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VOCABULARY

1. Surreptitiously: In a secretive manner, especially to avoid notice or attention
 - Synonyms: Secretly, stealthily, covertly, clandestinely
 - Antonyms: Openly, overtly, transparently
 - Sentence: The spyware was surreptitiously installed on the phones of unsuspecting users.
2. Obfuscation: The action of making something unclear or difficult to understand.
 - Synonyms: Confusion, ambiguity, obscurity, complication
 - Antonyms: Clarity, transparency, simplicity
 - Sentence: The government's obfuscation on surveillance issues has raised concerns about accountability.
3. Tampering: The act of interfering with something to cause damage or alter its intended function.
 - Synonyms: Interference, meddling, manipulation, sabotage
 - Antonyms: Preservation, safeguarding, protection
 - Sentence: Allegations of tampering with election machines have led to widespread mistrust.
4. Jeopardize: To put something at risk of harm, loss, or failure.
 - Synonyms: Endanger, threaten, imperil, compromise
 - Antonyms: Protect, safeguard, secure
 - Sentence: The government's silence on cybersecurity issues may jeopardize public trust.
5. Dissidents: Individuals who disagree with or oppose an established policy or authority.
 - Synonyms: Protesters, rebels, dissenters, oppositionists
 - Antonyms: Conformists, supporters, loyalists
 - Sentence: Dissidents were allegedly targeted using surveillance software.

6. Impetus: A driving force or stimulus that encourages action or progress.
 - Synonyms: Momentum, motivation, catalyst, incentive
 - Antonyms: Deterrent, hindrance, obstacle
 - Sentence: The ruling provided new impetus to investigate allegations of spyware misuse.

7. Draconian: Excessively harsh or severe.
 - Synonyms: Oppressive, authoritarian, stringent, harsh
 - Antonyms: Lenient, mild, permissive, flexible
 - Sentence: Critics labeled the new surveillance laws as draconian measures.

8. Plausible: Seeming reasonable or probable.
 - Synonyms: Believable, credible, likely, feasible
 - Antonyms: Implausible, unlikely, improbable, doubtful
 - Sentence: The explanation provided by the officials seemed plausible at first glance.

9. Repercussions: Unintended consequences or effects, often negative, of an action or event.
 - Synonyms: Consequences, outcomes, fallout, ramifications
 - Antonyms: Causes, antecedents
 - Sentence: The decision to restrict public access to poll documents may have severe repercussions.

10. Exacerbate: To make a problem or situation worse.
 - Synonyms: Aggravate, worsen, intensify, heighten
 - Antonyms: Alleviate, mitigate, improve, ease
 - Sentence: The lack of transparency only serves to exacerbate public mistrust.

CURRENT AFFAIRS

25th December, 2024

1. External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar was awarded the Sri Chandrasekarendra Saraswathi National Eminence Award for Public Leadership by the South Indian Education Society (SIES).
2. Good Governance Day is celebrated on December 25th, every year to commemorate the birth anniversary of Atal Bihari Vajpayee.
 - First celebrated in 2014, it underscores the government's commitment to providing a transparent and accountable administration and ensuring that the benefits of development reach every citizen.
 - The Good Governance Day on December 25, 2024, holds special significance as it marks the 100th birth anniversary of Atal Bihari Vajpayee.
3. Madhya Pradesh has recently gained international recognition as the Wall Street Journal named it one of the Go-To Global Destinations for 2025. This accolade showcases the state's rich heritage, diverse wildlife, and stunning landscapes.
4. A mysterious illness called "Dinga Dinga," causing shaking, fever, and weakness, is affecting women and girls in Uganda's Bundibugyo district. This mysterious illness serves as a stark reminder of the importance of vigilance in detecting and managing emerging diseases. The cause is unknown, but investigations are underway, with samples sent to the Ministry of Health for analysis.
5. Trai has amended tariff rules to require mobile service providers to offer a separate plan for voice calls and SMS for customers who do not use data, removing the 90-day cap on special recharge coupons and extending it to up to 365 days. The new rules cater to users who need only voice and SMS services.

6. 'Didi ki Libraries' in Bihar, set up by the State government under a World Bank-funded project, offer a range of services to children living in rural areas. Reports, on the way these community libraries are giving children a space to learn, grow, and prepare themselves for competitive examinations, seen as a chance at a life with monetary security.
7. The theme for Republic Day Parade tableaux is 'Swarnim Bharat: Virasataur Vikas'. Fifteen states and UTs along with 11 Union ministries will present them on January 26. The Expert Committee shortlists the ideas based on various creative criteria. Non-selected states can display their tableaux during Bharat Parvat Red Fort.
8. India has made significant progress in technology and innovation, securing the 49th rank in the Network Readiness Index 2024 (NRI 2024), an improvement of 11 places compared to last year.
 - This ranking is published by the Portulans Institute in Washington DC and evaluates how effectively countries utilize technology for governance and citizen engagement.