provide a wide platform to establish dialogue between collectors, producers, traders, entrepreneurs, scientists, administrators and policy makers associated with forest.
8. Forbes has recently unveiled its 2024 list of The World's 100 Most Powerful Women, featuring three Indian trailblazers: Nirmala Sitharaman, Roshni Nadar Malhotra, and Kiran Mazumdar Shaw.
 - Ranked 81st, Roshni Nadar Malhotra is the Chairperson of HCL Technologies and CEO of HCL Corporation. She leads the \$12 billion company founded by her father, Shiv Nadar.
 - Ranked 82nd, Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw is the founder of Biocon, a leading biopharmaceutical company. She expanded Biocon globally, including one of Asia's largest insulin facilities. Her key achievements include Biocon Biologics' \$3.3 billion acquisition of Viartis' biosimilars business and a successful IPO for Biocon-backed Bicara Therapeutics. Despite initially aspiring to be a doctor, she became a successful entrepreneur and philanthropist, donating \$7.5 million to cancer research in 2019.
9. Ravichandran Ashwin, one of India's leading spinners, has announced his retirement from international cricket after the third Border-Gavaskar Trophy Test in Brisbane on December 18, 2024, bringing an end to his remarkable 14- year career. Renowned for his tactical expertise and record breaking feats.