

Snap judgement: On India's Project Cheetah

Every birth or death shouldn't be seen as success or failure of Project Cheetah

It is almost three months since South Africa sent a batch of 12 cheetahs to India and two have already died. Taken along with the death of one of the eight cheetahs from Namibia — it had a **pre-existing renal** infection — and it **emerges** that about 15% of the animals have not **made it past** the first phase of India's **ambitious** Project Cheetah. The aim is to **establish** a **sustainable** population of about 35 cheetahs in the next **decade** by bringing in a few every year from Africa. Thus, it is **implicit** that there will be many deaths among the animals if one **factors in** both the natural **lifespan** of the cat as well as the challenges of **adapting** to Indian conditions. **Daksha**, one of the female cheetahs, **died** from injuries **following** a **violent mating** attempt by two males — again not **entirely** unexpected from what is known about the **predator's** behaviour.

Ordinarily, **the success** of wildlife breeding programmes **must** be **measured** over longer **intervals**. The **increase** in the lion population in Gir, Gujarat, as well as tiger numbers **has** been the result of **sustained** efforts over decades, that have also seen the wildcat count **dip** to **precipitous** levels. Therefore, it is yet **premature** to **weigh in** on the success of the cheetah **translocation** programme. However, **the arrival** of the cheetahs in India **was far from** an ordinary event. For one, it **capped** decades of government planning **undertaken** since 2009, **hearings** in the Supreme Court, **protracted negotiations** with two countries, the complex **logistics** of choosing and **ferrying** the animals, the Prime Minister's personal involvement in the enterprise, as well as the significant publicity effort by government departments to **promote** the **endeavour** as India's **exemplary commitment** to wildlife conservation. It is thus only natural that **three deaths** in three months **raise consternation** on whether the conservation **approach** adopted by experts **is** based on **sound** principles. There is **criticism** that Kuno National Park is inadequate to **host** 20 cheetahs and that some **ought to** be in other **sanctuaries**. The **existing** batch of animals lived far too long in **captivity** (in preparation for the translocation) and thus were excessively **stressed** and more **vulnerable**, the **argument** goes. Project Cheetah managers however **underline** that the **investments** such as in making the **landscape adequately stocked** with **prey**, consultations with experts in Namibia and South Africa with actual experience in managing cheetahs, and cultural traditions that minimise **poaching** and **incentivise** local communities to be protective of wildcats, **are** the right ones to help the species **flourish**. **Given** that the relocation programme has been **conceived** as an 'experiment', it is important that every death and every birth are not seen as **markers** of failure or success. However, there also ought to be clearly defined criteria with **timelines** that project managers must **adhere to**, to decide if **course correction** is **warranted**.

- Red/blue coloring of words in the sentence indicates subject verb relationship; where 'red' denotes 'subject' and 'blue' denotes 'verb'.

[Practice Exercise]

Vocabulary

1. **Snap** (adjective) – Sudden, impulsive, spontaneous, instant, quick आकस्मिक/अचानक
2. **Pre-existing** (adjective) – Prior, existing before, already present, earlier, antecedent पहले से मौजूद
3. **Renal** (adjective) – Kidney-related, nephric, nephritic, urinary, nephrological गुर्दे से संबंधित
4. **Emerge** (verb) – Arise, come out, surface, appear, become apparent प्रकट होना
5. **Make it past** (phrase) – Overcome, surpass, get through, get past, clear बच निकलना, पार कर जाना
6. **Ambitious** (adjective) – Aspiring, determined, enterprising, driven, goal-oriented महत्वाकांक्षी
7. **Establish** (verb) – Set up, create, found, institute, put in place स्थापित करना
8. **Sustainable** (adjective) – Long-lasting, enduring, viable, eco-friendly, green टिकाऊ
9. **Decade** (noun) – Ten years, 10-year period, decennium दशक
10. **Implicit** (adjective) – Implied, inferred, insinuated, suggested, hinted अंतर्निहित
11. **Factor in** (phrasal verb) – Consider, take into account, incorporate, include, count शामिल करना
12. **Lifespan** (noun) – Life expectancy, duration of life, lifetime, existence, life आयु
13. **Adapt** (to) (verb) – Adjust, acclimate, conform, get used to, accommodate अनुकूल बनाना
14. **Following** (preposition) – After, subsequent to, in the wake of, ensuing उसके बाद
15. **Violent** (adjective) – Aggressive, brutal, fierce, forceful, ferocious हिंसक
16. **Mating** (noun) – Breeding, reproduction, copulation, procreation, conjugation समागम
17. **Entirely** (adverb) – Completely, totally, fully, wholly, altogether पूरी तरह से
18. **Predator** (noun) – Hunter, carnivore, meat-eater, raptor, beast of prey शिकारी
19. **Ordinarily** (adverb) – Usually, generally, typically, commonly, normally सामान्यतः
20. **measure** (verb) – Gauge, calculate, compute, determine, assess माप करना
21. **Interval** (noun) – Gap, period, pause, interlude, break अंतराल

22. **Sustained** (adjective) – Continued, constant, steady, ongoing, prolonged
निरंतर
23. **Dip** (noun) – Drop, fall, decline, downturn, decrease गिरावट
24. **Precipitous** (adjective) – Steep, abrupt, sharp, sudden, hasty तीव्र
25. **Premature** (adjective) – Early, untimely, ahead of time, precipitate, hasty असामयिक
26. **Weigh in** (phrasal verb) – to give an opinion राय देना
27. **Translocation** (noun) – Relocation, resettlement, displacement, movement, transfer स्थानांतरण
28. **Far from** (phrase) – Not at all, nowhere near, not nearly, hardly, scarcely दूर
29. **Cap** (verb) – to put a limit on रोक लगाना
30. **Undertake** (verb) – Embark on, take on, commit to, engage in शुरू करना
31. **Hearing** (noun) – Trial, examination, inquiry, tribunal, proceeding सुनवाई
32. **Protracted** (adjective) – Lengthy, long-drawn-out, drawn-out, extended, prolonged लम्बा
33. **Negotiation** (noun) – Discussion, talks, dialogue, conference, parley वार्ता
34. **Logistics** (noun) – Coordination, organization, management, arrangement, administration आयोजन
35. **Ferry** (verb) – Transport, convey, carry, shuttle, haul परिवहन करना, ढोना
36. **Promote** (verb) – Encourage, advance, boost, foster, support बढ़ावा देना
37. **Endeavour** (noun) – Attempt, effort, try, undertaking, venture प्रयास
38. **Exemplary** (adjective) – Ideal, perfect, model, commendable, praiseworthy आदर्श
39. **Commitment** (noun) – Dedication, devotion, allegiance, loyalty, duty प्रतिबद्धता
40. **Consternation** (noun) – Dismay, distress, disquiet, alarm, surprise चिंता
41. **Sound** (adjective) – Valid, solid, reliable, dependable, robust जायज़, ठीक
42. **Criticism** (noun) – Censure, condemnation, denunciation, disapproval, critique आलोचना
43. **Host** (verb) – to provide the space and other things necessary for a special event जगह देना, ठहराना
44. **Ought to** (modal verb) – Should, Need to, Must, Is supposed to, Is expected to करना चाहिए

45. **Sanctuary** (noun) – Refuge, Haven, Reserve, Preserve, Conservation area
सुरक्षित क्षेत्र
46. **Existing** (adjective) – Current, Present, Prevalent, Established, Extant मौजूदा
47. **Captivity** (noun) – Imprisonment, Confinement, Detention, Incarceration, Captured state कैद
48. **Stressed** (adjective) – Anxious, Strained, Pressured, Worried, Overburdened
तनावग्रस्त
49. **Vulnerable** (adjective) – Exposed, Susceptible, At risk, In danger, Defenseless
कमजोर
50. **Argument** (noun) – Dispute, Controversy, Debate, Disagreement, Contentions तर्क
51. **Underline** (verb) – Highlight, Emphasize, Stress, Accentuate, Underscore ज़ोर देना
52. **Landscape** (noun) – Terrain, Scenery, Environment, Surroundings, Topography
परिदृश्य
53. **Adequately** (adverb) – Sufficiently, Suitably, Appropriately, Ample, Enough
पर्याप्त रूप से
54. **Stock** (with) (verb) – Supply, Provide, Furnish, Equip, Fill पूर्ति करना
55. **Prey** (noun) – Victim, Quarry, Target, Hunt, शिकार
56. **Poaching** (noun) – Illegal hunting, Unlawful hunting, Poach, Illegal fishing, Illicit hunting
अवैध शिकार
57. **Incentivise** (verb) – Motivate, Encourage, Stimulate, Inspire, Promote प्रोत्साहित करना
58. **Flourish** (verb) – Thrive, Prosper, Bloom, Grow, Develop पनपना
59. **Given** (preposition) – Considering, Taking into account, In view of, Bearing in mind, Given that देखते हुए
60. **Conceive** (verb) – Imagine, Envisage, Visualize, Think up, Formulate विचार करना
61. **Marker** (noun) – Indicator, Sign, Signal, Symbol, Benchmark सूचक
62. **Timeline** (noun) – Schedule, Plan, Timetable, Itinerary, Chronology समयरेखा
63. **Adhere to** (verb) – Follow, Abide by, Observe, Comply with, Stick to पालन करना
64. **Course correction** (noun) – Adjustment, Rectification, Improvement, Modification, Realignment कार्यप्रणाली में सुधार
65. **Warrant** (verb) – Justify, Validate, Authorize, Sanction, Entitle ज़रूरी बनाना

Summary of the Editorial

1. The editorial discusses India's ambitious Project Cheetah, aiming to establish a sustainable population of about 35 cheetahs in the next decade.
2. The project includes importing cheetahs from Africa, with two batches already brought in from South Africa and Namibia.
3. Three cheetahs have died since their arrival, raising concerns about the project's feasibility.
4. The death of Daksha, one of the female cheetahs, resulted from a violent mating attempt, reflecting challenges linked to the predators' behavior.
5. The editorial emphasizes that the success of wildlife breeding programs should be evaluated over longer periods, citing examples of the lion population in Gujarat and tiger numbers.
6. It's too early to judge the success of the cheetah translocation program, as wildlife conservation requires sustained efforts over a long duration.
7. The arrival of the cheetahs in India was significant due to the decades of government planning, Supreme Court hearings, negotiations with two countries, logistics, and the Prime Minister's personal involvement.
8. The three deaths in the initial three months have raised questions about the conservation approach's principles.
9. Critics argue that the Kuno National Park might not be adequate for 20 cheetahs, suggesting that some should be relocated to other sanctuaries.
10. Critics also suggest that the prolonged captivity of the cheetahs prior to translocation might have made them more stressed and vulnerable.
11. However, the managers of Project Cheetah argue that they have made necessary investments such as landscape preparation, consultations with experts, and community engagement to protect the cheetahs.
12. The managers view the project as an 'experiment' where each death or birth should not be seen as a mark of failure or success.
13. The editorial suggests that, while death and birth rates shouldn't be the sole markers of success or failure, there should still be clearly defined criteria for evaluating the project.
14. Timelines and guidelines should be set for project managers to determine when a course correction is needed.
15. The editorial concludes by emphasizing the importance of sound management principles in the success of such ambitious conservation projects like Project Cheetah.

Practice Exercise: SSC Pattern Based

1. **What should be taken into account when evaluating the success or failure of Project Cheetah?** [Editorial Page]
 - A. The number of cheetah births and deaths
 - B. The natural lifespan of cheetahs and adaptation challenges
 - C. The percentage of cheetahs surviving the first phase
 - D. The number of cheetahs imported from Africa every year
2. **Which statement is NOT true about India's Project Cheetah according to the passage?**
 - A. The project aims to establish a sustainable population of about 35 cheetahs in the next decade.
 - B. India has received cheetahs from both South Africa and Namibia.
 - C. The death of a cheetah indicates the project's failure.
 - D. Some cheetah deaths are expected due to natural lifespan and challenges of adapting to Indian conditions.
3. **What is the tone of the passage?**
 - A. Optimistic
 - B. Pessimistic
 - C. Neutral
 - D. Critical
4. **What is the main theme of the passage?**
 - A. The wildlife of Africa
 - B. The mating habits of cheetahs
 - C. The management of Project Cheetah
 - D. The life of cheetahs in captivity
5. What does the idiom "**weigh in on**" mean as used in the context of the editorial?
 - A. Physically adding weight to an object
 - B. To express a strong opinion
 - C. To calculate the weight of an object
 - D. To decide who will participate in an event
6. **According to the passage, which of the following is NOT a factor that has led to concern over the recent deaths of cheetahs in the translocation programme?**
 - A. The long period of captivity for the cheetahs before translocation.
 - B. The perceived inadequacy of Kuno National Park to host 20 cheetahs.
 - C. The lack of involvement from the Prime Minister in the cheetah translocation programme.
 - D. The possibility that the conservation approach may not be based on sound principles.
7. Which of the following is a synonym for the word "**precipitous**" as used in the passage?
 - A. Steep
 - B. Shallow
 - C. Level
 - D. Flat
8. Which of the following is a synonym for the word "**consternation**" as used in the passage?

- A. Alarm
 - B. Calmness
 - C. Indifference
 - D. Pleasure
9. Which of the following is an antonym for the word "**premature**" as used in the passage?
- A. Early
 - B. Belated
 - C. Ahead
 - D. Hasty
10. Which of the following is an antonym for the word "**adequate**" as used in the passage?
- A. Sufficient
 - B. Abundant
 - C. Insufficient
 - D. Plentiful

Comprehension

As India's "Operation Kaveri", launched to evacuate Indians stuck inside war-torn Sudan is underway, the government is making the most of a 72-hour ceasefire window to bring out about 3,000 civilians. The operation, which involves the Indian Air Force and the Indian Navy, _____1_____ being coordinated by the Ministry of External Affairs. Given the heavy fighting in Khartoum between forces loyal to the head of the _____2_____ council, General Abdel-Fattah al-Burhan, _____3_____ also heads the Sudanese Armed Forces, and his former deputy, Gen. Mohammed "Hemeti" Hamdan Dagalo of the paramilitary group, RSF, most civilians are being brought by road to Port Sudan, a _____4_____ journey, to be evacuated by air and sea. India has been coordinating efforts with other countries that have the most civilians and resources in Sudan, including the U.S., the U.K., the UAE and Saudi Arabia, on logistics, timing the evacuation operations, and even using Saudi and French planes. En route to the Caribbean for a scheduled visit, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar also met with the UN Secretary General in New York to seek help. It is clear that military personnel, officials and diplomats will have a difficult few days ahead given that even humanitarian workers and ambulances have been attacked. They have no doubt been assisted by the _____5_____ experience of similar operations over the decades, beginning with the largest such single civilian evacuation during the Gulf war, in 1991.

Fill in the blanks with the most appropriate combinations of words

11. **Select the most appropriate option to fill in blank 1.**
- A. Are
 - B. Is
 - C. Was
 - D. Were
12. **Select the most appropriate option to fill in blank 2.**
- A. Ruling
 - B. Enabling
 - C. Lingering

- D. Dithering
13. **Select the most appropriate option to fill in blank 3.**
- A. Who
 - B. His
 - C. Where
 - D. Which
14. **Select the most appropriate option to fill in blank 4.**
- A. Perilous
 - B. Enormous
 - C. Indigenous
 - D. Disingenuous
15. **Select the most appropriate option to fill in blank 5.**
- A. Cumulative
 - B. Incentive
 - C. Comprehensive
 - D. Competitive
16. **Arrange the following sentences to form a coherent paragraph.**
- P. One thing, however, appears clear — the leak was precipitated by a chemical reaction in an open sewer.
 - Q. The FIR on the incident notes that “some people usually get rid of industrial waste by dumping it in sewage lines”.
 - R. There can be no doubt that culpability for the gas leak must be fixed. But untreated waste getting into the city’s sewer network has been a longstanding concern for the city’s municipal authorities.
 - S. A probe is on to ascertain the reason for the gas leak that claimed 11 lives on Sunday in Ludhiana’s Giaspura area.
- A. SPQR B.QRPS C.SQPR D.PRQS
- Direction: In the following questions, some part of the sentence is underlined. Which of the options given below the sentence should replace the part underlined to make the sentence grammatically correct. If the sentence is correct as it is given then choose option D ‘No Correction required’ as the answer.**
17. He felt exhausted as he was working since 4 O’ clock in the morning
- A. Has been working
 - B. Had been working
 - C. Is working
 - D. No improvement
18. **In the following questions, four words are given in each question, out of which only one word is rightly spelt. Find the correctly spelt word.**
- A. Accommodate
 - B. Accomodate
 - C. Acommodate

D. Acomodate

19. **Arrange the following sentences to form a coherent paragraph**

- P.** For decades, environmentalists in the country have been alleging that a large number of infrastructure projects are implemented without mandatory due diligence and green clearance procedures are often riddled with irregularities
- Q.** Their criticisms have sharpened in the past 15 years because successive governments have diluted ecological safeguards — the public hearing requirement in the Environmental Impact Assessment notification
- R.** for instance — under the ruse of streamlining the clearance procedures
- S.** Two years ago, an Environmental Performance Index of Yale University ranked India 168 amongst 220 countries
- A. RSQP B.PQRS C.RSPQ D.SPRQ

Direction: In the following questions, out of the four alternatives, choose the one which can be substituted for the given words/sentence.

20. **One who assume a character or title not his own to deceive others**

- A. Imposter
- B. Misnomer
- C. Tremor
- D. Criminology

Answers

1. B 2.C 3.D 4. C 5. B 6. C 7. A 8.A 9.B 10.C 11.B
 12. A 13.D 14.C 15.A 16.A 17.B 18.A 19.B 20.A **[Practice Exercise]**

Explanations

- B) The natural lifespan of cheetahs and adaptation challenges**
 The passage emphasizes that every birth or death should not be seen as the sole indicator of success or failure for Project Cheetah. Instead, we should consider the natural lifespan of cheetahs and the challenges they face in adapting to Indian conditions when evaluating the project's progress.
- Option C is NOT true according to the passage. The passage states that every birth or death shouldn't be seen as the success or failure of Project Cheetah. The other options are true based on the information provided in the passage.
- D) Critical**
 The tone of the passage is critical. The author discusses the deaths of several cheetahs that were brought from Africa to India as part of Project Cheetah, indicating a certain level of criticism towards the project's management and the conditions of the animals. The author suggests that there should be clear criteria and timelines to determine if changes to the project are necessary, further illustrating a critical tone
- C) The management of Project Cheetah**
 The main theme of the passage is the management of Project Cheetah. While the passage mentions aspects of cheetah behavior and life in captivity, it primarily focuses on the successes and challenges of Project Cheetah, an initiative to establish a sustainable population of cheetahs in India. The author discusses the deaths of the cheetahs, concerns about the project's management, and the need for clearly defined criteria and timelines for the project.
- B) To express a strong opinion**
 In the context of the editorial, the idiom "weigh in on" is used when discussing the cheetah translocation program. **It's used to express the idea of giving an opinion or judgment about the success of the program.** Thus, the correct option is B) To express a strong opinion. The phrase does not refer to physically adding weight (Option A), calculating weight (Option C), or deciding participation (Option D) in the context it is used.
- C) The lack of involvement from the Prime Minister in the cheetah translocation programme.**
 The passage mentions that there is concern over the cheetah deaths due to various factors. These include the long period of captivity for the cheetahs before translocation (making them potentially more stressed and vulnerable), the potential inadequacy of Kuno National Park to host 20 cheetahs, and doubts about whether the conservation approach is based on sound principles. However, it is specifically stated that the Prime Minister was personally involved in the cheetah translocation programme, and this was not a factor leading to concern over the cheetah deaths.
- A) Steep

Precipitous (adjective) – very steep and often dangerous तेज़/ शीघ्र

In the context of the passage, "precipitous" refers to a rapid or sudden decrease. Hence, "steep" is a synonym as it also refers to a sharp increase or decrease.

8. A) Alarm

Consternation (noun) – a feeling of shock or worry चिंता या निराशा की भावना, आमतौर पर कुछ अनपेक्षित होने पर

"Consternation" in this context refers to feelings of anxiety or dismay, typically at something unexpected. Therefore, "alarm" is a suitable synonym, as it refers to a state of being alarmed or worried.

9. B) Belated

Premature (adjective) – untimely, early, too soon, too early, before time समय से पहले

In the passage, "premature" is used to indicate that something is happening too soon or earlier than expected. Therefore, "belated" is an antonym as it refers to something that is happening later than it should have

10. C) Insufficient

Adequate (adjective) – sufficient, satisfactory, enough, acceptable, passable पर्याप्त

In the passage, "adequate" refers to enough or satisfactory in quality or quantity. Hence, "insufficient" is an antonym as it means not enough; lacking in quantity or quality.

11. The correct option is B ("Is") because the sentence is talking about the present continuous tense, and the subject is "**the operation**," which is singular. "**Is**" is the appropriate auxiliary verb for a singular subject in present continuous tense.

12. **Ruling** (adjective) – Governing, dominant, controlling, in power शासक

- **Enabling** (adjective) – Empowering, facilitating, permitting, authorizing समर्थकारी

- **Lingering** (adjective) – persistent, prolonged, protracted, lasting मंडराता

- **Dithering** (noun) – Hesitation, indecision, wavering, vacillation, uncertainty असमंजस

13. Option A ("**Who**") is the correct choice because it is a relative pronoun that refers back to General Abdel-Fattah al-Burhan and provides additional information about his role as the head of the Sudanese Armed Forces.

14. **Perilous** (adjective) – Dangerous, risky, hazardous, treacherous जोखिम

- **Enormous** (adjective) – Huge, immense, vast, great, extensive विशाल

- **Indigenous** (adjective) – native, local, original स्वदेशी

- **Disingenuous** (adjective) – Insincere, dishonest, untruthful, false कपटी

15. **Cumulative** (adjective) – Aggregate, combined, collective, amassed संचयी, कुल

- **Incentive** (noun) – Motivation, encouragement, stimulus, प्रोत्साहन

- Comprehensive (adjective) – Thorough, all-inclusive, complete, extensive, exhaustive
विस्तृत

- **Competitive** (adjective) – Rivalrous, competitive, contesting, प्रतिस्पर्धात्मक

16. **SPQR**

A probe is on to ascertain the reason for the gas leak that claimed 11 lives on Sunday in Ludhiana's Giaspura area. One thing, however, appears clear — the leak was precipitated by a chemical reaction in an open sewer. The FIR on the incident notes that “some people usually get rid of industrial waste by dumping it in sewage lines”. There can be no doubt that culpability for the gas leak must be fixed. But untreated waste getting into the city's sewer network has been a longstanding concern for the city's municipal authorities.

17. (B) The past perfect continuous tense will be used.

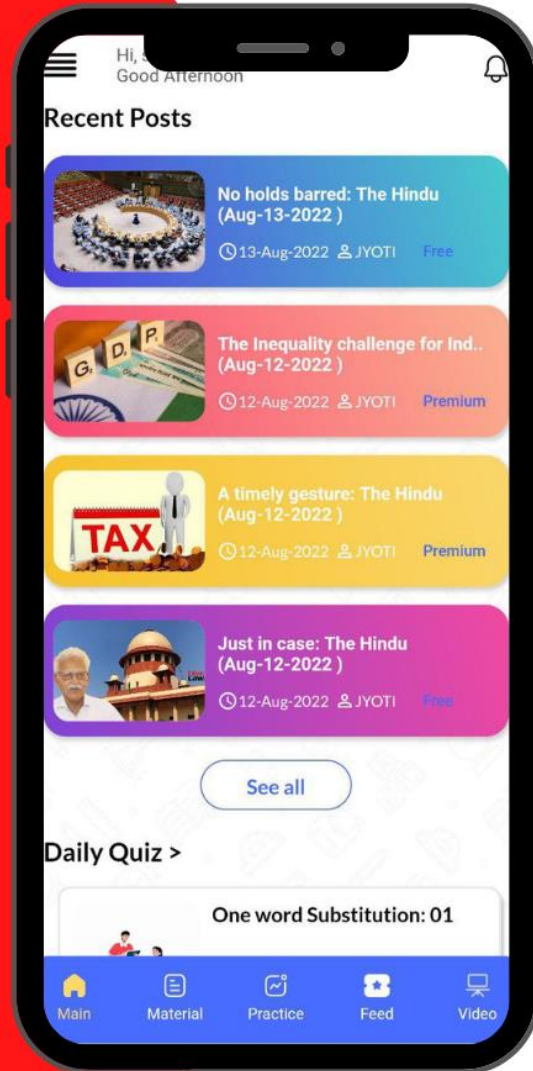
18. Accommodate (verb)– (of a building or other area) provide lodging or sufficient space for. जगह देना, ठहराना

19. **PQRS**

For decades, environmentalists in the country have been alleging that a large number of infrastructure projects are implemented without mandatory due diligence and green clearance procedures are often riddled with irregularities. Their criticisms have sharpened in the past 15 years because successive governments have diluted ecological safeguards — the public hearing requirement in the Environmental Impact Assessment notification, for instance — under the ruse of streamlining the clearance procedures. Two years ago, an Environmental Performance Index of Yale University ranked India 168 amongst 220 countries

20. **Imposter** – One who assume a character or title not his own to deceive others ढोंगी

- **Misnomer** – Wrong use of a name, word or description असंगत नाम
- **Tremor** – An involuntary quivering movement कंपन
- **Criminology** – Science of crimes and criminals. अपराध विज्ञान



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