

Important Vocab for the Editorial

1. **character** (noun) – status, position, image, reputation, credibility, prestige.
2. **directive** (noun) – instruction, direction, order, demand.
3. **manipulated** (adjective) – misrepresented, falsified, distorted.
4. **manipulated media** (noun) – As per Twitter’s policy, content may be labelled/tagged as ‘manipulated media’ or in some cases removed, if the company has a reason to believe that media (videos, audio, and images), or the context in which media are presented, are “significantly and deceptively altered or manipulated”.
5. **tag** (noun) – label.
6. **microblogging** (noun) – it refers to the act of creating concise posts for short audience interactions, often on common microblogging platforms such as Twitter and Tumblr. In addition to text, a post on a microblog can include links, audio, images, and even video.
7. **functionary** (noun) – official, representative, agent, especially in a government or political party.
8. **not have a leg to stand on** (phrase) – do not have facts to support one’s argument/actions.
9. **go to any lengths** (phrase) – to do whatever/anything possible to complete a task (and achieve a goal).
10. **empower** (verb) – authorize, entitle, permit, allow.
11. **tarnish** (verb) – spoil, ruin, damage, defame.
12. **opponent** (noun) – rival, nemesis, combatant, competitor.
13. **misinform** (verb) – mislead, misguide, give wrong information to.
14. **toolkit** (noun) – a document containing a set of details/resources/guidelines/suggestions/various urgent action items about something in order to get it done.
15. **disparage** (verb) – belittle, underrate, downgrade; speak ill of, speak badly of, criticize, condemn, vilify.
16. **forge** (verb) – fake, falsify, counterfeit, copy fraudulently.
17. **forged** (adjective) – fake.
18. **indeed** (adverb) – in fact, actually, undeniably.
19. **opportunity cost** (noun) – It refers to the price/cost/value of the next best thing you could have done had you not made your first choice.
20. **Central Vista** (noun) – it is a grand redevelopment project for building what will be the power corridor of India, having a new Parliament

building, a common central secretariat, and revamped three-km-long Rajpath, from the Rashtrapati Bhavan to the India Gate.

21. **digital footprint** (noun) – a trail of data/information that's created – intentionally and unintentionally – through your activities and communication online. The impression you create on the internet through your online activity, which includes browsing, interactions with others, and publication of content.
22. **supposedly** (adverb) – apparently, seemingly, ostensibly.
23. **course of action** (phrase) – plan of action, action/step, procedure.
24. **catalogue** (verb) – archive, record, register.
25. **propagandist** (noun) – advocate, champion, supporter, proponent, campaigner.
26. **lead to** (verb) – result in, cause, bring about, call forth, give rise to, produce.
27. **bully** (verb) – intimidate, persecute, oppress, browbeat.
28. **mob** (noun) – a large, disorganized, and often violent crowd of people.
29. **comply with** (verb) – abide by, adhere to, conform to, follow.
30. **handle** (noun) – a “username” used on social media that begins with the “@” symbol.
31. **reasoning** (noun) – reason, rationale, argument, premise.
32. **in the absence of** (phrase) – without.
33. **provision** (noun) – clause, (legal) term, stipulation, requirement, condition.
34. **cite** (verb) – refer to, mention, make reference to.
35. **baffle** (verb) – perplex, puzzle, bewilder, mystify.
36. **prejudged** (adjective) – anticipated, judged prematurely.
37. **prejudiced** (adjective) – biased, discriminatory, partisan, one-sided.
38. **deliberate** (adjective) – intentional, planned, conscious, purposeful.
39. **colour** (verb) – influence, affect, bias, prejudice.
40. **metric** (noun) – a system/standard.
41. **concur** (verb) – permit, consent to, agree to, allow, assent to.
42. **publicise** (verb) – bring to public notice, announce, communicate, disseminate, circulate.
43. **deceptively** (adverb) – deceitfully, fraudulently, ambiguously.
44. **fabricate** (verb) – forge, falsify, fake.
45. **mechanism** (noun) – procedure, process, method, technique.
46. **determination** (noun) – decision, settlement, choice.
47. **entity** (noun) – organization, institution, establishment, outfit.

48. Information Technology Act (noun) – it is an Act of the Indian Parliament notified on 17 October 2000. It is the primary law in India dealing with cybercrime and electronic commerce.
49. regulate (verb) – control, oversee, administer something (by using rules and regulations).
50. additionally (adverb) – besides, moreover, further, as well.
51. regarding (preposition) – concerning, with regard to, with respect to.
52. arbitrary (adjective) – whimsical, capricious, random, casual; tyrannical, autocratic, dictatorial, authoritarian, draconian, anti-democratic.
53. ensorship (noun) – the suppression of speech, public communication, or other information, on the basis that such material is considered objectionable, harmful, sensitive, or inconvenient.
54. transparency (noun) – clarity, straightforwardness, openness, honesty, unambiguity.
55. desperation (noun) – recklessness, riskiness, audacity, boldness; hopelessness, despair, distress.
56. embarrass (verb) – shame, humiliate, discomfit.
57. rather than (phrase) – instead of.
58. intimidate (verb) – frighten, threaten, overawe, browbeat.
59. discipline (verb) – train someone to do something in a controlled way.
60. civility (noun) – politeness, good manners, consideration, respect.
61. engagement (noun) – participation, taking part, involvement.
62. critic (noun) – censurer, attacker, fault-finder.

Character challenge: On Gol's directive to Twitter

MAY 25, 2021 00:02 IST

The Centre's directive to Twitter to remove 'manipulated media' tag on posts is illegal

The Government of India's directive to microblogging platform Twitter that it remove the label 'manipulated media' from certain posts shared by functionaries of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), including Union Ministers, has no legal leg to stand on. But it reveals that the Government of India is willing to go to any lengths to empower BJP functionaries to tarnish political opponents and misinform the public. The BJP functionaries

circulated on Twitter what they called a ‘toolkit’ prepared by the Congress to disparage the government. The Congress has filed a police complaint that the BJP functionaries forged a document that does not exist. It has also written to Twitter to permanently suspend the accounts of those who circulated the forged documents. There is indeed a document that the Congress prepared on the opportunity costs of the Central Vista project for its internal use. The one circulated by the BJP leaders included additional pages on COVID-19. The BJP has failed to provide the digital footprint, or the copies, of what it calls the COVID-19 toolkit. There is no evidence that the Congress has done anything in the toolkit which was supposedly prepared in May; but the toolkit proposes courses of action that have already happened in April, an analysis by fact-checking platform AltNews has revealed. Toolkits are meant to be about coordinating future actions on social media, and not cataloguing past events. When challenged on facts, a BJP propagandist revealed the identity of a woman who was involved in the Central Vista research, leading to her bullying by cyber mobs.

Twitter has not complied with the Centre’s directive, and at least six handles of BJP functionaries now have posts with the tag ‘manipulated media’. The reasoning behind the directive, in the absence of any legal provision to cite, by the Government of India is baffling. It has argued that the labelling was a “prejudged, prejudiced and a deliberate attempt to colour the investigation by local law enforcement agency”. By this metric, a private company must allow what it has determined as problematic content, until a state agency concurs. Twitter has a publicised policy that it may label tweets that include media that have been deceptively altered or fabricated. It could use its own mechanism or use third party services to make that determination. Twitter is a private entity whose relationship with users is guided by its terms of services. The IT Act that empowers the government to regulate content does not give it the power to order the removal of a label. Additionally, the government move raises serious concerns regarding arbitrary censorship and transparency. The Centre’s desperation to control any discussion on its failures, and shift the focus on to the Opposition is leading to such situations that embarrass a democracy. Rather than intimidate a private company, the BJP and the Centre should discipline its functionaries into more civility and truthfulness in their engagement with critics.