

Important Vocab for the Editorial

1. **ruler** (noun) – leader, sovereign, head of state; despot, dictator, tyrant, autocrat.
2. **curb** (noun) – control, restriction, limitation.
3. **hear out** (phrasal verb) – listen to someone who wants to say something.
4. **shed** (verb) – discard, get rid of, do away with, drop, abandon, throw out, jettison.
5. **arbitrary** (adjective) – whimsical, capricious, random, casual; tyrannical, autocratic, dictatorial, authoritarian, draconian, anti-democratic.
6. **rule-making** (noun) – the making of rules/regulations.
7. **most if not all** (phrase) – almost all, maybe all, a large majority of.
8. **giant** (noun) – a very large firm.
9. **comply with** (verb) – abide by, adhere to, conform to, follow.
10. **The Information Technology (Guidelines for Intermediaries and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021** (noun) – the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules 2021 have been framed in exercise of powers under section 87 (2) of the Information Technology Act, 2000 and in supersession of the earlier Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines) Rules 2011.
11. **intermediary** (noun) – social media website, eCommerce website, blogging platform, search engine, telecom provider, Internet platform (hosting user-generated content), cloud provider, etc.
12. **come into effect** (phrase) – become applicable; come into force.
13. **non-compliance** (noun) – indiscipline, misbehaviour, misconduct, disobedience.
14. **trigger** (verb) – cause, prompt, bring about.
15. **worsening** (noun) – deterioration, decline, decay, collapse, failure.
16. **among other things** (phrase) – used to indicate that there are several more things like the one mentioned, but that you do not intend to mention them all.
17. **adhere to** (verb) – abide by, follow, obey, comply with.
18. **vastly** (adverb) – extremely, immensely, exceedingly, hugely/largely.
19. **compliance** (noun) – conformity, observance, observation, accordance, adherence.
20. **make sure** (phrase) – check, confirm, make certain, ensure.

21. nodal officer (noun) – an office-holder given responsibility for a particular job within an organisation.
22. grievance (noun) – complaint.
23. trace (verb) – track down, find, detect.
24. encrypted (adjective) – concealed/hidden with secret code.
25. indeed (adverb) – in fact, actually, undeniably.
26. bring in (phrasal verb) – introduce, cause, bring about, create.
27. plethora (noun) – a lot, too many; excess, abundance, surplus.
28. ought to (modal verb) – must, should.
29. legislative (adjective) – relating to legislation; involving or relating to the process of making and passing laws.
30. make things/matters worse (phrase) – to make the situation even worse.
31. break down (phrasal verb) – fail, collapse, come to nothing, founder, fall through, be unsuccessful.
32. stand-off (noun) – deadlock, stalemate, impasse (in a dispute/conflict).
33. tag (verb) – label.
34. manipulated (adjective) – misrepresented, falsified, distorted.
35. 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".
36. result in (phrasal verb) – cause, bring on, bring about, call forth, give rise to.
37. back-story (noun) – history.
38. court of law (noun) – court, tribunal.
39. engage with (verb) – to establish a meaningful relation with someone.
40. strained (adjective) – difficult, troubled, embarrassed.
41. stonewalling (noun) – obstruction, delaying of something.
42. stonewall (verb) – obstruct, impede, interfere with, hinder, hamper, block, interrupt.
43. have someone's back (phrase) – be prepared to support/defend someone.
44. on one's part (phrase) – made by, carried out by, caused by, from.
45. make all the right noises (phrase) – behave as if you support or accept something by making statements (even though that may not be correct).

46. **take on board** (phrase) – understand, make sense of, comprehend, work out.
47. **pandemic** (noun) – the worldwide spread of a new disease; The illness spreads around the world and typically affects a large number of people across a wide area.
48. **The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII)** (noun) – It works to create and sustain an environment conducive to the development of India, partnering industry, Government and civil society, through advisory and consultative processes.
49. **The Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI)** (noun) – Established in 1927, FICCI is the largest and oldest apex business organisation in India. A non-government, not-for-profit organisation, FICCI is the voice of India's business and industry. From influencing policy to encouraging debate, engaging with policy makers and civil society, FICCI articulates the views and concerns of industry.
50. **The U.S.-India Business Council (USIBC)** (noun) – Formed in 1975 at the request of the U.S. and Indian governments, the U.S.-India Business Council is the premier business advocacy organization, composed of more than 350 top-tier U.S. and Indian companies advancing U.S.-India commercial ties. The Council aims to create an inclusive bilateral trade environment between India and the United States by serving as the voice of industry, linking governments to businesses, and supporting long-term commercial partnerships that will nurture the spirit of entrepreneurship, create jobs, and successfully contribute to the global economy.
51. **seek** (verb) – request, ask for, demand.
52. **high-handed** (adjective) – imperious, arbitrary, overbearing, domineering; autocratic, authoritarian, anti-democratic, dictatorial, oppressive.

Rules and rulers: On social media curbs

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The Govt. must hear out the social media industry, and shed its arbitrary rule-making

It does seem that most if not all global social media giants will miss complying with the new IT rules of intermediaries, which come into effect today. It would be unfortunate if this non-compliance were to trigger a further worsening of the already poor relationship between some social media players and the Government. The new rules were introduced in February. Among other things, they require the bigger social media platforms, which the rules referred to as significant social media intermediaries, to adhere to a vastly tighter set of rules within three months, which ended on May 25. They require these platforms to appoint chief compliance officers, in order to make sure the rules are followed, nodal officers, to coordinate with law enforcement agencies, and grievance officers. Another rule requires messaging platforms such as WhatsApp to trace problematic messages to its originators, raising uneasy questions about how services that are end-to-end encrypted can adhere to this. There are indeed many problems with the new rules, not the least of which is the manner in which they were introduced without much public consultation. There has also been criticism about bringing in a plethora of new rules that ought to be normally triggered only via legislative action.

But non-compliance can only make things worse, especially in a situation in which the relationship between some platforms such as Twitter and the Government seems to have broken down. The latest stand-off between them, over Twitter tagging certain posts by BJP spokespeople as ‘manipulated media’, has even resulted in the Delhi Police visiting the company’s offices. Separately, the Government has been fighting WhatsApp over its new privacy rules. Whatever the back-story, it is important that social media companies fight the new rules in a court of law if they find them to be problematic. The other option, that of engaging with the Government, may not work in these strained times. But stonewalling on the question of compliance can never be justified, even if it is to be assumed that the U.S. Government has their back. Facebook, on its part, has made all the right noises. It has said that it aims to comply with the new rules but also needs to engage with the Government on a few issues. What is important is that the genuine concerns of social media companies are taken on board. Apart from issues about the rules, there have been problems about creating conditions for compliance during the pandemic. As reported by The Hindu, five industry bodies, including the CII, FICCI and the U.S.-India Business

Council have sought an extension of 6-12 months for compliance. This is an opportunity for the Government to hear out the industry, and also shed its high-handed way of rule-making.

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