



THE HINDU

EDITORIAL ANALYSIS

&

VOCABULARY

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16 February





Unbonded: On the striking down of the Electoral Bond

Scheme by the Supreme Court

The electoral bonds verdict is a blow for freedom of expression

A strongman at the helm: Pn Indonesia's presidential election

Indonesia must avoid the trap of populist nativism of authoritarian rulers



VOCABULARY



UNDERMINE

Part of speech: **Verb**

Meaning: **To weaken or sabotage, especially someone's efforts, authority, or position.**

Synonym: **Sabotage, subvert**

Antonym: **Bolster, support, strengthen**

Sentence: **The constant criticisms from his colleagues were designed to undermine his authority in the office.**



MALAISE

Part of speech: Noun

Meaning: Feeling of discomfort, illness, or unease, often without any specific cause; a sense of dissatisfaction or unhappiness.

Synonym: Discomfort, lethargy, discontent

Antonym: Well-being, comfort, vitality, vigor

Sentence: After the company announced layoffs, there was a sense of malaise among the employees, leading to decreased productivity and morale.



INTERIM

Part of speech: Adjective, Noun

Meaning : Temporary measure until something permanent or final is not decided; an interval between two events or stages.

Synonym: transitional, makeshift, stopgap

Antonym: Permanent, final, settled, conclusive

Sentence: After the sudden resignation of the CEO, the company appointed John as the interim leader until they found a permanent replacement.



TUSSLE

Part of speech: Noun

Meaning: A vigorous struggle, fight, or scuffle, often involving physical contact or vigorous disagreement.

Synonym: skirmish, brawl, altercation, clash

Antonym: Harmony, agreement, peace, concord

Sentence: The two players got into a tussle over the ball during the game.



VEXED

Part of speech: Adjective

Meaning: Feeling or showing irritation, annoyance, or frustration.

Synonym: Annoyed, exasperated, troubled, bothered

Antonym: Calm, content, pleased, unruffled, unperturbed

Example: After hours of trying to solve the puzzle, he grew increasingly vexed with his inability to find the solution.



RESURGENCE

Part of speech: **Noun**

Meaning: **The act of rising or coming back into prominence, popularity, or importance after a period of decline or stagnation.**

Synonym: **Revival, reawakening, comeback,**

Antonym: **Decline, downturn, decrease, recession**

Example: **There has been a resurgence of interest in traditional craftsmanship in recent years.**



HOBBLE

Part of speech: **Verb**

Meaning: **To walk or move with difficulty, often due to injury or physical impairment; to hinder or impede the progress or development of something.**

Synonym: **Limp, hinder, impede, hamper**

Antonym: **Stride, march, progress, advance**

Example: **After spraining her ankle, she hobbled around on crutches for a few weeks.**



HERALD

Part of speech: **Verb**

Meaning: **a person or thing viewed as a sign that something is about to happen; to announce or proclaim something, especially with enthusiasm**

Synonym: **Announce, signal, declare**

Antonym: **Conceal, suppress, silence**

Example: **The ringing of the church bells heralded the arrival of the new year.**



IRON-FISTED

Part of speech: **Adjective**

Meaning: **Describing someone who rules or controls with strictness, harshness, often characterized by a lack of tolerance or mercy.**

Synonym: **Authoritarian, dictatorial, oppressive, tyrannical, ruthless**

Antonym: **Lenient, democratic, gentle, compassionate**

Example: **Under the iron-fisted rule of the dictator, dissent was swiftly crushed and freedoms were severely restricted.**



AT THE HELM (Idiom)

Meaning: It refers to being in control or in a position of leadership.

Synonym: In charge, in command, in control, leading, steering

Antonym: Out of control, subordinate, follower

Example sentence: With the CEO at the helm, the company navigated through the challenging economic downturn successfully.



PASS THE TORCH (Idiom)

Meaning: To transfer responsibility, authority, or leadership from one person to another, especially when the first person is retiring or stepping down.

Synonym: Hand over, transfer, delegate

Antonym: Retain, withhold, keep, maintain

Example sentence: After decades of leading the organization, the founder decided it was time to pass the torch to the younger generation.



WIPE ONE'S SLATE CLEAN (Idiom)

Meaning: To start fresh, without any past mistakes, debts, or burdens.

Synonym: Start over, begin anew, start with a clean slate, reset

Antonym: Carry baggage, remain burdened, hold grudges

Example sentence: After completing his sentence, he was determined to wipe his slate clean and make positive changes in his life.



QUID PRO QUO (Phrase)

Meaning: "Quid pro quo" is a Latin phrase that translates to "something for something" in English.

Synonym: Tit for tat, exchange, reciprocity

Antonym: Unconditional, one-sided, unilateral

Example sentence: The politician was accused of engaging in quid pro quo, offering government contracts in exchange for political support.



ARTICLE ANALYSIS

THE HINDU EDITORIAL



TODAY'S EDITORIAL TOPIC

Unbonded: On the striking down
of the Electoral Bond Scheme by
the Supreme Court

The electoral bonds verdict is a blow
for freedom of expression



Anonymous donations of high value tend to undermine electoral democracy and governance as they facilitate a quid pro quo culture involving donors and beneficiaries. In striking down the Electoral Bond Scheme (EBS) under which anyone could buy electoral bonds and donate them to political parties for encashment, the Supreme Court of India has recognised this malaise and struck a blow for democracy and transparency in political funding. The Court found that the entire scheme violates the Constitution, especially the voters' right to information.



It further found manifestly arbitrary, the amendment to the Companies Act that removed the cap of 7.5% of a company's profit that can be donated to political parties without any requirement to disclose details of the recipient parties in its profit and loss accounts. It has also mandated disclosure of donation details since 2019. The judgment is one more in a long line of verdicts the Court has handed down to promote voter rights and preserve the purity of elections. Its earlier interventions led to the featuring of the 'None of the Above' option on the ballot, the removal of the protection given to legislators from immediate disqualification on conviction for a criminal offence, the mandatory disclosure of the assets and criminal antecedents of candidates in their election affidavits and expedited trials for MPs and MLAs involved in criminal offences.



The Court’s reasoning is unexceptionable. It found that the primary justification for the EBS — curbing the use of ‘black money’ for political or electoral funding by allowing donations through banking channels — failed the test of proportionality, as it was not the least restrictive measure to abridge the voters’ right to know. It has made the logical connection between unidentified corporate donations and the likelihood of policy decisions being tailored to suit the donors. The judgment is a natural follow-up to a principle it had laid down years ago that the voters’ freedom of expression under Article 19(1)(a) will be incomplete without access to information on a candidate’s background.



The principle has now been extended to removing the veil on corporate donors who may have been funding ruling parties in exchange for favours. While the verdict may help ease the hold that donors may have on governance through money power, a question that arises is whether the validity of the scheme could have been decided earlier or the issuance of bonds on a regular basis stayed. How much of the thousands of crores of rupees given to parties under this scheme resulted in policy measures favourable to the donors or helped fund the deployment of additional campaign resources will never be known. This was a fit case for the grant of an interim stay.



TO

1. **INFORMATIVE**
2. **ANALYTICAL**
3. **SKEPTICAL**
4. **NEUTRAL**
5. **CRITICAL**



**THANK
YOU**