Important Vocab For the Editorial

1. **maroon** (verb) – strand, leave isolated, abandon.
2. **metropolis** (noun) – a big city/a large & busy city.
3. **afloat** (adjective) – out of danger/difficulty; above water.
4. put a brave front on (phrase) – to face a very difficult situation with high spirits/optimism.
5. **resilience** (noun) – strength, toughness; the capacity to recover quickly from difficulties.
6. **tattered** (adjective) – falling to pieces/worn, deteriorated, in poor condition.
7. take a toll (phrase) – to cause suffering/loss/damage to someone/something.
8. **weigh down** (phrasal verb) – trouble, worry/bother, disturb.
9. **give way (to)** (phrase) – collapse, crumble/disintegrate, fall in.
10. **catastrophe** (noun) – destruction, damage, disaster.
11. **paralyse** (adjective) – disable, immobilize, make powerless.
12. **baseline** (noun) – an analysis that describes the situation prior to an intervention, against which progress can be assessed or comparisons made during the life of a project or programme.
13. **incur** (verb) – suffer, sustain/bring upon oneself; be subject to.
14. **resolve** (noun) – determination, resolution, decision.
15. **rampant** (adjective) – widespread, present everywhere/pervasive, unrestrained/out of control.
16. **integrity** (noun) – unity, coherence, togetherness.
17. **erratic** (adjective) – irregular, unsteady, unreliable.
18. **insight** (noun) – perception, awareness, discernment/understanding.
19. **prolonged** (adjective) – continuous, lengthy, unending.
20. **storm water** (noun) – inundated/flood water produced after a heavy rainfall.
21. **deluge** (noun) – severe flood, torrent; downpour/torrential rain.
22. **consensus** (noun) – an idea or opinion that is shared by all the people in a group. agreement, concurrence.
23. **choke** (verb) – clog, block, obstruct.
24. **sclerotic** (adjective) – rigid, unresponsive, low-spirited, uncommunicative.
25. **rely on** (phrasal verb) – depend on; resort to, have recourse to.
26. **paradigm** (noun) – model, pattern/example; world view.
27. seasonality index (noun) – a forecasting tool used to determine demand for various commodities or goods in a given marketplace over the course of a typical year (or a shorter time period).
28. **relatively** (adverb) – quite, comparatively/proportionately; to a certain extent.
29. **window** (noun) – opportunity, chance, opening.
30. climate change (noun) – a long-term change in the Earth's climate, or of a region on Earth (Courtesy: NASA).
31. **call for** (phrasal verb) – require, publicly ask/necessitate, demand.
32. **ecological** (adjective) – relating to the branch of biology which studies the interactions among organisms and their environment.
33. **drought** (noun) – lack/dry spell, lack of rain, shortage of water.

Mumbai marooned

Despite past experience, the metropolis remains unprepared for the monsoon

Mumbai once again struggled to stay afloat after the first heavy spell of rain this year, bringing back memories of the July 2005 **flood.** Each massive rainfall event is making it evident that the city is putting on a brave front and projecting resilience, but the failure of the Maharashtra government to upgrade its tattered infrastructure is taking a heavy toll and weighing down on the financial capital. A single day of rain has killed 22 people in a wall collapse in north Mumbai, while many more died in Pune and elsewhere. In Ratnagiri, a dam gave way creating a catastrophe; flights have been cancelled and normal life is affected. Clearly, the State government should have regarded the 94 cm of rain that paralysed Mumbai in one day 14 years ago as the baseline disaster to prepare for. That it could not manage 37 cm in 24 hours, that too after incurring a massive expenditure on management projects, shows a lack of resolve among political leaders, rampant inefficiency and lack of integrity in the administrative machinery. As one of the wettest metropolises in India getting about 210 cm of rain annually, it should have been a top order priority to restore rivers and canals to manage floods. The government of Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis needs to explain why Mumbai is yet unprepared to cope, especially when rainfall is projected to become erratic in coming years, and when scientific insights point to intense rainfall in a short span of time, driven by warmer oceans and hotter cities.

In a recent report, the Comptroller and Auditor General identified prolonged delays in the upgrading of storm water drain infrastructure in Mumbai. On the other hand, after the deluge of 2005, the consensus was for the flood-carrying capacity of the Mithi river in the city to be increased. But the choked and polluted river was again overflowing this year. Beyond the sclerotic management of flood waters that relies on storm drains in Mumbai, and several other Indian cities, there is a need for a new urban paradigm. For one thing, Mumbai, Thane, Ratnagiri and Raigad have, during the last century, displayed a high seasonality index, indicating a relatively small monsoon window bringing a lot of rain. This is in contrast to steady, prolonged rain in the central districts in Maharashtra. So a new climate change-influenced normal could mean fewer days of torrential rain and erratic monsoons. Managing them calls for a new approach that is ecological, and makes restoration of existing urban wetlands and creation of reservoirs and water channels a high priority. The water question is the biggest challenge for Indian cities today, as both drought

and flood are common. State governments should give it priority and address it by making **urban planning** people-centric. A strong framework is needed to manage water, starting with Mumbai.