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The Hindu Editorial with Vocabulary PDF



1. New playground for non-state actors

Hidden terror was, till now, believed to be confined mainly to the less developed regions of the world — the 9/11 attack in the U.S. was seen as an aberration, or exception, rather than the rule in this respect. Since 2015, however, with the attack in January of that year on the Charlie Hebdo offices in Paris, followed by a series of major terrorist incidents in Brussels, Paris, Nice, Berlin and Istanbul during the past two years, it is **evident** that the developed world is no longer immune from terror strikes.

The Islamic State (IS) has claimed responsibility for the vast majority of these attacks, though this may not be true in all cases. What is not disputed any longer is that the West now has a sizeable number of **radicalized (cause (someone) to become an advocate of radical political or social reform. कट्टरपंथी)** Islamist elements who are willing to **perpetrate** acts of terror — either on their own, or under instructions from elsewhere.

Timeline of the new phase

Terrorism can be said today to be the single most serious threat to peace across the world. Several aspects, political, security and developmental, are affected adversely by terrorism. Meanwhile, those **indulging** in acts of terror appear to have moved beyond the earlier non-

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traditional, non-state actors who were legatees of the Afghan Jihad (1979-1989). The new breed of radicalised terrorists is not overly dependent on external sponsors or state support. Their inspiration is different. While their origins may be traced to outfits such as al-Qaeda and its affiliates — and they still continue to adopt the techniques and belong to the same **genre** of terror — they are distinct.

The United Kingdom, which has a reputation of possessing the best counter-terrorist organisation in Europe, and displays a steely resolve not to allow emotion to cloud its judgment unlike many other European nations, has lately been hit in rapid succession, by three significant terror attacks. This is indicative of the shifting trajectory of terror today, and the determination of 'new era' terrorists to attack not only 'soft states', but even those who pride themselves on being fully prepared to meet all **contingencies**.

The first of the attacks occurred in March. This came after a gap of several years following the 2005 terror attacks in London. The March attack took place on Westminster Bridge and in the shadow of the Big Ben, in which five persons were killed and around 50 injured.

A far more serious terrorist incident occurred subsequently in Manchester in May, in which at least 22 people were killed and more than a hundred injured. It featured a home-grown 'jihadist', whose victims were mostly teenagers attending a music concert, possibly the first instance of a large scale killing by the IS in the U.K. There had been prior warnings that the IS would focus on 'soft targets' and large crowds, rather than on protected areas with high security. The IS **propaganda** magazine 'Rumiyah' had specifically listed 'concert halls' as ideal target locations for attacks, while publishing a lengthy defence on the killing of women and children in 'crusader' countries.

The IS has claimed responsibility for the latest June 3 attack. This resulted in the killing of eight persons, and injuries to more than 40. The attackers utilised a van driven at high speed across the London Bridge to mow down bystanders in its wake. The attackers proceeded, thereafter, to knife many more persons in the neighbouring Borough Market. Similarities between the March and June terror attacks in London are quite **eerie**. So, likewise, are the similarities between the May 22 Manchester attack in the U.K., and the November 13, 2015, Bataclan terror attack in Paris.

Copycat methods



Copycat methods have often featured in IS attacks. In both the London attacks, vans were used, and even the locale was much the same. Not to be lost sight of also is the fact that in quite a few other IS-sponsored attacks vans/trucks have been employed. Instances of this kind have been reported earlier in Stockholm, Antwerp, Berlin and Nice in the past two years.

All this needs to be viewed against the backdrop of the complicated pattern of relationships that exist between various radical Islamist terrorist organisations worldwide. These exist, notwithstanding the fact that the IS, for instance, **preaches** an exclusive brand of **puritanical** Islam alongside a vision of a new **Caliphate** (खलिफ़ाकाअधिकारक्षेत्र), while some of the other terrorist organisations do not fully subscribe to this ideal. The reality is that many present-day terrorists have a common origin, and this includes the IS and al-Qaeda, though they may be rivals today. A fair amount of cooperation at the operational level is hence **inevitable**, and does exist among terror outfits, alongside a commonality in tactics and techniques, including in the use of high grade explosives such as TATP (TriacetoneTriperoxide).

What also cannot be ignored while comparing the banal with ground realities is that terrorism is becoming even more **asymmetric** by the day. This is becoming more evident by the day as new terrorist groups emerge. Collaboration agreements among terror outfits are, meantime, increasing, with signs of greater **sophistication** in the means and methods to perpetuate terror.

This last aspect is especially important. Both 'direct to home jihad' and the 'lone wolf' syndrome have gained new meanings of late. Radicalisation via the Internet has attained a whole new dimension. Propaganda via the Internet today involves far more than mere recruitment imperatives, even though elaborate recruitment videos continue to be distributed via the social media, which depict the IS fighters as 'knights'. All this still remains highly appealing to some Muslim youth. Nevertheless, a far more dangerous aspect today is the arrival of 'Internet-enabled' terrorism. This has introduced a far greater degree of indeterminate complexity into an already difficult scenario. The result is that the 'lone wolf' is no longer alone. Internet-enabled terror involves violence conceived and guided by "controllers" thousands of miles away. The attacks are masterminded from afar, guided via the Internet, and the actual perpetrators of violence act almost like robots.

'Enabled' or 'remote-controlled' terrorism is fundamentally different from anything seen previously. Remote controllers choose the target, the actual operative, the 'nature' of the attack, and even the weapon to be used. Operating behind a wall of **anonymity**, this helps **obscure** the



role played by individual members of terrorist groups, who utilise various individuals to carry out attacks and leave no trace.

Specific instances already exist of the IS undertaking this kind of recruitment via the Internet. Thereafter, the individual is guided through every single step along the way for several months by anonymous “handlers” to carry out a terror attack. This marks a quantum jump as far as the terror matrix is concerned. We are possibly still at the beginning of the curve as far as the phenomena of ‘enabled’ or ‘remote-controlled’ terrorism is concerned; yet, the impact of this could be quite shattering.

Remote-plotting

The IS appears to be in the lead in this respect as of now. Other international terrorist organisations are also beginning to resort to ‘remote-plotting’. Such situations will result in little or no dependence on the maintenance of safe havens for the plotters, since the plotters are anonymous. Visa restrictions and airport security, including perimeter security of the installations to be targeted, would again mean little to attackers, since they will strike where they live, and will no longer have to travel abroad or long distances for both training and action.

Welcome, hence, to the world of ‘cyber-planners’, who will be responsible for planning terror attacks, identifying recruits, assess possible opportunities, act as “virtual coaches”, and provide guidance and encouragement throughout the process. These elements could be involved in every single planning stage of an operation, including where to obtain weapons that will be needed for use. All the while, the ‘cyber planners’ and ‘cyber controllers’ would be able to maintain almost total anonymity.

The Internet has thus become a dangerous ‘plaything’ in the hands of the many of the new-era terror outfits. Some like the IS are said to be also preparing to use the ‘deep web’ and the ‘dark net’. The ‘dark net’, in particular, could become a **vicious** instrument in the hands of terrorist groups such as the IS.

Magical Vocabulary from “The Hindu Editorial”

1. Evident (adjective) प्रत्यक्ष/सुस्पष्ट: Plain or obvious; clearly seen or understood.

Synonyms: obvious, apparent, noticeable, conspicuous, perceptible, and visible.

Example: The words are becoming familiar and the lack of youth provision appears **evident** .



2. Perpetrate (verb) दोषकरना/पापकरना: carry out or commit (a harmful, illegal, or immoral action).

Synonyms: commit, carry out, perform, execute, do, effect, bring about, accomplish, be guilty of.

Example: Why do these criminals feel they can **perpetrate** such horrendous crimes and get away with it?

3. Indulging (verb) लिप्त/आसक्तहोना: Allow oneself to enjoy the pleasure of.

Synonyms: satisfy, gratify, fulfill, feed, accommodate, yield to, give in to, give way to.

Example: We **indulged** in some hot fudge sundaes.

4. Genre (noun) शैली/रचना-पद्धति: A category of artistic composition, as in music or literature, characterized by similarities in form, style, or subject matter.

Synonyms: category, class, classification, group, set, list, type, sort, kind, breed.

Example: I will also write about the **genre** of the literature involved and how we understand it.

5. Contingencies (noun) आकस्मिकदुर्घटना/हादसा: A future event or circumstance that is possible but cannot be predicted with certainty.

Synonyms: eventuality, (chance) event, incident, happening, occurrence, juncture, possibility.

Example: A detailed contract that attempts to provide for all possible **contingencies**.

6. Propaganda (noun) प्रचारप्रसार: Information, especially of a biased or misleading nature, used to promote or publicize a particular political cause or point of view.

Synonyms: information, promotion, advertising, publicity, spin, disinformation, counter-information.

Example: The role of the government **propaganda** camps known as public schools cannot be discounted in all this.



7. **Eerie (adjective) भयानक/अदभुत** : Strange and frightening.

Synonyms: uncanny, sinister, ghostly, unnatural, unearthly, supernatural, otherworldly.

Example: The plot begins with a woman who witnesses a murder on a dark and **eerie** night.

8. **Preaches (verb) उपदेश/प्रचारितकरना:** Deliver a sermon or religious address to an assembled group of people, typically in church.

Synonyms: proclaim, teach, spread, propagate, expound.

Example: Yet the former evangelical minister often **preaches** love and understanding during his political rallies.

9. **Puritanical (adjective) कड़ा/सख्त:** Practicing or affecting strict religious or moral behavior.

Synonyms: moralistic, puritan, pietistic, strait-laced, stuffy, prudish, prim, priggish.

Example: This theory makes perfect sense and plays to our **puritanical** prejudice that fat, fast food and television are innately damaging to our humanity.

10. **Inevitable (adjective) अनिवार्य:** Certain to happen; unavoidable./a situation that is unavoidable.

Synonyms: unavoidable, inescapable, inexorable, ineluctable, assured, certain.

Example: While works are not a means of salvation, good works are the **inevitable** result of salvation.

11. **Asymmetry (noun) विषमता:** lack of equality or equivalence between parts or aspects of something; lack of symmetry.

Synonyms: dissymmetry, imbalance.

Example: Many problems that occur during fetal development cause **asymmetry** in the resulting organism.

12. **Sophistication (noun) कृत्रिमता/मिलावट:** The quality of being sophisticated.



Synonyms: mundanity, worldliness, mundaneness, edification.

Example: The technological **sophistication** of their products.

13. Anonymity (noun) गुमनामी/अशांतहोनेकीअवस्था: The condition of being anonymous.

Synonyms: Invisibility, Inconspicuousness.

Example: One woman, who requested **anonymity**, said Government must get serious about dealing with fires in the city.

14. Obscure (adjective) अस्पष्ट/धुंधला: not discovered or known about; uncertain./keep from being seen; conceal.

Synonyms: unclear, abstruse, little known, indistinct, hidden, vague, unnoticeable, unsung, dark.

Example: This seems to be another case of journalism that is intended to **obscure** the facts rather than shine light on them.

15. Vicious (Adjective) शातिर/दुष्ट/दोषपूर्ण : The quality of being sophisticated.

Synonyms: brutal, ferocious, savage, violent, dangerous, ruthless, remorseless, merciless, heartless.

Example: Our most **vicious** tendencies are based around and triggered by hormonal impulses.

2. Legislation and legality

At one point in its recently delivered judgment, in Binoy Viswam v. Union of India, the Supreme Court described the dispute over Section 139AA of the Income Tax Act, 1961, as falling within a category of what “Ronald Dworkin calls ‘hard cases’”. The petitioners before the court had argued that the provision, which makes it obligatory on individuals filing income tax returns to link their permanent account numbers (PAN) to their Aadhaar, was unconstitutional as it, among other things, **infringed** a number of fundamental rights.

The court, however, in declaring this case as “hard”, was effectively telling us that its abilities were somehow hamstrung by the nature of the dispute, that despite the strength of the



petitioners' arguments there existed principled reasons why it might be difficult for it to intervene. Unfortunately, this assertion flies in the face of American philosopher-jurist Dworkin's ideas which the court sought to invoke.

While at first blush, a **quibble** over this categorisation might seem a largely **frivolous** concern, seeing as it is made on apparently **pedantic** grounds, in reality the court's mistake here goes to the root of why it got its decision in BinoyViswam as it did, and why it so often fails to uphold critical civil liberties when faced with acts of governmental **coercion**.

Dworkin's 'hard cases'

For Dworkin, "hard cases" are those disputes where "no settled rule dictates a decision either way", and where, therefore, "it might seem that a proper decision could be generated by either policy or principle." In other words, they encompass cases where there exists a particularly knotty controversy over deciding what the law really is, where an application of differing value judgments could **plausibly** (अनुग्राह्यतापूर्वक) result in contradictory identifications of the law.

To **illuminate** this point, in his book, Law's Empire, Dworkin cites McLoughlin v. O'Brian, a 1983 House of Lords case involving an automobile accident. Here, Ms. McLoughlin's husband and four children were injured after their car was hit by a lorry. She only heard about the accident a few hours later, and when she drove to the hospital where the rest of her family was admitted, she was told that one child had died and the others were seriously injured. Ms. McLoughlin, as a result of these revelations, suffered a nervous shock, and she later sued the lorry driver whose negligence had caused the accident.

This case, in Dworkin's belief, was "hard" because there was no existing precedent where a person was awarded damages despite being absent from the scene of the accident. To decide such a case, Dworkin said, a judge must view "law as integrity", that "propositions of law are true if they are derived from principles of justice, fairness and procedural due process, which provide the best constructive interpretation of the community's legal practice." In other words, a judge deciding such a dispute must test her interpretation by asking whether her decision could form part of a **coherent** theory that justifies the entire network of political structure and legal doctrine of their community.

The issues in BinoyViswam, however, called for no such Herculean interpretive exercise. Nor did it require the court to indulge in any lawmaking. The facts were simple enough, and the court, notwithstanding its assertions to the contrary, did not have to decide on the "wisdom of the



Legislature in enacting a particular law”, but merely on its constitutionality. To do this, it only had to apply existing precedent to rule on whether Section 139AA violated one or the other of the fundamental rights guaranteed in Part III of the Constitution. Regrettably, the court’s answers to these basic questions are patently misjudged.

Despite keeping arguments over privacy outside the scope of their submissions — given that a larger bench of the Supreme Court has been asked to rule on whether India’s citizens possess a fundamental right to privacy at all — there were a number of acute arguments that were made to show the court that Section 139AA violated the rights to equality, to practise any profession, and to personal liberty of the petitioners. However, each of these arguments was dismissed almost on the singular ground that the state has a legitimate interest in making classifications to effectuate its policy decisions. This might seem like an unexceptionable proposition. But in effectively holding that the government has the power to undermine rights to achieve policy goals (an ironic conclusion given that Dworkin, who the court relies on, championed rights as trumps) the court has accepted, sans reasons, sweeping conclusions drawn by the state.

Casting away concerns

For instance, the court altogether rejected the contention that the Income Tax Act cannot make Aadhaar compulsory when the core legislation, the Aadhaar (Targeted Delivery of Financial & Other Subsidies, Benefits & Services) Act, 2016, makes enrolment in the scheme voluntary. The court did this by accepting as **gospel (सुसमाचार)** truth the state’s arguments that the linking of Aadhaar and PAN can help eradicate the ills of tax evasion caused by a **proliferation** of black money. Several significant concerns highlighted by the petitioners, which showed that both biometric details and iris scans can be forged, were also swept aside without so much as a mention. As a result, the state’s argument was allowed to stand, in spite of the fact that almost no rational nexus has been shown to exist between the government’s purported aim of eradicating black money and the classification that Section 139AA makes in compelling individuals alone to secure a unique identity.

The court showed a similar disdain in dismissing arguments made on the arbitrariness that is **inherent** in Section 139AA. The reasons supplied by the petitioners on why the linking of Aadhaar and PAN is **capricious** were wholly ignored. For example, the judgment failed to heed to the fact that the consequences of an invalidation of a person’s PAN might result in a virtual “civil death”, as the senior counsel Arvind P. Datar, who represented one of the petitioners, described the provision. Instead the court invoked the proposition that a legislation cannot be struck down



on grounds of arbitrariness alone. To do this, it relied on the verdict from 2015 in *Rajbala v. State of Haryana*, ignoring, in the process, a mountain of earlier precedent where arbitrary state action, including by way of legislation, has been held as antithetical to the guarantee of equality.

Now, it's plain to see that even if Parliament represents the interests of the people, any legislation made by it is a product of the proclivities of the government in power. To check whether a legislation is **arbitrary** or not is not to question the wisdom of the legislature, but rather to examine whether the classifications that a law makes are rational and to **scrutinise** whether Parliament has exercised judgment by responding to reasoned analysis as opposed to the whims of motivated interest groups. Here, the court finds no need for such an inquiry because a legislation, it holds, cannot be subject to judicial review for being purely arbitrary.

Arguments on how Section 139AA violates a person's right to practise any profession or carry on any trade under Article 19(1)(g) also met with a similar fate. And this cloud has only the thinnest of silver linings — when a Constitution Bench eventually decides on whether Aadhaar as a collective policy infringes the rights to privacy and bodily integrity (if indeed such liberties are deemed as fundamental guarantees), there remains the possibility that Section 139AA may be rendered void.

But, for now, we're left with a deeply undesirable and unsatisfactory outcome: all those who already possess an Aadhaar card must integrate it with their PAN, regardless of whether they ever imagined having to submit to such a burden at the time of securing the identity, and where any person who files an income tax return after July 1 must have, at the least, applied for a unique identity. As to how this distinction is constitutionally sustainable, the court tells us little. Ultimately, this wasn't a "hard case" to decide. But by getting its conclusions as it has, the judgment's consequences are certainly likely to prove difficult, imposing, as they do, an unreasonable burden on our essential civil liberties.

Magical Vocabulary from "The Hindu Editorial"

1. Infringed (verb) उल्लंघनकरना: Actively break the terms of (a law, agreement, etc.).

Synonyms: contravene, restrict, impinge, contravene, violate, transgress, break, breach, disobey, defy.

Example: People would not be able to copy chunks of code because they would be **infringing** someone else's copyright.



2. Quibble (verb) वक्रोक्ति: argue or raise objections about a trivial matter./a slight objection or criticism.

Synonyms: niggle, squabble, bicker, pettifog, brabble, criticism, objection, complaint, protest, argument, exception.

Example: My only **quibble** is that some comments - criticisms and praise - remain unchanged year to year.

3. Frivolous (adjective) तुच्छ/छिछोरा : Not having any serious purpose or value.

Synonyms: skittish, flighty, giddy, silly, foolish, superficial, shallow, irresponsible, thoughtless.

Example: This **frivolous** attitude towards love reflects an immature response to abrupt freedom and independence.

4. Pedantic (adjective) रूढ़िवादी/ज़रूरतसे ज़्यादा परिशुद्ध : of or like a pedant.

Synonyms: overscrupulous, scrupulous, precise, exact, perfectionist, punctilious, meticulous.

Example: There's simply no way around the system: it's **pedantic**, laboured and mind-numbingly frustrating.

5. Coercion (noun) ज़बरदस्ती/दबाव: the practice of persuading someone to do something by using force or threats.

Synonyms: force, compulsion, constraint, duress, oppression, enforcement, harassment, intimidation.

Example: it wasn't slavery because no **coercion** was used.

6. Coherent (adjective) सुसंगत / स्पष्ट: (of an argument, theory, or policy) logical and consistent.

Synonyms: logical, reasoned, reasonable, rational, sound, cogent, consistent, consilient, clear, lucid.

Example: I can think of a lot of reasons why this is neither a good nor a **coherent** policy.



7. Proliferation (noun) तीव्रवृद्धि: rapid increase in numbers.

Synonyms: spreading, diffusion, dissemination, prevalence, dispersal.

Example: Stopping nuclear **proliferation** should be the goal of every country.

8. Arbitrary (adjective) मनमाना/एकपक्षीय: Based on random choice or personal whim, rather than any reason or system.

Synonyms: capricious, autocratic, dictatorial, autarchic, undemocratic, despotic, tyrannical, authoritarian.

Example: Freedom from **arbitrary** power is a great good - but so is the avoidance of anarchy.

9. Inherent (adjective) अन्तर्निहित/जन्मजात: Existing in something as a permanent, essential, or characteristic attribute.

Synonyms: intrinsic, innate, immanent, built-in, indwelling, inborn, ingrained.

Example: In my opinion, this is not a matter falling within my **inherent** jurisdiction as a superior court judge.

10. Capricious (adjective) मनमौजी: given to sudden and unaccountable changes of mood or behavior.

Synonyms: fickle, inconstant, changeable, variable, mercurial, volatile, unpredictable.

Example: The woman was so fickle-minded and **capricious** that Agueda often found herself confused.

11. Scrutinise (verb) जाँचकरना: examine or inspect closely and thoroughly.

Synonyms: examine, inspect, survey, study, look at, peruse, investigate, explore.

Example: All submitted data were carefully **scrutinized** and checked for completeness.



3. Bringing GM to the table

In May 11, 2017, the Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee (GEAC) — the scientific committee of the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change — that regulates genetically modified (GM) crops in India — had cleared GM mustard for commercial production. Anti-GM groups immediately opposed the decision and appealed to the Minister for Environment, who gives the final clearance, not to accept the GEAC's recommendation.

Issues at core of opposition

The question of whether India should allow commercial production of GM crops has been one of the more enduring public policy debates over the last decade-and-a-half. After the approval of Bt cotton in 2002, the attempt to bring BtBrinjal into commercial production faced serious resistance in 2010. After the GEAC approved Btbrinjal for commercial production, the then Environment Minister, Jairam Ramesh, placed a **moratorium** after undertaking extensive public consultation. Proponents of GM crops, including Noble **laureates** (पुरस्कारविजेता), insist that opposition to GM crops is driven by irrational fears of harm to human health and having an environmental impact and accuse opposing environmental groups of misrepresenting facts. Such arguments, however, are unlikely to **convince** the opponents of GM crops. While the debate is complex, involving a wide range of scientific, socio-economic, and political factors, it is important to understand two related issues that are fundamental to the opposition: invoking the precautionary principle for regulatory decision-making and a lack of trust in government and industry that promotes and benefits from GM technologies.

One of the principal reasons for opposition to GM crops is the potential for serious, irreversible damage to human health and the environment. This is especially relevant in the context of crops such as Btbrinjal which involve direct consumption by humans, unlike Bt cotton. The widespread **havoc** that chemical pesticides and fertilizers have caused since the Green Revolution only adds **credence** to these concerns. While GM supporters claim that there is little scientific evidence of adverse impacts so far, GM opponents cite the need for longer term assessment of adverse impacts and more concrete evidence of no adverse effects. Implicitly, GM opponents are invoking the precautionary principle, which is a widely incorporated one in several international agreements and treaties on the environment. In the context of technologies such as GM crops, where there is significant scientific uncertainty over their safety, the precautionary principle suggests that we wait until a broader scientific **consensus** is achieved. For example, regulations



in Europe, where GM crops face similar opposition, explicitly invoke the precautionary principle as the basis for deciding whether GM foods should be allowed.

Lack of transparency

The lack of transparency in the regulatory process further amplifies apprehensions stemming from a precautionary approach. All the safety tests for regulatory approvals are typically conducted by the same party that applies for commercialisation of GM crops — whether it is Mahyco on Btbrinjal or Delhi University on GM mustard. This conflict of interest was made worse by the refusal of GEAC (in both cases) to publicly release the safety testing data submitted for regulatory approval until GM opponents filed a Right to Information petition. This tendency to operate in secrecy has not only created a serious distrust of the government and the promoters of GM crops but is also fuelling the conflict. Extensive research on public acceptance of GM foods in the European context identifies trust in regulatory agencies and industry as being a critical factor in public willingness to accept GM technology.

In a well-articulated decision letter at the time of rejecting Btbrinjal, the then Environment Minister, Jairam Ramesh, outlined the need for the GEAC “to draw up a fresh protocol for the specific tests that will have to be conducted in order to generate public confidence”. The GM mustard case does not provide much evidence that anything has changed since the moratorium on Btbrinjal.

If there is a genuine case to be made to allow GM crops to improve yields and address India’s food security, GM supporters might want to start cultivating an environment of openness and transparency to allay genuine fears instead of dismissing GM opponents as being “irrational”. On its part, the government should adopt a participatory approach to bring together all stakeholders to develop regulatory protocols that restore trust in the process. The burden of proof lies with the promoters of GM technology to persuade consumers, farmers and activists that among various alternatives available for sustainable food production — e.g., organic farming, use of biopesticides — GM technology is at least a serious option that we should embrace.

Magical Vocabulary from “The Hindu Editorial”

1. Moratorium (noun) प्रतिबंध: A temporary prohibition of an activity.

Synonyms: embargo, ban, prohibition, suspension, postponement, stay, stoppage, halt, freeze.



Example: The **moratorium** offer includes the suspension of payments of debt principal and interest for a certain period of time.

2. Convince (verb) विश्वासदिलाना : Cause (someone) to believe firmly in the truth of something.

Synonyms: persuade, satisfy, prove to, assure.

Example: He failed to **convince** her that he was being honest.

3. Havoc (adjective) बरबादी/विनाश: widespread destruction.

Synonyms: devastation, destruction, damage, desolation, ruination, ruin, disaster, catastrophe.

Example: Drought is wreaking **havoc** in the Thanjavur belt of Tamil Nadu.

4. Credence (noun) विश्वास : Belief in or acceptance of something as true.

Synonyms: belief, faith, trust, confidence, reliance.

Example: A decision from the ethics committee lends **credence**, just by its existence, to the moral correctness of that decision.

5. Consensus (noun) आमसहमति: General agreement.

Synonyms: harmony, concurrence, accord, unity, unanimity, solidarity, concord.

Example: We tried to get a **consensus** of opinion and it proved to be easier than I thought.

6. Articulated (verb) व्यक्त: Express (an idea or feeling) fluently and coherently.

Synonyms: Express, voice, vocalize, put in words, communicate, state, air, ventilate.

Example: They formally rework the assumptions into consistent, fully **articulated** and intellectually supportable positions.

4. Kumble's farewell: On Team India coach exit

A **ghastly fissure** ripped through Indian cricket as Anil Kumble quit as the national team's head coach on Tuesday. Kumble's exit had seemed **inevitable** once the Board of Control for Cricket in



India called for fresh applications for the post of head coach just as the Men in Blue flew to England for the now-concluded ICC Champions Trophy. Until that moment on May 25, skipper Kohli and coach Kumble had seemed to be a perfect match. The duo oversaw five Test series victories against opponents as diverse as the West Indies and Australia, besides winning one-day internationals and Twenty20s. The lone blip was the loss to Pakistan in the Champions Trophy final this Sunday. **Speculation** that something was amiss got stronger when leaks surfaced about the alleged **rift** between Kohli and Kumble, a rumour that was initially denied by the captain but has become a fact following the coach's farewell statement, in which he wrote: "It was **apparent** that the partnership was untenable." That Kumble resigned despite the Cricket Advisory Committee comprising Sachin Tendulkar, Sourav Ganguly and V.V.S. Laxman endorsing his extension is a reflection of his **inherent** dignity. He clearly did not want to be drawn into an unpleasant battle with Kohli. It also followed the pattern of his earlier departures, be it his injury-induced Test retirement in 2008 or his resignation as chairman of the National Cricket Academy in 2011. Those decisions were swift, the reasons were delivered with surgical **precision**, and he left with grace.

A difference of opinion between two strong individuals causing a discord is not new to Indian cricket. There is a precedent in the spat between Ganguly and Greg Chappell, but there are differences between that **tussle** and what transpired between Kohli and Kumble. The Ganguly-Chappell **feud** became obvious during India's tour of Zimbabwe in September 2005. Subsequently, Ganguly lost his captaincy and place in the team, eventually returned to the team, and Chappell finally resigned in April 2007 following India's **disastrous** World Cup in the West Indies. Chappell had a longer stint despite a rebellion in the ranks, and had his say for a large part of that time. For Kumble, the period of uncertainty lasted just four weeks after the BCCI sought applications for the post. The latest development also highlights the superstar culture undermining Indian cricket, a point earlier made by the former member of the Committee of Administrators, Ramachandra Guha. If Kohli can be a prima donna and demand **pliable** coaches, it will set a wrong example. The BCCI should ensure that a coach with the right credentials is picked and given a contract that lasts till the 2019 World Cup in England. Kumble got a raw one-year deal. It is a position that demands an extended tenure on the strength of results, not one that can be curtailed by bad blood.

Magical Vocabulary from "The Hindu Editorial"



1. Ghastly (adjective) भयंकररूपसे: Extremely unwell or causing great horror or fear; frightful or macabre.

Synonyms: unpleasant, objectionable, disagreeable, distasteful, awful, terrible, dreadful.

Example: So many reports were prepared of the **ghastly** crime against humanity and still that work is going on.

2. Fissure (verb) दरार: Split or crack (something) to form a long narrow opening.

Synonyms: Crevice, crack, cleft, breach, crevasse, chasm, break, fracture

Example: A fissure between philosophy and reality

3. Inevitable (adjective) अनिवार्य: A situation that is unavoidable.

Synonyms: unavoidable, inescapable, inexorable, ineluctable, assured, certain.

Example: It's easy to guess the **inevitable** response because people are genuinely predictable.

4. Speculation (noun) अटकलबाजी/विचार : The forming of a theory or conjecture without firm evidence

Synonyms: hypothesis, supposition, surmise, surmised, guess, conjecture

Example: The Prime Minister's press chief returned from Washington yesterday amid unprecedented **speculation** he was going to resign.

5. Apparent (adjective) स्पष्ट: Clearly visible or understood; obvious.

Synonyms: evident, seeming, plain.

Example: The same approach to collective dominance is **apparent** in the context of mergers.

6. Inherent (adjective) अन्तर्निहित/जन्मजात: Existing in something as a permanent, essential, or characteristic attribute.

Synonyms: intrinsic, innate, immanent, built-in, indwelling, inborn, ingrained.



Example: In my opinion, this is not a matter falling within my **inherent** jurisdiction as a superior court judge.

7. Precision (noun) सुस्पष्टता/सुनिश्चितता : The quality, condition, or fact of being exact and accurate.

Synonyms: exactness, exactitude, accuracy, correctness, preciseness, care, carefulness.

Example: The ability to take out **precision** targets in urban environments will be critical in future conflicts.

8. Tussle (noun) संघर्ष: A vigorous struggle or scuffle, typically in order to obtain or achieve something.

Synonyms: scuffle, fight, struggle, skirmish, brawl, scrum, rough-and-tumble, wrestle, clash, scrap, roughhouse.

Example: They had won the seemingly impossible battle without even a **tussle** .

9. Feud (verb) झगड़ा/चिरस्थायीकलह: Take part in a prolonged quarrel or conflict.

Synonyms: quarrel, fight, argue, bicker, squabble, vendetta, conflict, rivalry, hostility, enmity, strife, discord.

Example: The revelation led to a bitter **feud** and the pair did not speak for more than a year.

10. Disastrous (adjective) विनाशकारी: Causing great damage.

Synonyms: catastrophic, calamitous, cataclysmic, tragic, devastating, ruinous, harmful.

Example: The increase in numbers, while it distorts the demographic picture, has more **disastrous** effects.

11. Pliable (adjective) लचीला/मानलेनेवाला: Easily influenced.

Synonyms: tractile, malleable, tensile, pliant, ductile.

Example: When minds are young and **pliable** - government experts understand this principle - you can fill them with nonsense that is practically impossible to root out.



5. A moment for realism

When Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Donald Trump shake hands and perhaps embrace each other next week, the mandatory encomiums about India and U.S. being the world's largest and oldest democracies, respectively, would have a **sombre** undertone to them. Both these democracies are passing through testing times.

Two nations in churning

Powerful political forces are trying to re-litigate principles that have held for decades in India, and have evolved over centuries in America. This ongoing re-litigation involves, at the functional level, some fundamental questions about citizenship, individual and collective rights, particularly religious rights, the terms of engagement between the state and citizens, the balance of power between various branches of the government, the role of the media, etc. At the conceptual level, what is being debated is the question of national identity itself. As recurring incidents show in both countries, this process is oftentimes violent, and not based on a commonly agreed set of facts. And facts are being invented and misrepresented, including in cases where historical records and scientific evidence do not leave any such scope. This internal debate on democracy is also testing the **resilience** of institutional checks and balances, the bedrock of both democracies. While both India and the U.S are **pondering** over the values that define them as nations, talking of shared values — the bond between the two countries — may sound **incongruous**.

The other shared bond is of interests. America is deeply divided on what its national interests are. It is unable to decide who are its friends and who are its enemies. Indian commentators have over the years admired America for its single-minded pursuit of its strategic culture, its ability and willingness to use military power to change the course of world politics. But the Trump movement is based on a public **repudiation** of this strategic culture. The President has repeatedly called out the country's war planners and strategic thinkers. It is not that he is offering any alternative thinking; in fact, his actions are contradicting his own stated positions on so many fronts. He believes that championing a new era of military build-up is essential for making America great again, though he has called American interventions in recent decades "stupid". It is unlikely that America's strategic behaviour would change dramatically, but the fact remains that it now has a President who believes that what America has been pursuing all this while is not its national interest.



Resisting Chinese expansionism has been a shared interest between India and the U.S in recent years, and the rising defence cooperation between the two countries is testimony to that. But the American attitude to China, and the way it sees India in that equation, is more nuanced than the linear notion **prevalent** in India. In the order of American threat perceptions, China appears to be quite low at the moment, with Russia climbing to the top as a conventional threat — yet another point on which the security establishment and the President are not on the same page. Islamism and the potential for nuclear adventurism by North Korea or Iran come much higher on the list than China.

Not a military threat

China is not a military threat to the American mainland unlike Russia, which has the capability even if not the intent. Economic ties are no guarantee against conflict; strategic commentators have argued citing pre-World War trade links among European countries. But U.S.-China economic links are of a different nature **qualitatively**. American companies **fume** about unfair state interventions and IPR (intellectual property rights) losses in China, but the Chinese market and manufacturing processes are essential for their global operations. For the American state, China, as a threat, comes in the category of 'important, but not urgent'. Moreover, China is a valuable partner dealing with some more urgent questions. During the Obama years, they were climate change and North Korea. Under Mr. Trump, the single-minded focus is on dealing with North Korea. Mr. Trump also hopes for Chinese cooperation in his plans for the America economy. His administration has taken a **benign** view of Beijing's Belt and Road Initiative while American companies are trying to get as much business out of it as possible.

Reining in Pakistan

India has complained of American lack of sympathy for its concerns in its policy towards Pakistan. There has been increasing appreciation among Washington's strategic thinkers and policymakers of Pakistan's duplicity in the conflict in Afghanistan. That Pakistan exports terror to its neighbouring countries has now been stated in multiple government documents and Congressional hearings. However, successive U.S. administrations have viewed India's attempts to influence America's Pakistan policy with scepticism. While India wants the U.S. to **rein** in Pakistan's sponsorship of terrorism, it does not want American opinion on Kashmir — a position that American policymakers consider contradictory. While Americans increasingly appreciate the fact that India has been a victim of Pakistani aggression, they also believe New Delhi could be



more appreciative and supportive of American efforts to stabilise the region. Stabilising Pakistan and seeking a political deal with the Taliban have been part of that approach.

Previous administrations would be more guarded in expressing such concerns with India, which may not be case with Mr. Trump. Already, by offering to negotiate between India and Pakistan, the U.S. Ambassador to the UN, Nikki Haley, has stirred up a hornet's nest in India.

While it will take continuous engagement for India and the U.S. to explore their shared interests in Asia-Pacific and Af-Pak, any misalignment between the U.S. State Department and the Pentagon is no good news for India. Mr. Trump has cut the budget for the former while committing more money to defence, and the White House has declared that the new administration believes in hard power, not soft. The Pentagon sees each bilateral relationship from a military planning perspective while the State Department places it in a broader strategic calculation. Consequently, the U.S. Department of Defense has been a champion of enhancing cooperation with India, and its initiatives often do not pass muster with the Department of State. For instance, the Pentagon supports the sale of Guardian drones to India, while the State Department has raised the red flag that the technology has been given only to South Korea, a treaty ally of the U.S., so far in the region. Resolution of such intra-government disputes can only be achieved by a strong-willed political leadership committed to ties with India.

The India-U.S. partnership has **inherent** reasons to survive. But the romanticism that characterised the hype of well-meaning advocates of a stronger partnership needs to be tempered with a dose of realism. The heady romance is taking a pause, but the companionship will endure, loveless as it could be.

Magical Vocabulary from "The Hindu Editorial"

1. Sombre (adjective) निराशाजनक/अंधकारपूर्ण: Dark or dull in color or tone; gloomy.

Synonyms: depressed, sad, melancholy, dismal, doleful, mournful, lugubrious.

Example: Other writers were equally to popularize the notion of a fundamental watershed, but in tones that encouraged a more **sombre** mood.

2. Resilience (noun) पलटाव/लचीलाता: The capacity to recover quickly from difficulties; toughness



Synonyms: rebound, resilience, relapse.

Example: Consumer strength in the second half has been central to the **resilience** of the overall economy.

3. Pondering (verb) विचारकरना: Think about (something) carefully, especially before making a decision or reaching a conclusion.

Synonyms: Think about, contemplate, consider, review, reflect on, mull over, meditate on, muse on.

Example: I **pondered** the question of what clothes to wear for the occasion

4. Speculation (noun) अटकलबाजी/विचार : The forming of a theory or conjecture without firm evidence

Synonyms: hypothesis, supposition, surmise, surmised, guess, conjecture

Example: The Prime Minister's press chief returned from Washington yesterday amid unprecedented **speculation** he was going to resign.

5. Incongruous (adjective) असंगत : Not in harmony or keeping with the surroundings or other aspects of something.

Synonyms: Inappropriate, unsuitable, unsuited, wrong, strange, odd, curious, queer, absurd, bizarre.

Example: Critics argue the park itself is **incongruous** in a country where around half the population of 130m lives below the poverty line.

6. Inherent (adjective) अन्तर्निहित/जन्मजात: Existing in something as a permanent, essential, or characteristic attribute.

Synonyms: intrinsic, innate, immanent, built-in, indwelling, inborn, ingrained.

Example: In my opinion, this is not a matter falling within my **inherent** jurisdiction as a superior court judge.



7. Repudiation (noun) परित्याग/इनकार: Rejection of a proposal or idea or denial of the truth or validity of something.

Synonyms: cancellation, revocation, reversal, invalidation, nullification, abrogation.

Example: They are also anxious about growing popular animosity to the government's **repudiation** of democratic rights.

8. Prevalent (adjective) प्रचलित/प्रचारित: Widespread in a particular area at a particular time.

Synonyms: Widespread, prevailing, frequent, usual, common, current, popular, general, universal, endemic, rampant.

Example: The racism our parent's faced in the past is far less **prevalent** today than it was decades ago.

9. Fume (noun) क्रोधावेग/धूआंछोड़ना: feel, show, or express great anger.

Synonyms: Be furious, be enraged, be very angry, seethe, be livid, be incensed,

Example: He is **fuming** over the interference in his work.

10. Benign (adjective) सौम्य/अच्छा : Gentle; kindly.

Synonyms: kindly, kind, warmhearted, good-natured, friendly, warm, affectionate, agreeable, genial.

Example: The open eye, which had been fairly **benign** and friendly up until then, narrowed slightly into a bit of a glare.

11. Rein (noun) नियंत्रण/राज्यचलानेकीनीति/लगाम: A long, narrow strap attached at one end to a horse's bit, typically used in pairs to guide or check a horse while riding or driving.

Synonyms: Restrain, check, curb, constrain, hold back/in, keep under control, regulate, restrict, control.

Example: If political leaders lack the control to **rein** in their more violent followers, they have no right to public protests.



6. Enlarge the Frame

There has been no shortage of advice given to Narendra Modi about how he should approach Donald Trump. There is a touch of presumption in such advice, particularly because it is difficult to predict how the mercurial Trump will approach India. But the general **tenor** of the advice has been that India should be modest and transactional. It should avoid raising global issues that will annoy Trump and are incompatible with his worldview. Instead, we should be looking for modest deals under the radar, quietly advance some defence and business interests, and leave it at that. There might be a touch of helpful prudence in this advice. But there is also the suspicion that much of this advice comes from sections that have internalised a single-minded yardstick of Indian success in international relations: How does India do with an American President?

The Trump presidency should be a wake-up call on two things. India cannot give up its strategic autonomy. No one denies the importance of a deep and broad relationship with the United States. But the idea that tailoring our expectations to **ingratiate** ourselves to the US will solve most of our pressing strategic challenges is a pipe dream. While it is important to stress bilateral issues, the fact of the matter is that India will not be served well if the world generally becomes a more **precarious** place. Modi has unprecedented popular legitimacy and prides himself on his **candour**. It would be a shame if he did not at least communicate, without being confrontational, what should be India's grave concerns about the emerging world order. Statesmen have to be realistic. Mere **sermonizing** will not do. But any statesman who loses the larger plot of history for small transactional gains will not do his country a service.

In one respect, Modi has already taken his gaze off that wider sweep of history. The unstated story of the Trump effect on India is the one no one is talking about. With the sheen wearing off American democracy, its reputation for openness diminishing, India had, in its own way, a chance to project itself as a potential normative exemplar. Instead, we have done the opposite. When Modi came to power, he was caught between two normative impulses. On the one hand, he had his Hindutva base. On the other he aspired to being accepted, perhaps even to lead, a community of peers on the global stage; and his outreach was fantastic. But till the Obama presidency, part of Modi's global authority depended upon not acquiring a reputation for growing intolerance. It is much easier for India to project authority when its own foundations are liberal and secure.



The Trump presidency has **altered** that global norm. Liberal values, always a hypocritical currency in global affairs, can now simply be **damned**. It is not entirely a coincidence that as Trump has given short **shrif (confession)** to liberal values, the sense has grown in this regime that more assertive Hindutva will not have any reputational costs for India. We won't get the sermons on diversity and tolerance that we got from Obama.

What India has done is to use the normative vacuum created by Trump, to advance an aggressive Hindutva agenda even more vigorously because this now has no reputational or peer displeasure attached to it. India should not get ahead of itself; its democracy has flaws. But being an exemplar of the free world is a far more befitting and **ennobling** ambition than using this vacuum in international affairs to damage our reputation for liberal constitutionalism with **impunity**. Rather than take a lead, we are following Trump's example in **frittering away** our biggest strength. Modi's handshake with Trump would be so much more a show of power if it had the **imprimatur (a person's authoritative approval.)** of liberal values than simply a deal for Lockheed Martin behind it.

Trump has constructed a mythology that America is now more transactional and isolationist. But neither is, strictly speaking, true. If transactional simply means business deals can trump norms, America has often been transactional. But Trump is not isolationist. The global order is more precarious, because American ad hoc interventionism is now likely to be more extensive. Trump's forays into West Asia signal some things very clearly: The United States is not going to leave that region alone, it will continue to actively **meddle**, take partisan sides and will most likely create the conditions for more turmoil. The GCC, which had been insulated from the wider turmoil of the region, now risks being drawn in; America's Syria policy seems less about ISIS and more about showing the Russians they cannot have their way; America is backsliding on its **rapprochement** with Iran, a key element to any hope for preventing more conflict in the Middle East and Afghanistan.

While the immediate rhetoric from Washington is on Russia, the enduring axis of conflict and competition will remain China. Trump's characteristically ambiguous tweet thanking China for "trying" to help in North Korea is a signal that the North Korea card will buy China goodwill only up to a point. China has also upped the stakes by pursuing a more aggressive global agenda. Trump will pivot back to the China threat sooner or later. But the global system now risks being pushed into a corner where neither China nor the US will find it easy to compromise.



Throw in two more elements arising out of domestic politics in America, and the world system is looking riskier. Trump does not have much pushback from the Republicans. His own political survival will also require keeping the spectre of global conflict alive even more than has been the case with past presidents. The American military industrial complex is about to get even more active and interventionist, not isolationist. While India can sense some strategic opportunities in these tensions, surely it behoves it to say very candidly, that the US is playing with fire in stoking more conflict. These conflicts are not ours; but it is in our interests to throw cold water on them. On a range of other issues that we have been told to avoid, from climate change to multilateralism, India has a strong hand; it should play them with any eye to **posterity**.

Modi likes to be a cool prime minister. History will remember him more kindly if India performed the function of a cool and cooling power in the international system. We need to be more liberal, less transactional and more internationalist. Worry about history, not about getting the approval of Trump.

Magical Vocabulary from " The Indian Express"

1. Tenor (noun) अभिप्राय/आशय/चेतना: The general meaning, sense, or content of something.

Synonyms: Sense, Meaning, Purpose, Substance.

Example: Your teachers were all baritones and even your **tenor** voice has a distinct baritone touch to it.

2. Ingratiate (verb) अनुग्रहप्राप्तकरना: Bring oneself into favor with someone by flattering or trying to please them.

Synonyms: Flatter, Curry favor with, Find the favor of, Get on the good side of, Get in someone's good books.

Example: A social climber who had tried to **ingratiate** herself with the city gentry.

3. Precarious (adjective) अनिश्चित/अस्थिर: Characterized by a lack of security or stability that threatens with danger/ not securely held or in position.

Synonyms: uncertain, insecure, unpredictable, risky, parlous, hazardous, dangerous.

Example: We can see clearly the essence of despotism and the **precarious** nature of democracy.



4. **Candour (noun)**सरलता/स्पष्टवादिता: The quality of being open and honest; frankness.

Synonyms: Frankness, Glasnost, Honesty, Candidness, Truthfulness, Sincerity.

Example: A human being, but a professional, he answers questions with generosity, intelligence and **candour** .

5. **Sermonize (verb)**उपदेशदेना/प्रचारकरना: Deliver an opinionated and dogmatic talk to someone.
/ compose or deliver a sermon.

Synonyms: Preach, Evangelize, Pontificate, moralise, .

Example: In their speech, there is a tendency to be rhetorical and instructive and school-masterly and **sermonising** .

6. **Damn (verb)**आलोचनाकरना/निन्दा: Criticize strongly or expressing anger, surprise, or frustration.

Synonyms: condemn, censure, criticize, attack, denounce, revile, find fault with, deprecate.

Example: The editor **damned** the author's work as trite.

7. **Ennoble (verb)**अभिजातवर्गकासदस्यबनाना/उच्चपदप्रदानकरना: Lend greater dignity or nobility of character to.

Synonyms: Dignify, Honour, Bestow Honour On.

Example: Her skill and talent **ennoble** her profession.

8. **Fritter away (phrasal verb)**गँवाना: To waste something foolishly.

Synonyms: Waste, Squander, Spend Foolishly,

Example: Do not **fritter away** your youth time in wasteful things.

9. **Meddle (verb)**हस्तक्षेपकरना: Interfere in something that is not one's concern.

Synonyms: Interfere, Intervene, Tamper, Obtrude.



Example: I don't think we need to be seen to be **meddling** too much in the affairs of the Middle East region.

10. Rapprochement (noun) घनिष्ठता: An establishment or resumption of harmonious relations. /an agreement reached by opposing parties.

Synonyms: Harmonization, Reconciliation, Agreement, Cordiality, Friendliness.

Example: Music itself had acquired the potential to quicken the pace of an eventual **rapprochement** between the West and its colonies.

7. Look Beyond Waivers for Kisan 2.0

When LalBahadurShastri first shouted 'Jai Jawan, Jai Kisan' at Delhi's Ram Lila Maidan in 1965, he fleshed out a **cardinal** truth about India's political imaginary: the idea of the brave soldier and the hardworking farmer as **bulwarks** of the nation. BJP, in the past three years, has **adroitly** managed to hook its political messaging to the martial constituency with its uncompromising nationalist rhetoric and chest-thumping **machismo**. The question is whether growing kisan unrest from Madhya Pradesh to Rajasthan will prove to be an unexpected political googly as we head towards 2019.

After all, the imagery of the hardpressed exploited farmer running the engines of the nation deified from the beginning of the republic in films like Mother India and Do Bigha Zamin remains an unshakeable **shibboleth** of the Indian political imagination. So, will the kisan agitations prove to be an effective political lever for a desperate opposition looking for evocative handles to block BJP's electoral juggernaut or will this crisis taper off?

At the political level, BJP has, of course, been acutely focussed on the power of the farmer vote. Prime Minister Narendra Modi publicly declared his government's intent to double farmers' income by 2022 and BJP's 2014 manifesto promised to 'ensure a minimum of 50% profits over the costs of production' in agriculture. Yet, at the policy level, it has been confounded by the fact that the toolkit that our governments have traditionally used for managing agriculture is outdated and faulty. It is essentially trying to fix the wrong questions with the wrong answers.

The irony of MP's predicament is instructive. Chief minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan **farcically** went on a fast after his own police fired at farmers but agriculture is the one thing he has focussed consistently on since taking power in 2005. As the agricultural economist Ashok Gulati and his



colleagues point out, the state's agricultural GDP grew at a **staggering** 14.2% over the past five years and over thrice the national average over the last decade. "This is unprecedented in the annals of India's agricultural history. Even Punjab did not grow at this rate during the green revolution period." Yet, despite this, average earnings of agricultural households in MP continue to lag far behind the national average. This is basically because while farmers have been producing more, their input costs water, diesel, fertilisers, etc have increased **substantially** while prices for their products went down. A TOI analysis shows that between 2004-05 and 2014-15 in MP, the cost per hectare of fertilisers and seeds for wheat doubled while irrigation costs also increased substantially. This is of piece with the national agriculture story where after two years of drought, Indian farmers finally delivered a good crop for most commodities but saw their net margins going down in many cases into the red. That greater farm production in 2016-17 would lead to a glut in the market, prices would collapse and farmer incomes would consequently go down is Economics 101. Yet, the problem is that most of our policies have been fixated on giving farmers a minimum support price (MSP) and not enough on creating conditions for market mechanisms to play out effectively. Government fixes MSP for 23 commodities but official procurement is limited to only two wheat and rice and that too in only a few states. It is estimated that over 90% of India's farmers do not get the MSP price and are dependent on markets, which are circumscribed by arbitrary government over-regulation and the shortage of godowns and mandis.

A good example of policy as a problem is the case of pulses farmers. After a bumper harvest, in February 2017, the India Pulses and Grain Association petitioned the Union commerce secretary to remove an old 2006 export ban since market prices in India had slipped below MSP. Tur dal was being sold at the time between Rs 35,000 and Rs 47,000 per tonne in MP, Karnataka and Maharashtra, against the MSP of Rs 50,500. Yet, **inexplicably**, the ban remains in place, along with limits on stocks, making it impossible for farmers to even recover their costs. Artificially choking the market and not letting it play out is a recipe for disaster. Second, farmer loan waivers only push the can further down the road. They don't solve the problem. After BJP came good on its UP loan waiver poll promise, Maharashtra caved in to a similar demand and Haryana, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu are all facing the same music. In Punjab, Congress came to power promising exactly this.

States simply don't have the money for such **largesse** The combined debt-to-state GDP ratio of all states taken together hit an alarming 3.6% in 2015-16, breaching the mandated 3% ceiling under fiscal prudence rules. It will go through the roof with new waivers. A similar waiver by UPA in



2008 had no discernible long-term impact on improving agriculture. As TV pictures of the kisan agitations show, the blue jeans and T-shirt clad farmers of 2017 are very different from the downtrodden peasants of our collective national imagination. They ask why only big corporates should get loan waivers. It is a fair question. Yet, instead of temporary sops each year, government must do a fundamental rethink and address this Kisan 2.0 with a new deal on market pricing and a comprehensive deregulation of policy instead of old mai-baapsarkar type solutions that are past their use-by date.

Magical Vocabulary from "The Times of India"

1. **Cardinal(Adjective)**मौलिक/आधारभूत: Fundamental, of the greatest importance

Synonyms: Basic, Chief, Foremost, Prime, Principal,

Example: The rest of them, save the one single **cardinal** that keeps evading my lens, I'm not sure what they are.

Related Word: Cardinal (Noun): A leading dignitary of the Roman Catholic Church.

2. **Bulwarks(Noun)**बांध/मजबूतदीवार: A defensive wall

Synonyms: Barrier, Bastion, Defense, Embankment, Fortress,

Example: As a **bulwark** against the Spanish, the colony was successful, but as an economic experiment it was a failure.

3. **Adroitly (Adverb)**दक्षतापूर्वक/होशियारीसे: In a clever or skilful way.

Synonyms: Ably, Capably, Competently, Deftly, Expertly, Neatly, circumspectively, pawkily, warily.

Example: "Be quite easy," he continued playfully, as he **adroitly** took the gold coin in his palm.

4. **Machismo (Noun)**मर्दानगी: Strong or aggressive masculine pride

Synonyms: Macho, Manliness, Masculine, Virile

Example: Also in the rural areas, some of the more traditional **machismo**, an aggressively strong masculine character associated with patriarchy, prevailed.



5. Shibboleth (Noun) सिद्धांत: A custom, principle, or belief distinguishing a particular class or group of people.

Synonyms: Aphorism, Catchword, Dictum, Percept, Slogan

Example: "Sawch Bharat" is the **shibboleth** often repeated by the BJP's followers.

6. Farcically (Adverb) विनोदपूर्ण: Ludicrously, laughably inept

Synonyms: madcap, zany, slapstick, comic, comical, clownish, amusing, hilarious.

Example: Amber has been known to behave farcically when she is under the influence of marijuana.

7. Staggering (Verb) चौंका देने वाला: Astonish or deeply shock.

Synonyms: Amazing, Astounding, Shocking, Stunning

Example: Can you believe the television actor earns the **staggering** amount of three million dollars per show?

8. Substantially (Adverb) वास्तवमें/ काफी हद तक: To a great or significant extent.

Synonyms: Considerably, Essentially, Extensively, Materially, Significantly

Antonyms: Insignificantly, Negligibly

Example: Sales grew **substantially** when we moved as less time was being spent on staff management issues.

9. Inexplicably (Adverb) बेवजह/ बिना किसी स्पष्टीकरण के: Unable to be explained or accounted for.

Synonyms: Peculiarly, Queerly, Ridiculously, Strangely, Unusually

Example: She was aware that she was babbling, but for some **inexplicable** reason she was nervous.

10. Largesse (Noun) दरियादिली/ उदारता: Generosity in bestowing money or gifts upon others.



Synonyms: Assistance, Contribution, Endowment, Fund, Relief

Example: We have a fairly patrician government that in the past handed out **largesse** that kept us going.

8. Modi can shape Trump's views on Pakistan: New colours of the White House

As Prime Minister Narendra Modi prepares to meet President Donald Trump for the first time, today in Washington, there is a sense that the favourable winds that carried the India-U.S. relationship over the past 10 to 15 years may be changing. In its first six months, the Trump administration's radical and nationalistic approach to international affairs has already touched India in important areas, from visas for skilled workers, to climate change, to Iran policy. After an era in which successive American Presidents were persuaded to forego short-term pay-offs for longer-term economic and diplomatic investment in India, we now have an **incumbent** whose foreign policy imperative is to secure a pound of flesh — and to do so in the here and now. "The world is not a "global community'," noted two of Trump's advisers in a Wall Street Journal oped this month, summarising the President's worldview, declaring that they embraced "this elemental nature of international affairs". This undoubtedly throws up new challenges for India. Yet there are three important things to keep in mind when looking at the path ahead.

Three indications

First, the India-U.S. relationship has its own mass and momentum. While the grand gestures of the past decade may be more difficult to achieve, the relationship is likely to remain robust. While the **whims** of the President and his most radical advisers will buffet particular areas — such as trade, immigration, and climate change — more **pragmatic** cabinet ministers are not without influence. Most significant here is the so-called Axis of Adults, comprising Secretary of State Rex Tillerson, Secretary of Defence James Mattis, and National Security Advisor H.R. McMaster.

While this **trio** has been undercut more than once — sometimes quite brutally, as when Mr. Trump removed a crucial reference to the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation's collective defence



clause from a major speech — they continue to exercise power over their own domains, on issues that do not necessarily rise to presidential attention. This is especially true of the Pentagon, which is vested with considerable executive authority, but also of weaker departments. The State Department’s decision to authorise the \$2 billion sale of nearly two dozen predator drones to India, significantly augmenting the Indian Navy’s unmanned aerial capability, is an important signal in this regard. Such a sensitive platform might have been used as leverage to secure Indian concessions in areas where the administration was seeking a change in India’s behaviour — say, Iran — but the positive trend in defence sales looks set to continue. Progress in the joint working group in aircraft carrier technology, which involves much more far-reaching technology transfer, will be an important test of this over the medium term.

The record so far

Second, there is now a template for how foreign leaders can manipulate Mr. Trump to their own ends. We have two useful illustrations of this: China and Saudi Arabia. China, criticised in **vituperative** terms by Mr. Trump on the campaign trail, persuaded the President not only to **swallow** the bowdlerised history that Korea “used to be a part of China”, but also that Beijing was making every effort to address North Korea’s nuclear programme. In doing so, it induced Mr. Trump to soft-pedal on the South China Sea — the administration blocked at least three requests by the U.S. military’s Pacific Command to conduct freedom of navigation operations, before the first one was allowed to go ahead in late May — and delay arms sales to Taiwan. On June 20, the President declared that this policy of relying on China “has not worked out”, but expressed gratitude to Beijing for trying. It’s too early to conclude that the Chinese approach to Mr. Trump has entirely succeeded, because a sixth North Korean nuclear test could clearly upend this **détente (the easing of hostility or strained relations, especially between countries- शांतिबनाएरखने)**. However, China has managed to dramatically moderate Mr. Trump’s hostility and buy a period of calm. Another, even more stark, example comes from West Asia. In recent weeks, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates have persuaded Mr. Trump to enthusiastically tweet his support for their economic and diplomatic assault on Qatar, a country which hosts more than 10,000 American troops and the forward headquarters of Central Command, over its policies towards the Muslim Brotherhood and Iran. Mr. Trump was persuaded of this despite the State Department’s urging that the dispute be settled quickly and **amicably**, and the risk to disruption of U.S.-led military operations against the Islamic State at a crucial time in the battle.



These two cases have a few things in common. For one thing, they involve foreign leaders personally cultivating Mr. Trump. "After listening for 10 minutes," Mr. Trump declared following his April meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping on North Korea, "I realised that it's not so easy." Mr. Xi achieved the best of both worlds: persuading Mr. Trump that Chinese influence was limited, thereby insulating China from the **consequences** of failure, but also securing Mr. Trump's goodwill for his efforts. Mr. Trump's meetings with Saudi Arabia's King Salman, and now Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman in Riyadh in May were also likely to have been important in winning his subsequent backing for the campaign against Qatar.

Mr. Trump is **credulous**, impressionable, and **narcissistic**. China and Saudi Arabia succeeded in framing their behaviour as being, first and foremost, an effort to address one of the President's personal priorities — North Korea in the first instance, and terrorism in the second. By contrast, the U.S.'s allies in Europe and Japan have struggled to craft a similar narrative.

The South Asian matrix

Third, more important than what President Trump does for India may be what he does not do. The Qatar crisis has shown that he cares little for **shibboleths** (किसीसमूहकाचिह्न) such as regional stability, mutual restraint, and dispute resolution. He respects power and those who **wield (hold and use (a weapon or tool).)** it, oftentimes regardless of the end result. For better or worse, this may open up new space for India's posture towards Pakistan, which has over the past year evolved in a significantly more **coercive** and risk-acceptant direction. The Obama administration's sympathetic approach to last year's so-called surgical strikes showed that U.S. policy was anyway shifting in the direction of giving greater latitude to New Delhi. As the ceasefire on the Line of Control collapses and the KulbhushanJadhav crisis festers, the prospect of a militarised Indian response to another terrorist attack rises.

It's by no means certain that Mr. Trump will take a hands-off stance in such a scenario. After all, Israeli leaders have been unpleasantly surprised by the interest that he has taken in the Israel-Palestine dispute, despite his broadly pro-Israel stance. But Mr. Modi will have an opportunity to shape Mr. Trump's basic views on Pakistan, and at a formative moment for his administration's Afghan policy. This may well be where Mr. Modi chooses to focus his efforts, leaving **thornier** subjects for the coming years.

Magical Vocabulary from "The Hindu"



1. Incumbent (Adjective) निर्भर: Necessary for (someone) as a duty or responsibility.

Synonyms: Necessary for one to, essential that, required that, imperative that, holder, bearer, occupant.

Example: It is a small union and it does not take many votes to defeat an **incumbent** official.

Related Word: Cardinal (Noun): A leading dignitary of the Roman Catholic Church.

2. Pragmatic (Adjective) व्यावहारिक/हस्तक्षेपकरनेवाला : Dealing with things sensibly and realistically in a way that is based on practical rather than theoretical considerations.

Synonyms: Practical, matter-of-fact, sensible, down-to-earth, commonsensical, matter-of-fact.

Example: This is a programme that any **pragmatic** centre-right government could be proud of.

3. Vituperative (Adjective) निंदापूर्ण: Bitter and abusive.

Synonyms: Sardonic, pejorative, abusive

Example: The assembly meeting was the scene of **vituperative** attacks on any attempt to mitigate the consequences of the victory.

4. Swallow (Noun) सहनकरना/निगलना: An act of swallowing something, especially food or drink.

Synonyms: Tolerate, endure, stand, put up with, bear, abide, countenance.

Example: Thilda shrugged her shoulders and took a **swallow** of her mead.

5. Amicable (adjective) मैत्रीपूर्ण/सौहार्दपूर्ण: (of relations between people) having a spirit of friendliness; without serious disagreement or rancor

Synonyms: friendly, good-natured, cordial, easy, easygoing, neighborly, harmonious, cooperative.

Example: The conversation was **amicable** , as befitted a meeting between two old friends.

6. Consequences (noun) परिणाम: A result or effect of an action or condition.



Synonyms: result, upshot, outcome, effect, repercussion, ramification.

Example: Many have been laid off from work as a **consequence** of the administration's policies.

7. Credulous (adjective) विश्वासप्रवणता: Having or showing too great a readiness to believe things.

Synonyms: Gullible, naive, too trusting, easily taken in, impressionable, unsuspecting, unsuspecting.

Example: This is not a new approach, since mediums have long done readings for their **credulous** clients.

8. Narcissistic (adjective) आत्मशक्ति: Having an excessive or erotic interest in oneself and one's physical appearance.

Synonyms: vain, self-loving, self-admiring, self-absorbed, self-obsessed, conceited.

Example: The **narcissistic** presumption of centrality that underpins paranoia here gives birth to semiotic solipsism.

9. Coercive (adjective) बलपूर्वक/अनिवार्य: Relating to or using force or threats.

Synonyms: compulsive, compulsory, violent, preceptive, mandatory.

Example: What we have here is the government using its power over prisoners for commercial advantage.

10. Thornier (adjective) कांटेदार/कठिन/कष्टमय: Having many thorns or thorn bushes.

Synonyms: Problematic, tricky, ticklish, touchy, delicate, controversial, awkward, difficult, knotty, tough.

Example: He addresses this **thorny** question in his third book on the science of belief.



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