

## Important Vocab For the Editorial

1. **vacuum** (noun) – empty space, emptiness, void, nothingness.
2. **detention** (noun) – confinement/incarceration, captivity, custody.
3. **discredit** (verb) – dishonour, disrepute, ill repute, disgrace.
4. **secessionist** (noun) – separatist, breakaway party, dissenting group.
5. **overreach** (noun) – an act of trying to do too much.
6. **curtail** (verb) – reduce, diminish, decrease.
7. **abrogate** (verb) – cancel, abolish, revoke, repeal.
8. **relative** (adjective) – considerable, some, proportionate.
9. **autonomy** (noun) – independence, freedom, self-government/rule.
10. **shutdown** (noun) – closure of a system.
11. **secular** (adjective) – non-religious, worldly, earthly.
12. **pluralist** (adjective) – coexisting; relating to (the people) exist in harmony irrespective of various differences.
13. **travesty** (noun) – misrepresentation, distortion/perversion, poor imitation.
14. **assault** (verb) – invasion, offensive, attack.
15. **detain** (verb) – hold, take into custody, arrest.
16. **smack of** (phrasal verb) – have the flavour of, give the impression of (something negative).
17. **disregard** (noun) – indifference, inattention, heedlessness, carelessness.
18. **on one's own volition** (phrase) – voluntarily, by choice, by one's own preference.
19. **stringent** (adjective) – strict/stern, severe, tough/rigorous.
20. **silence** (verb) – suppress, quieten, stop.
21. **humiliate** (verb) – embarrass, degrade, shame.
22. **betray** (verb) – inform against, reveal, disclose.
23. **marginalise** (verb) – treat as insignificant, treat as unimportant, neglected.
24. **odds** (noun) – (difficult/tough) probability, chances, conditions.
25. **aloof** (adjective) – distant, detached, unresponsive/indifferent.
26. **hostile** (adjective) – opposed; aggressive, confrontational/belligerent.
27. **nepotism** (noun) – favouritism, preferential treatment, patronage/partiality.
28. **disingenuous** (adjective) – dishonest, deceitful, double-dealing.
29. **endemic** (adjective) – widespread, prevailing, common/ubiquitous.
30. **amorality** (noun) – immorality, disregard for morality, wickedness.
31. **dispiriting** (adjective) – disheartening, discouraging, demoralizing.
32. **inimical** (adjective) – hostile, unfriendly, opposed/unfavourable.

## Dangerous vacuum: On detention of J&K leaders

**If mainstream politicians are discredited in J&K, the space will be filled by secessionists**

The detention of National Conference leader Farooq Abdullah under the Public Safety Act on Monday marks a new, dangerous low in the overreach of state power to curtail liberty in

Kashmir. The 81-year old leader has been thrice Chief Minister, Union Minister and five times Member of Parliament. He is currently MP from Srinagar. His father and National Conference founder, Sheikh Abdullah, led Kashmir's Muslim population in rejecting the two-nation theory that led to Partition and the formation of Pakistan in 1947. And his son, Omar Abdullah, former Chief Minister and Union Minister, is also under detention since August 5, when the Centre abrogated Article 370 through a controversial process, ended J&K's relative autonomy and is reorganising it into two Union Territories. While the BJP and the Centre have claimed massive public support for these moves, the Kashmir Valley has been in shutdown since then. Despite his declining popularity in the Valley, Farooq Abdullah continued to argue that Kashmir's destiny was with secular, pluralist India. To treat him as a threat to public safety is a travesty of justice and an assault on democratic principles.

The manner in which he was detained smacks of complete disregard for the rule of law and accountability. His detention, for 12 days, was announced hours before the Supreme Court was to consider MDMK chief Vaiko's plea seeking a directive that Mr. Abdullah be produced before it. In Parliament last month, Home Minister Amit Shah had said the NC leader was not in detention but was staying at home on his own volition. The detention has now been legalised under a stringent law that allows limited remedies and could be extended to as long as two years. The moves to silence and humiliate Kashmir's senior-most politician betrays a dangerous tactic of marginalising the moderate, mainstream politicians. Almost all Kashmir's political leaders are in jail, including former Chief Minister and PDP leader Mehbooba Mufti and the IAS officer-turned-politician Shah Faesal. They have kept the political process alive in Kashmir against all odds, and despite threats even as some sections of the population remained aloof or hostile to India. The argument that Kashmiri politicians used the State's special status to shield their corruption and nepotism is disingenuous, as these problems are endemic to Indian **politics**. The amorality of the government's treatment of pro-India forces is certainly dispiriting, but dangerous is the vacuum this is creating. The void will be filled only by forces inimical to India, if the government removes politicians from public spaces by wrongly labelling them anti-India.