

Important Vocab for the Editorial

1. **curb** (noun) – restraint, restriction, control, limitation.
2. **wake up** (to) (phrasal verb) – realize, become aware of, become heedful of.
3. **ill-effects** (plural noun) – bad results or adverse consequences.
4. **campaign** (noun) – canvassing, electioneering, an act of soliciting (asking for/requesting) votes; an organized effort that seeks to influence the decision-making progress within a specific group.
5. **campaign** (verb) – canvass, electioneer, solicit (ask for/request) votes.
6. **wisdom** (noun) – understanding, sense, common sense, insight, foresight, judgement, circumspection.
7. **dawn** (verb) – occur to, come to mind, enter someone's head, enter someone's mind, strike/hit.
8. **nevertheless** (adverb) – in spite of everything, in spite of that, nonetheless, even so, however.
9. **unreasonably** (adverb) – senselessly, illogically, unfairly, unacceptably.
10. **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.
11. **seek** (verb) – ask for, request, demand.
12. **measure** (noun) – action, step, procedure.
13. **context** (noun) – circumstances, conditions, situation.
14. **rally** (noun) – gathering, march/procession, meeting.
15. **roadshow** (noun) – a series of a political campaign (in different places throughout the country/state).
16. **anguish** (noun) – distress, worry, grief, unhappiness.
17. **adhere to** (verb) – abide by, follow, obey, comply with.
18. **protocol** (noun) – rules of conduct, procedure, code of behaviour, customs.
19. **cut** (verb) – reduce, decrease, lessen.
20. **directive** (noun) – instruction, direction, notice, regulation, rule.
21. **foresight** (noun) – anticipation, planning, forethought, forward planning.
22. **infrastructure** (noun) – the basic physical or organisational structure for something (to function properly).
23. **robust** (adjective) – strong, powerful.

24. **surge** (noun) – sudden increase or rise/jump of something.
25. **amid** (preposition) – in the middle of, surrounded by; during.
26. **call for** (phrasal verb) – require, publicly ask/necessitate, demand.
27. **club (together)** (verb) – combine, join together.
28. **in the face of** (phrase) – despite, notwithstanding, regardless of; when confronted with.
29. **allegation** (noun) – charge, accusation, indictment.
30. **dependent on** (adjective) – based on, depending on, resting on; controlled by, influenced by.
31. **star campaigner** (noun) – a celebrity vote seeker in an election for a party. This person can be a politician or even a film star. There is no law governing who can or cannot be made a star campaigner.
32. **carry weight** (phrase) – be most important, be influential, be significant.
33. **ironic** (adjective) – strange, unexpected, odd, paradoxical.
34. **prolonged** (adjective) – lengthy, extended, protracted.
35. **turn out** (phrasal verb) – happen, develop, end (in a specific way).
36. **gloat** (verb) – delight in, relish, take great pleasure in, triumph over.
37. **turnout** (noun) – attendance.
38. **correlation** (noun) – connection, link, relation.
39. **sleepwalk** (verb) – get involved in something without knowing the consequences.
40. **drag in** (phrasal verb) – to make someone get involved in a situation when he/she does not want to.
41. **boisterous** (adjective) – active, vibrant, energetic, noisy, overexcited, high-spirited, disorderly, unrestrained, undisciplined, uproarious.
42. **triumphalism** (noun) – boastfulness, self-assertion, self-satisfaction, excessive pride, extreme self-confidence, chutzpah, chest-thumping, chest-beating; an attitude or a belief that a particular doctrine, religion, culture, social system is superior to and should triumph all over others.
43. **hubris** (noun) – feeling of superiority, excessive self-importance, excessive pride, excessive self-confidence/self-glory, overconfidence, arrogance.
44. **unwise** (adjective) – ill-advised, ill-considered, short-sighted, misguided, thoughtless.
45. **corrective** (adjective) – remedial, restorative, curative, reparative; correctional, punitive, reformatory.
46. **lack of** (noun) – absence, deficiency, scarcity, dearth.
47. **draw up** (phrasal verb) – formulate, prepare, devise, create, work out.

48. **border on** (phrasal verb) – come close to, come near to, be near to; be comparable to, approximate/similar to, be tantamount to.
49. **complicity** (noun) – collusion, involvement, collaboration.

Too little: On the Election Commission's COVID-19 curbs

APRIL 24, 2021 00:02 IST

The ECI woke up late to the ill-effects the long campaign in Bengal had on public health

The Election Commission of India's decision to restrict campaigning for the remaining two phases of the West Bengal Assembly election is an instance of wisdom dawning late. Nevertheless, it will help limit the public health damage to what was already caused by an unreasonably extended election cycle in the State during the pandemic. After the Calcutta High Court sought an action taken report on what measures it was adopting in the context of the spreading pandemic, the Election Commission has ordered the cancellation of all rallies and roadshows. Only meetings that are attended by no more than 500 people will be allowed now. In its order, the Election Commission noted "with anguish" that parties and candidates were not adhering to safety protocols. Daily campaign hours had already been cut and campaigning was to stop 72 hours prior to polling, instead of 48 hours, as per an earlier directive. A bit of foresight would have been more helpful. The State is recording high numbers of infection. Bengal's health infrastructure is not robust to deal with a heavy surge. All parties organised rallies amid the pandemic. But parties other than the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) have been calling for clubbing the last phases together. In the face of the Election Commission's refusal to do so, the Congress, the Trinamool Congress and the Left had discontinued big rallies.

The only party that did not have a problem with the election being spread over eight phases over five weeks has been the BJP. Allegations that this helped the BJP that was dependent on its star campaigners and workers

from other States moving from one region to the next carries weight. It is ironic that the BJP that argues for clubbing together all elections across the country has been happy about such a prolonged process in Bengal. Even after it became evident that the new surge was turning out to be severe, the BJP continued with big rallies in the State. Prime Minister Narendra Modi gloated about massive turnouts at his rallies. BJP leaders declared that there was no correlation between rally turnouts and the spread of the pandemic. It is not that India sleepwalked into this disaster; it was dragged in a boisterous procession of triumphalism and hubris by the political leadership. The unusual and unreasonable schedule of the Bengal election during the pandemic was unwise and avoidable. The Election Commission's corrective measures at the last moment can only be of limited help. The lack of foresight while drawing up the schedule and monitoring the campaign bordered on complicity in the surge of new infections.

GUPTA CLASSES