

Important Vocab For the Editorial

1. stand to gain (phrase) – to be in a position where one can get an advantage.
2. fractious (adjective) – difficult, uncontrollable/unmanageable, out of hand.
3. culmination (noun) – climax, finale, conclusion.
4. skulduggery (noun) – trickery, double-dealing, underhandedness.
5. uncertainty (noun) – lack of certainty, indecision, irresolution.
6. cripple (verb) – disable, paralyse, immobilize.
7. allegation (noun) – charge, accusation, indictment.
8. bribe (verb) – corrupt, pay off, suborn.
9. flock (noun) – a large number of people.
10. to no avail (phrase) – in vain, without success, unsuccessfully/ fruitlessly.
11. howsoever (conjunction) – in whatever way, however.
12. inevitable (adjective) – unavoidable, sure to happen, unpreventable.
13. shrunk past participle of shrink (verb) – reduce, decrease, lessen.
14. protestation (noun) – declaration, announcement, statement.
15. notwithstanding (preposition) – in spite of, despite, regardless of.
16. engineer (verb) – organize/mastermind, orchestrate, choreograph.
17. rebellion (noun) – dissent, nonconformity, defiance.
18. concede (verb) – admit, acknowledge, accept/recognize.
19. slugfest (noun) – fight/dispute, fistfighting, commotion/ruckus.
20. have — to do with (phrase) – be connected with.
21. disregard (noun) – inattention, heedlessness/carelessness, neglect.
22. shallow (adjective) – foolish, silly, unthinking.
23. cease (verb) – end, stop, conclude.
24. machinations (noun) – schemes/plots, intrigues, conspiracies.
25. drive a wedge (between) (phrase) – separate, divide.
26. abstain (verb) – refuse, decline; avoid/shun.
27. precedent (noun) – previous example/instance, prior instance, exemplar.
28. facetious (adjective) – not serious, funny, playful.
29. schemed (adjective) – secretly planned, intrigued, conspired.
30. absenteeism (noun) – non-attendance, non-appearance, truancy.
31. statute (noun) – act/law, regulation, rule.
32. stake a claim (phrase) – assert, declare, state (ones right).
33. pursue (verb) – engage in, follow, conduct.
34. deem (verb) – regard as, consider; view as.
35. desperation (noun) – hopelessness, despair, distress.
36. wield (verb) – exert, be possessed of, have/hold.

Karnataka crisis: BJP must wait until fresh elections are held for vacant seats

The BJP stands to gain by not rushing in to fill the space vacated by a fractious coalition

The fall of the Congress-JD(S) coalition government in Karnataka, at the culmination of weeks of political skulduggery, hardly marks the end of uncertainty and the beginning of stability for the State. The crisis in the ruling coalition had crippled governance, even as allegations of bribing and kidnapping of legislators by the Opposition BJP emerged. The coalition tried every trick to hold its flock together, but to no avail. Howsoever delayed, the inevitable happened on Tuesday as the government led by H. D. Kumaraswamy lost a trust vote in the Assembly. In a House shrunken by the resignation of several coalition MLAs, the BJP, which had won 105 seats in the 2018 election, had a majority. Its protestations notwithstanding, the BJP has been instrumental in engineering the rebellion. Regardless of the claims of both sides, it would be difficult to concede that their slugfest had to do with any principles. The legislators who resigned from the Assembly have demonstrated a remarkable disregard for the people's mandate, and their excuses for doing so are shallow and dishonest. This drama must end, at least now.

Though it had not won a majority, the BJP, as the single largest party was invited to form a government after the 2018 election. The Supreme Court intervened to enforce an early trust vote that the BJP failed to win, paving the way for the government that has now collapsed. The BJP never ceased its machinations to drive a wedge in the coalition, and now wants to form a government. Seventeen coalition MLAs abstained from the voting, and most of them had resigned already. The status of their resignations and questions regarding their disqualification are now subjects of scrutiny by the Speaker and the Supreme Court. Many of the questions are without precedent and complicated, but they need to be settled urgently. Until then, it would be undesirable to form a new government. It would be facetious for the BJP to claim a majority in the House with its strength reduced by schemed absenteeism of members or vacant seats. Nothing in the statute prevents the BJP from staking claim, but it should not pursue that path. Instead, it should wait until fresh elections are held for all vacant seats. It is possible that the BJP could repeat its performance in the Lok Sabha election and win most of these seats. It needs at least eight more MLAs to cross the halfway mark in the House that has a strength of 224 elected members. No government with the support of fewer than half the total strength could be deemed to have a mandate. Waiting might be in the BJP's best interests. The party has an opportunity to demonstrate that it wants to form an alternative government not because of any desperation to wield power, but because it wants to ensure political stability and restore good governance.