

Important Vocab for the Editorial

1. **imperious** (adjective) – forceful, arrogant, high-handed, overbearing, commanding, domineering, authoritarian.
2. **misstep** (noun) – mistake, blunder, false step.
3. **recall** (verb) – officially call back (someone).
4. **ill-conceived** (adjective) – absurd, ridiculous, not carefully planned.
5. **archipelago** (noun) – a group of (small) islands closely scattered in a body of water; e.g. Indonesia, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Japan, the Philippines, Maldives & etc.
6. **idyllic** (adjective) – ideal/perfect, extremely happy, peaceful.
7. **no longer** (phrase) – not any more.
8. **long arm** (noun) – far-reaching power, force, authority.
9. **rummage** (verb) – search through, hunt through, ferret about in, dig in.
10. **Administrator** (noun) – Union Territories are administrated by the President acting to such extent, as he thinks fit, through an Administrator appointed by him.
11. **determined** (adjective) – insistent on, fixed on, firm about, obsessed with, single-minded about.
12. **upend** (verb) – to affect/damage something completely/drastically.
13. **landscape** (noun) – terrain, environment; the distinctive features (of a field of activity).
14. **recast** (verb) – change, alter, transform; reshape, remodel.
15. **authoritarian** (adjective) – oppressive, draconian, dictatorial, totalitarian.
16. **imagination** (noun) – interest, attention, preoccupation.
17. **The Draft Lakshadweep Development Authority Regulation, 2021 (LDAR 2021)** (noun) – This Draft Regulation, notified on the administration's website, proposes to change the existing land ownership and usage in Lakshadweep by giving sweeping powers to the administration to directly interfere with an islander's right to possess and retain their property. It empowers the administration to pick any land for "development" activities provided under its regulation.
18. **sweeping** (adjective) – overwhelming, decisive, complete, total, out-and-out, unrestricted, unconditional.
19. **measure** (noun) – statute, act, law, legislation.
20. **offence** (noun) – crime, illegal/unlawful act, wrongdoing.

21. **hold** (verb) – imprison, lock up, put behind bars, put in prison, put in jail, incarcerate.
22. **The Lakshadweep Prevention of Anti-Social Activities Regulation or Goonda Act** (noun) – This act grants immense powers to the administrator, including to detain a person for up to one year to 'prevent him from acting in any manner prejudicial to the maintenance of public order.
23. **livelihood** (noun) – means of making a living with the basic necessities (food, water, shelter and clothing); means of support, subsistence, source of income.
24. **impede** (verb) – hinder, obstruct, hamper, disrupt.
25. **Coast Guard Act, 1978** (noun) – An Act to provide for the constitution and regulation of an Armed Force of the Union for ensuring the security of the maritime zones of India with a view to the protection of maritime and other national interests in such zones and for matters connected therewith.
26. **dairy** (adjective) – relating to the products made from milk.
27. **run** (verb) – organize, manage, control.
28. **fragile** (adjective) – weak, delicate, shaky.
29. **ecosystem** (noun) – complex situation/environment.
30. **is no stranger to** (phrase) – experienced in something; knowledgeable about something; to be well informed about a particular experience or activity.
31. **disregard** (noun) – negligence, indifference, non-observance, inattention.
32. **in the absence of** (phrase) – without.
33. **rationale** (noun) – reason, reasoning/thinking, logic, grounds, basis.
34. **public good** (phrase) – the benefit, advantage, or well-being of the public.
35. **blatantly** (adverb) – openly, flagrantly, glaringly, shamelessly.
36. **arbitrary** (adjective) – whimsical, capricious, random, casual; tyrannical, autocratic, dictatorial, authoritarian, draconian, anti-democratic.
37. **at play** (phrase) – in effect, happening.
38. **inhabitant** (noun) – resident, dweller; people/public.
39. **part with** (verb) – give up, relinquish, forgo, hand over, renounce.
40. **ill-advised** (adjective) – ill-considered, ill-judged, misguided, badly planned.
41. **demography** (noun) – the composition/formation of a specific human population.

42. **rise** (verb) – become more intense.
43. **far from** (phrase) – not, not at all.
44. **insistent** (adjective) – determined, adamant, unyielding, unrelenting.
45. **carve out** (phrasal verb) – establish, develop, create something (by taking something from a larger whole) with effort.
46. **invert** (verb) – reverse, flip over, transpose, upturn.
47. **licence** (noun) – permission, authority, right, a free hand, consent, authorization, approval.
48. **interfere** (verb) – intervene in, get involved in, encroach on, impinge on, meddle in.

Imperious missteps: On Lakshadweep restrictions

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The Centre should recall the Lakshadweep Administrator and drop his ill-conceived plans

Lakshadweep, an archipelago of 36 islands totalling 32 square kilometres in the Arabian Sea, has had an idyllic existence as a Union Territory. But no longer, it seems, as the **long arm of Delhi is rummaging around the islands** these days. Praful K. Patel, a BJP politician from Gujarat, who arrived as Administrator in December, appears determined to upend the landscape and recast the lives of the islanders, around 70,000 of them, all according to his authoritarian imagination. The **draft Lakshadweep Development Authority Regulation 2021** gives sweeping powers to the Administrator to take over land and forcibly relocate people, and proposes harsh punishment to those who resist. In other measures, proposed or implemented, the consumption or sale of beef, a part of the food habits of many, could be an offence punishable by seven years in prison; those who have more than two children cannot contest panchayat elections. Anyone could be held in prison without reason up to a year, under a new Goonda Act, in a place that has a very low crime rate. The traditional livelihood of

fishing communities has been impeded by mindless regulations that deny them access to coastlines. Their sheds on the coastal areas have been demolished, saying they violated the Coast Guard Act. Dairy farms run by the administration have been shut.

Development, as it is coming, is not a promise, but a serious threat to the people of Lakshadweep and the fragile ecosystem. Mr. Patel is no stranger to controversies. In March, the [Mumbai Police named him as an accused in a case related to the death by suicide of seven-time Dadra and Nagar Haveli MP Mohan Delkar](#). Mr. Patel was named in the suicide note. He is the first politician to become the Administrator. In the last five months, he has demonstrated a unique disregard for the people's concerns and priorities. In the absence of any administrative rationale or public good in these blatantly arbitrary measures, there are fears of other motivations. Commercial interests could be at play, and the land that inhabitants are forced to part with could be transferred to buyers from outside. There could also be ill-advised political plans to change the demography of the islands. People have risen in protest, but far from listening to them, the Administrator seems insistent on his plans. Rajya Sabha Members from Kerala, K.C. Venugopal of the Congress and Elamaram Kareem of the CPI(M) have in separate letters urged the President to recall the Administrator. The rationale for carving out Union Territories as an administrative unit is to protect the unique cultural and historical situations of their inhabitants. The Centre is inverting its responsibility to protect into a licence to interfere. It must recall the Administrator and reassure the islanders.