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## VOCABULARY

1. **Apprehension:** Anxiety or fear about something that may happen.
  - Synonyms: Anxiety, worry, fear
  - Antonyms: Confidence, assurance, calmness
  - Sentence: The passengers felt a sense of apprehension as the storm approached.
  
2. **Exertion:** Physical or mental effort.
  - Synonyms: Effort, strain, labor
  - Antonyms: Relaxation, ease, rest
  - Sentence: The crew's exertion during the rescue operation saved many lives.
  
3. **Imperative:** Extremely important or necessary.
  - Synonyms: Crucial, vital, urgent
  - Antonyms: Optional, unnecessary, trivial
  - Sentence: It is imperative that all boats are equipped with enough life jackets.
  
4. **Instinctively:** Without conscious thought, based on natural instinct.
  - Synonyms: Automatically, naturally, impulsively
  - Antonyms: Deliberately, intentionally, thoughtfully
  - Sentence: The passengers instinctively grabbed their life jackets when the boat began to capsize.
  
5. **Recklessly:** In a way that shows a lack of care or concern for safety.
  - Synonyms: Carelessly, thoughtlessly, irresponsibly
  - Antonyms: Cautiously, carefully, prudently
  - Sentence: The sailors recklessly ignored the safety regulations, leading to disaster.

- 6. Catastrophic:** Involving or causing great damage or disaster.
  - Synonyms: Disastrous, ruinous, devastating
  - Antonyms: Beneficial, fortunate, lucky
  - Sentence: The catastrophic accident led to significant loss of life.
  
- 7. Manoeuvrability :** The ability to change direction or position easily.
  - Synonyms: Agility, control, dexterity
  - Antonyms: Clumsiness, rigidity
  - Sentence: The manoeuvrability of the boat was tested in difficult conditions
  
- 8. Strenuous:** Requiring great effort, energy, or exertion.
  - Synonyms: Hard, intense, demanding
  - Antonyms: Easy, effortless, relaxed
  - Sentence: The strenuous sea trials tested the boat's machinery to its limits.
  
- 9. Capsizing:** To overturn or flip, especially a boat or ship.
  - Synonyms: Overturn, tip over, turn over
  - Antonyms: Stabilize, steady
  - Sentence: The old boat was prone to capsizing in rough seas.
  
- 10. Inhospitable:** Unwelcoming or hostile to life or human activity.
  - Synonyms: Unfriendly, harsh, unforgiving
  - Antonyms: Hospitable, welcoming, friendly
  - Sentence: The sea can be inhospitable, making survival difficult for stranded passengers.

## CURRENT AFFAIRS

20<sup>th</sup> December, 2024

1. In a major boost to bilateral relations, India and China on Wednesday agreed to strengthen cross-border exchanges and take concrete steps towards resumption of the Kailash-Mansarovar Yatra.
  - The Kailash-Mansarovar Yatra has been suspended since 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the Chinese side's non-renewal of arrangements.
  - The Centre has been diplomatically engaging with the Chinese authorities to resume the yatra.
  - The Kailash-Mansarovar Yatra is a challenging pilgrimage that winds its way through the majestic Tibetan plateau. Considered one of the most sacred journeys in Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism, it centres around Mount Kailash, believed to be the abode of Lord Shiva. Mount Kailash is located in Tibet Autonomous Region, China.
2. India marked a historic achievement in wildlife conservation by conducting first ever Ganges river dolphin tagging in Assam on 18th December. In a statement, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change said, this is the first tagging for the species which is a significant milestone in the advancement of Project Dolphin.
  - The Ministry said that the tagging exercise will help in understanding their seasonal and migratory patterns, range, distribution, and habitat utilization, particularly in fragmented or disturbed river systems. In a social media post, Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change Bhupender Yadav expressed happiness and said, this is a historic milestone for species and India. He said, this achievement will deepen understanding of conserving National Aquatic Animals.
3. Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma embarked on a three-day visit to Bhutan to attend the nation's National Day celebrations as a special guest. He received an audience with the King and Queen and met with the Prime Minister.

4. The Ram temple project in Ayodhya has been awarded the British Safety Council's 'Sword of Honour' for its exceptional safety standards. Construction, led by Larsen & Toubro, is nearing completion, with the temple's main structure expected to be finished by June 2025.
5. Hollywood actor Tom Cruise was awarded with US Navy's top civilian honour for his outstanding contributions to the Navy and the Marine Corps with Top Gun and other movies. The Navy thanked the action hero, who it said had increased public awareness and appreciation for our highly trained personnel and the sacrifices they make while in uniform.
6. Uttarakhand will become the first Indian state to implement the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) starting January 2025. The law mandates marriage registration within six months and requires live-in couples to register within one month. The UCC addresses marriage, divorce, inheritance, and live-in relationships, aiming to end practices like polygamy and ensure equal inheritance rights.
7. Rama Mohan Rao Amara has been appointed as the new Managing Director of the State Bank of India (SBI) for a three-year term. Amara, currently Deputy Managing Director, fills the vacancy left by CS Setty's promotion to Chairman. This appointment completes SBI's board, comprising a Chairman and four Managing Directors.
8. Jasprit Bumrah broke Kapil Dev's record in the third Test against Australia at the Gabba. He dismissed Marnus Labuschagne to claim his 52nd wicket in Australia. India avoided the follow-on, thanks to Bumrah and Akash Deep. Rahul scored 84, and Jadeja hit a half-century. Australia declared at 445, with centuries from Head and Smith.
9. Team Asia, featuring star Indian paddler Manika Batra, clinched the inaugural edition of the Waldner Cup 2024 table tennis tournament, defeating Team World 14-10 in Oslo, Norway.

- The invitational tournament, held over the weekend, was established by Jan-Ove Waldner, Sweden's 1992 Olympic gold medallist from the Barcelona Games.

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