

Sops for votes: On election promises

Promising gifts in **run-up** to polls, not welfare, **is** the real 'freebie' issue

After considering the formation of an expert body to **examine** the issues relating to political parties promising free goods to voters in their election **manifestoes**, the Supreme Court has **stayed its hand** and referred the issue to a three-judge Bench. Also referred for deeper **consideration** is the correctness of an earlier judgment in S. Subramaniam Balaji vs Tamil Nadu (2013), which **ruled** that making promises in a manifesto would not **amount to** a **corrupt** practice. The **proceedings** before a Bench, headed by the now retired Chief Justice of India N.V. Ramana, last week, **offered** crucial **perspectives** on the **political economy** of **welfarism**, **socialism** and **pre-election** promises of 'freebies'. Over the few **hearings**, the Bench moved from **vague** references to 'freebies' to making **rational distinctions** between welfare schemes and **socio-economic concessions on the one hand**, and poll-time announcements of **material goods** and items as **incentives** to vote. This clarity itself was lacking in the initial stages, as **omnibus** references to 'freebies' and **railery** against political parties for their approach to welfare dominated the **discourse**. Those who have **approached** the Court against **irrational** promises found support from the Union government. **Following** Prime Minister Narendra Modi making public comments disapproving of the 'freebie' culture, the Government's **stand** is no surprise.

However, the Government was **reluctant** to examine the issue through discussions among political parties and favoured a judicially appointed panel. But, such a panel may not achieve much. Most parties oppose any **fetters** on their right to appeal to voters through **means** of their choice and, if elected, use their **mandate** to distribute finances and resources as they **deem** fit, subject to law and **legislative** approval. Therefore, it is no surprise that the Bench has included in its reference, questions on the scope of judicial **intervention** in the matter and whether any **enforceable** order can be passed. The two-judge Bench judgment in 2013 had examined the issue in the **backdrop** of the DMK coming to power in 2006 on a promise to distribute television sets to the poor and implementing it. It ruled that the **Directive Principles of State Policy** allow such schemes and that **spending** of public funds on them **could** not be questioned if it was based on **appropriations** passed by the **legislature**. It also **concluded** that poll promises by a party could not be **termed** a 'corrupt practice'. **That** Bench had also rejected the argument that giving benefits to everyone, that is, the poor and **the well-off**, **would** violate the equality norm in Article 14. When it came to **state largesse**, it said, **the rule** against treating unequals as equals **would** not be applicable. Does this amount to **implying** that the Directive Principles can **override** fundamental rights, as the **petitioners** have argued? This too **awaits** examination. **[Practice Exercise]**

- Red/blue coloring of words in the sentence indicates subject verb relationship; where 'red' denotes 'subject' and 'blue' denotes 'verb'

Vocabulary

1. **Sop** (noun) – something unimportant or of little value that is offered to stop complaints or unhappiness जो वस्तु शान्ति के लिये दी जाये
2. **Run-up to** (phrase) – the final period of time before an important event:
3. **Freebie** (noun) – a thing that is provided or given free of charge.
4. **Examine** (verb) – Inspect, Scrutinize, Observe, Study, Survey, Scan जांच करना
5. **Manifesto** (noun) – a written statement of the beliefs or aims esp. of a political party घोषणापत्र
6. **Stay one's hand** (phrase) – restrain someone from acting.
7. **Consideration** (noun) – Thought, Deliberation, Reflection, Contemplation, Attention विचार
8. **Rule** (verb) – Decide, Judge, Declare, Pronounce, Decree, Dictate निर्णय देना
9. **Amount to** (phrasal verb) – be equivalent to के बराबर होना
10. **Corrupt** (adjective) – Immoral, Unethical, Dishonest, Crooked, Shady, Fraudulent भ्रष्ट
11. **Proceedings** (noun) – legal proceeding, कानूनी कार्यवाही
12. **Perspective** (noun) – Viewpoint, Standpoint, Outlook, View, Perception, Angle परिप्रेक्ष्य
13. **Political economy** (noun) – the study of how economic and political systems are linked
14. **Welfarism** (noun) – the principles or policies associated with a welfare state.
15. **Socialism** (noun) – an economic, political, and social system that is based on the belief that all people are equal and should share equally in a country's money समाजवाद
16. **Pre** – (prefix) – previous to; before. के पूर्व,
17. **Hearing** (noun) – Trial, Inquiry, Enquiry, Investigation, Examination, Consideration सुनवाई
18. **Vague** (adjective) – Unclear, Imprecise, Indefinite, Ambiguous, Equivocal, Nebulous, Elusive, Inexplicit अस्पष्ट
19. **Rational** (adjective) – Sensible, Reasonable, Logical, Realistic, Sound, Wise तर्कसंगत
20. **Distinction** (noun) – Difference, Division, Dissimilarity Discrepancy, Otherness अन्तर
21. **Socio-economic** (adjective) – relating to or concerned with the interaction of social and economic factors. सामाजिक-आर्थिक

22. **Concession** (noun) – Allowance, Dispensation, Privilege, Reduction रियायत
23. **On the one hand** (phrase) – used to introduce a point of view, fact, or situation, followed by another that typically contrasts with it. एक तरफ
24. **Material goods** (noun) – Materials goods are items that are tangible, meaning you can touch, hold and see them within a physical space
25. **Incentive** (noun) – Inducement, Enticement, Motivation, Encouragement, Spur, प्रोत्साहन, प्रलोभन
26. **Omnibus** (adjective) – comprising several items सार्वत्रिक
27. **Raillery** (noun) – good-humoured teasing परिहास, मज़ाक
28. **Discourse** (noun) – Speech, Talk, Dialogue, Conversation संभाषण, भाषण
29. **Approach** (verb) – Contact, Accost, Speak to, Talk to, Get in touch with, Make contact with पहुँचना
30. **Following** (preposition) – After के बाद
31. **Stand** (noun) – Stance, Viewpoint, Standpoint View रुख
32. **Reluctant** (adjective) – Unwilling, Unenthusiastic, Disinclined, Loath, Hesitant, Indisposed अनिच्छुक
33. **Fetter** (noun) – Shackle, Chain, Restraint, Restriction रोक
34. **Means** (noun) – Way, Method, Measure, Course, Channel साधन
35. **Mandate** (noun) – the authority to carry out a policy, regarded as given by the electorate to a party or candidate that wins an election. अधिदेश
36. **Deem** (verb) – Think, Believe, Consider, Suppose, Reason, Judge समझना
37. **Legislative** (adjective) – Lawmaking, Governmental, Parliamentary वैधानिक
38. **Intervention** (noun) – Interference, Involvement, Intrusion, Intercession, Mediation हस्तक्षेप
39. **Enforceable** (adjective) – (of a law, rule, or obligation) able to be imposed so that it must be complied with. प्रवर्तनीय, लागू करने योग्य
40. **Backdrop** (noun) – Background, Setting, Milieu पृष्ठभूमि
41. **Directive Principles of State Policy** (DPSP) (noun) – it aim to create social and economic conditions under which the citizens can lead a good life
42. **Appropriation** (noun) – a sum of money allocated officially for a particular use. विनियोग

43. **Legislature** (noun) – Government, Parliament, Administration, Assembly, Council विधानमंडल
44. **Conclude** (verb) – Deduce, Assume, Presume, Decide, Reckon, Construe, Suppose निष्कर्ष निकालना
45. **Term** (verb) – Name, Call, Designate, Characterize नाम देना
46. **The Well-off** (noun) – The wealthy or rich person/people अमीर लोग
47. **State** (adjective) – Government सरकारी
48. **Largesse** (noun) – Generosity, Munificence, Charity, Donations, Gifts, Handouts, Money उदारता
49. **Imply** (verb) – Suggest, Infer, Hint at, Point toward सूचित करना
50. **Override** (verb) – Overrule, Countermand, Reverse, Ignore, Disregard, Defy, Flout रद्द करना
51. **Petitioner** (noun) – Supplicant, Requester, Activist, Campaigner, Solicitor प्रार्थी
52. **Await** (verb) – Expect, Anticipate, Wait for प्रतीक्षा करना

Practice Exercise

Direction (Q1 – Q3): Select the best express synonym of the given words

[Editorial page]

1. This clarity itself was lacking in the initial stages, as omnibus references to ‘freebies’ and **raillery** against political parties for their approach to welfare dominated the discourse.
A. Coherent
B. Quixotic
C. Teasing
D. Insinuate
2. Most parties oppose any **fetters** on their right to appeal to voters through means of their choice
A. Ramification
B. Gregarious
C. Shackle
D. Burgeon
3. When it came to state **largesse**, it said, the rule against treating unequals as equals would not be applicable
A. Dearth
B. Generosity
C. Concise
D. Relegate

Direction (Q4 – Q5): select the appropriate antonym of the given words

[Answer]

4. Over the few hearings, the Bench moved from **vague** references to ‘freebies’ to making rational distinctions between welfare schemes and socio-economic concessions
A. Abhor
B. Ambivalent
C. Amorous
D. Definite
5. However, the Government was **reluctant** to examine the issue through discussions among political parties and favoured a judicially appointed panel.
A. Cognizant
B. Perjury
C. Keen
D. Philistine

Direction (Q6 – Q10): Read the given sentences to find out whether there is any grammatical error in them

6. A. When he found out that the girl had escaped he was absolute irritated and furious.
B. Neither the mouse nor the lion was caught.
C. After you return from New Delhi, I will meet after you.
D. When I was young I used to collect stamps as a hobby.
E. All are correct

7. A. Nuclear waste will still be radioactive even after twenty thousand years, so it must be disposed of very carefully.
B. The weather is much more warmer than it was a few days ago.
C. My friend lived at the top of an old house which has been converted into a flat.
D. Both A & B are incorrect
E. All are correct
8. While I am (A)/ doing the house works (B)/ I like to listen to (C)/ music on the radio. (D)/no error (E)
9. I was very lucky (A)/ that day (B)/ and caught (C)/ a log of fish. (D)/ no error(E)

10. **Find out the misspelt word**

[Answer]

- A. Tyranny
B. Underrate
C. Upholstry
D. Useable
11. **Direction:** Six statements are given below, which are jumbled in any random order. These statements will form a coherent and meaningful paragraph, when arranged in the correct sequence. Arrange the sentences in the right order and answer the questions that follow.
- The BJP has stolen a march over the Opposition by naming Droupadi Murmu as its candidate for President. (High office – The Hindu: 24 June, 2022)**
- P.** she is poised to win and become the first from a tribal community to occupy the highest office of the Republic.
- Q.** The significance of her elevation is particularly pronounced in the 75th year of India's independence.
- R.** notwithstanding the disturbing signs of the mobilisation of subaltern communities for majoritarian politics.
- S.** A tribal woman succeeding a Dalit in the highest office of the country is a remarkable testimony to the deepening of Indian democracy,
- T.** Ms. Murmu will be the second woman to hold the highest office, after Pratibha Patil, and at 64, she will be the youngest President in the country's history.
- U.** With the support of BJP allies and regional parties such as Odisha's BJD and Andhra Pradesh's YSRCP,
- Which among the following will be the **Fourth** sentence of the paragraph after the rearrangement?
- A. P B.T C.S D.Q E.R

Direction (Q12 – Q15): Cloze test based on Editorial (High office – The Hindu: 24 June, 2022)

With numbers tilted in the BJP's favour, the Opposition could have only used the contest for the highest office as an opportunity for political messaging. The joint candidate of the Opposition parties, Yashwant Sinha — a former BJP leader and Union Minister in the Janata Dal and BJP governments — hardly serves that purpose. For all his track record, Mr. Sinha hardly represents anything political. That he turned into a strong critic of Mr. Modi after being ignored for positions, if anything, weakens any claim of his candidacy being an ideological counter to the BJP. The lack of imagination, initiative and capacity for any radical politics in the Opposition comes across _____**12**_____ in the selection of the candidate. While Mr. Modi uses every election as an opportunity to respond to group aspirations of various communities, the Opposition remains _____**13**_____ and _____**14**_____ in cocoons. That Mr. Sinha comes from a tribal State, Jharkhand, makes the optics of this contest even more damaging for the Opposition. The Opposition is right to point out that the BJP did not make any serious effort to field a _____**15**_____ candidate.

- | | | | |
|----------------------|------------------|--------------------|---------------|
| 12. A. Sycophant | B. Starkly | C. inappropriately | D. Unclearly |
| 13. A. Adrift | B. Introspective | C. Assimilating | D. Preeminent |
| 14. A. Erudite | B. Indifferent | C. Ensconced | D. Complicity |
| 15. A. Infinitesimal | B. Consensus | C. Existential | D. Willful |

Answers

1. C 2.C 3.B 4. D 5. C 6. A 7. B 8. B 9. C 10. C 11.C 12.B
13. A 14.C 15.B

[Practice Exercise]

Explanations

6. 'absolute' के बदले 'absolutely' का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि 'absolute' एक adjective है जबकि 'absolutely' एक adverb, और adjectives 'irritated' तथा 'furious' की विशेषता एक adverb बताएगा, न कि एक adjective.

➤ 'absolutely' will be used instead of 'absolute' because 'absolute' is an adjective while 'absolutely' is an adverb, and the adjectives 'irritated' and 'furious' will be characterized as an adverb and not an adjective.

7. comparative 'warmer' के पहले 'more' का प्रयोग नहीं होगा क्योंकि किसी comparative के पहले 'more' या किसी superlative के पहले 'most' जोड़कर उसका double comparative या double superlative नहीं बनाया जाता है।

➤ 'more' will not be used before comparative 'warmer' because 'more' before a comparative or 'most' before any superlative is not made to make it double comparative or double superlative

8. (B) 'works' के बदले 'work' का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि कामए कार्य के अर्थ में 'work' एक uncountable noun होता है और 'गृह कार्य' के लिए 'home work' का प्रयोग होता है।

(B) 'work' will be used instead of 'works' because 'work' is an uncountable noun

9. (C) 'catched' के बदले 'caught' का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि 'catch'(पकडना) का v^2 तथा v^3 रूप 'caught' होता है।

(C) 'caught' will be used instead of 'catched' because 'caught' has v^2 and v^3 forms of 'caught'

10. **Upholstery** (noun) – Soft, padded textile covering that is fixed to furniture such as armchairs and sofas.

11. **UPQSRT**

The BJP has stolen a march over the Opposition by naming Droupadi Murmu as its candidate for President. With the support of BJP allies and regional parties such as Odisha's BJD and Andhra Pradesh's YSRCP, she is poised to win and become the first from a tribal community to occupy the highest office of the Republic. The significance of her elevation is particularly pronounced in the 75th year of India's independence. A tribal woman succeeding a Dalit in the highest office of the country is a remarkable testimony to the deepening of Indian democracy, notwithstanding the disturbing signs of the mobilisation of subaltern communities for majoritarian politics. Ms. Murmu will be the second woman to hold the highest office, after Pratibha Patil, and at 64, she will be the youngest President in the country's history.

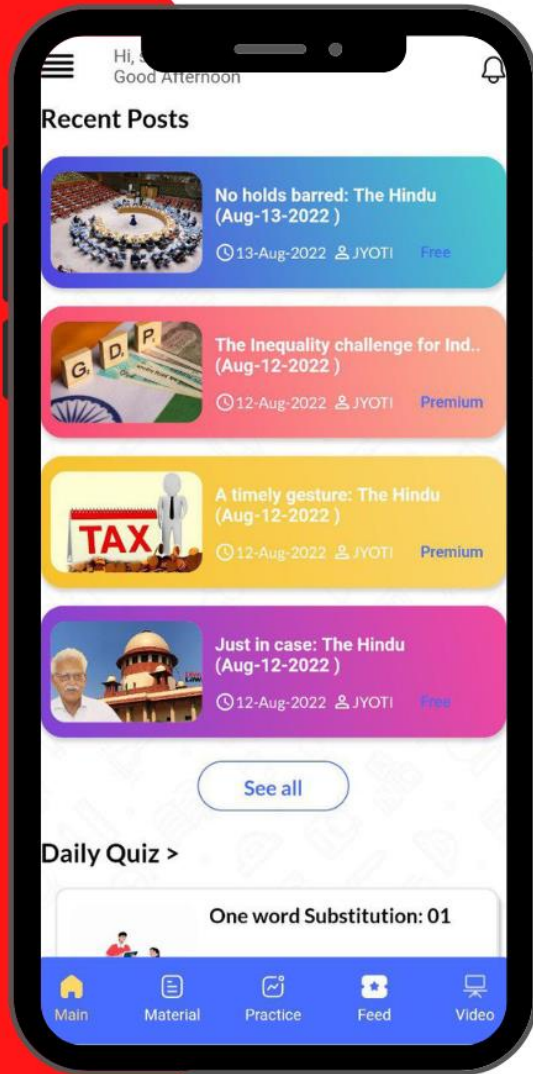
12. **Starkly** (adverb) – in a sharply clear way. स्पष्ट रूप से
13. **Adrift** (adjective) – lost, off course, disoriented, confused, bewildered; wrong, mistaken, inaccurate भटकते हुए; बेठिकाने
14. **Ensnoced** (adjective) – settled, seat, entrenched, sheltered, screened विराजमान; पनाह लेना
15. **Consensus** (noun as modifier) – common consent, accord, unison, unity, unanimity, oneness आम सहमति

[Click here to download all such PDFs](#)

Explanation of other important words

Sr.NO	Words		Meanings	
Q1	Coherent	adjective	Holding together; making sense	सुसंगत, संसक्त, स्पष्ट
	Quixotic	adjective	Romantic or idealistic to a foolish or impractical degree	विलक्षण
	Insinuate	verb	To hint; to creep in	इशारा करना
Q2	Ramification	noun	A consequences; a branching out	शाखा विस्तार
	Gregarious	adjective	Sociable; enjoying the company of others	झुण्ड में रहनेवाला, सुसामाजिक
	Burgeon	verb	To expand; to flourish	विकास पाना, सफल होना
Q3	Dearth	noun	Lack; scarcity	कमी, अकाल
	Concise	adjective	Brief and to the point; succinct	संक्षिप्त
	Relegate	verb	To banish; to send away	बाहर निकाल देना
Q4	Abhor	verb	To hate very, very much; to detest	घृणा करना
	Ambivalent	adjective	Undecided; neutral; wishy-washy	दुविधा में पड़ा हुआ, अनिर्णीत
	Amorous	adjective	Feeling loving; especially in sexual sense in love; relating to love	कामुक, प्रणयशील
Q5	Cognizant	adjective	Aware; conscious	जानकार, परिचित
	Perjury	noun	Lying under oath	झूठा साक्ष्य
	Philistine	noun	A smugly ignorant person with no appreciation of intellectual or artistic matter.	अशिक्षित
Q12	Sycophant	noun	One who sucks up to other	चापलूस
Q13	Introspective	adjective	Tending to think about oneself; examining one's feeling	आत्मविश्लेषी

	Assimilate	verb	To take in; to absorb to learn thoroughly	अपनाना
	Preeminent	adjective	Better than anyone else; outstanding; supreme	उत्तम
Q14	Erudite	adjective	Scholarly; deeply learned	वैज्ञानिक, विद्वत्तापूर्ण, ज्ञानी
	Indifferent	adjective	Not caring one way or the other; apathetic; mediocre	उदासीन
	Complicity	noun	Participation in wrongdoing; the act of being an accomplice	सहापराध, सहभागिता
Q15	Infinitesimal	adjective	Very, very, very small; infinitely small.	बहुत छोटा
	Existential	adjective	Having to do with existence	अस्तित्व संबंधी,
	Willful	adjective	Deliberate; obstinate; insistent on having one's way	जान-बूझकर



Learn Vocabulary Through Reading Articles

English Madhyam

