

## Important Vocab for the Editorial

1. **brew** (noun) – mixture, mix, blend, combination.
2. **evasive** (adjective) – elusive, indeterminate, non-committal; unclear, puzzling, perplexing.
3. **affair** (noun) – concerns, matters, activities, events (of public interest).
4. **albeit** (conjunction) – though, even though, however.
5. **mediate** (verb) – resolve, settle; negotiate, bring about, effect.
6. **strategist** (noun) – someone skilled in planning action/policy (especially in politics/war).
7. **troubleshooter** (noun) – a person who solves problems (in an organisation).
8. **unsustainable** (adjective) – undefendable, unjustifiable, unacceptable, illogical, irrational.
9. **keep away** from (phrasal verb) – make someone stay away from.
10. **any longer** (phrase) – anymore, at present.
11. **walk out** (phrasal verb) – depart, get out, leave suddenly; desert, abandon.
12. **face** (noun) – person.
13. **champion** (noun) – advocate, proponent, promoter, supporter.
14. **pluralism** (noun) – (of people) the practice exists in harmony irrespective of various differences.
15. **strident** (adjective) – in an excessively forceful way; high-pitched, loud & harsh.
16. **polarising** (adjective) – dividing, separating, parting.
17. **consecutive** (adjective) – successive, continuous.
18. **on the back of** (phrase) – as a result of, because of, due to, owing to.
19. **consolidation** (noun) – the process of combining a number of things into a single more effective one; unification.
20. **sweep through** (verb) – engulf, overwhelm, surge over, flow across.
21. **autonomous** (adjective) – self-governing, independent, self-ruling, self-determining.
22. **welfare** (noun) – a government program that provides (financial) assistance to individuals and families in need; social security, public assistance.
23. **constituent** (noun) – voter, elector, member of a constituency.

24. **base** (noun) – a group of people considered as supporting a (political) party.
25. **with regard to** (phrase) – regarding, concerning, with respect to, in respect of, with reference to.
26. **regime** (noun) – system, arrangement, apparatus, mechanism.
27. **legislate** (verb) – cause something by making/enacting laws.
28. **move** (verb) – apply formally to (a court) for something.
29. **National Register of Citizens (NRC)** (noun) – It is a register that includes demographic information about all those individuals who qualify as citizens of India as per the Citizenship Act, 1955.
30. **allege** (verb) – claim, accuse, charge.
31. **irregularity** (noun) – impropriety, incorrectness, wrongdoing, misconduct, illegitimacy.
32. **making** (noun) – creation, creating, formation, composition.
33. **pray** (verb) – invoke, call on, implore, appeal to, entreat.
34. **roll** (noun) – list, register, directory, record, file.
35. **discrepancy** (noun) – difference, variance, contradiction, incompatibility.
36. **Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA)** (noun) – The Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2019 seeks to grant citizenship to religious minorities of Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Bangladesh, who had to flee their homeland facing persecution. The six minority groups that have been specifically identified are Hindus, Jains, Sikhs, Buddhists, Christians, and Parsis.
37. **nationalist** (noun) – loyalist, patriot.
38. **floodgate** (noun) – something which is restraining/holding back/stifling an outflow of something else.
39. **open the floodgates** (phrase) – to make something easier for a lot of things to happen (or) to make it possible for a lot of people to start doing something that was not permitted previously.
40. **besides** (preposition/linking adverb) – in addition to, as well, apart from.
41. **strategy** (noun) – plan of action (in order to achieve a more expansive set of political, economic, and security interests).
42. **disingenuous** (adjective) – dishonest, deceitful, double-dealing.
43. **be riding a tiger** (phrase) – used to refer to a difficult action which has already begun, is something tough to stop safely & abruptly in midway.
44. **mandate** (noun) – approval, acceptance, endorsement, authority (given by a constituency to someone acting as its representative).

45. compassion (noun) – sympathy, feeling, empathy, consideration, humanity.
46. realism (noun) – pragmatism, practicality, matter-of-factness.

## Assam brew: On transfer of power in Assam

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### Himanta Biswa Sarma cannot continue with the BJP's evasive position on citizenship

The transfer of power in Assam, from Sarbananda Sonowal to Himanta Biswa Sarma was a smooth affair albeit mediated by the Bharatiya Janata Party's central leadership. Mr. Sarma has been the key strategist and troubleshooter for the BJP, not only in Assam, but in the entire northeast, for six years now. It would have been unsustainable for the party to keep him away from the post of the Chief Minister any longer. He was a key figure in the Congress until 2015, when he walked out of it to instantly emerge as the face of the BJP. A champion of pluralism as a Congress leader, Mr. Sarma grew strident as a polarising figure in Assam as a BJP leader. The BJP won Assam for a second consecutive time on the back of intense Hindu consolidation that swept through autonomous tribal regions, and across Bengali and Assamese speakers. Mr. Sarma has said his government would expand the welfare schemes started in the BJP's first term, particularly targeting women and tea garden workers. That is hardly a controversial move, apart from the additional burden it might put on the State finances. The real challenge for him is in balancing the conflicting expectations of the constituents of the party's support base with regard to the new citizenship regime legislated by the Centre.

Mr. Sarma's government has already moved the Supreme Court for a re-verification of the Assam National Register of Citizens (NRC). The State government alleges "major irregularities" in its making — ineligible inclusions and unreasonable exclusions. An application by the State also prays for the deletion of illegal voters from Assam's electoral rolls. The final draft of the NRC published in August 2019 had excluded 19.06 lakh

out of 3.3 crore applications for lack of adequate documents establishing them as Indian citizens. Some think too few have been excluded. The CM wants up to 20% re-verification in the NRC for areas bordering Bangladesh and 10% for interior areas; and the Supreme Court's guidance on the issue if discrepancies are found. The BJP's evasive position on the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, which Assamese nationalists fear will open a floodgate of Bengali Hindus into the State besides granting citizenship to those who are already there, has been successful as an electoral strategy this time. That it is a central law and the State has little to do with it is technically correct, but it is disingenuous for a party that is in power at both levels. The BJP has been riding a tiger on the citizenship question. The party must use its fresh mandate in Assam as an opportunity to refresh its approach towards peoples and their movements in the northeast with compassion and realism.

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