

Heavy-handed hurry: On The Wire fiasco

Perils of editorial **laxity** **are** obvious, but **defamation** should be **decriminalised**

What happens when there is a **grave lapse** in editorial judgment and something false gets published? If the report is against someone who **wields** influence, and **the media institution concerned is** a known **critic** of the Government, the consequences might **turn out to be disproportionately severe**. Digital publication The Wire finds itself in **precisely** this **predicament** after **a series** of its stories **has** been **discredited** due to what it **admits** is **fabricated** evidence provided by one of its own **consultants**. Its **reporting** relating to the **alleged privileges** enjoyed by a **purported beneficiary** of social media giant Meta's 'XCheck' programme — privileges that it claimed included the right to report any post and have it **taken down** with no questions asked — **has** turned out to be a major **debacle**. **Amit Malviya**, head of the ruling BJP's national IT department, named as the one who had got an Instagram post removed, **has** filed a police complaint, **alleging a conspiracy** by The Wire to harm his reputation through **forgery**. **The Delhi Police**, with whom The Wire too filed a complaint against its consultant Devesh Kumar for allegedly **perpetrating** an **elaborate hoax** by submitting fabricated digital proof, **lost** no time in searching the residences of its editors and **seizing** laptops and phones. Even by the set standards of the present **regime** in **dealing with vocal dissenters**, the hurry shown and the **seizures** made by the police are shocking. The effort seems to be to make an example of The Wire.

Despite the element of forgery in this case, one cannot dismiss a possible conspiracy to discredit The Wire. Mr. Malviya has limited his complaint to its founders and the journalists whose **bylines** appeared in initial reports **concerning** him. Further, the complaint does not name Mr. Kumar, raising a doubt whether this is intentional. The police should not really be investigating the defamation **angle**, as Supreme Court judgments are clear that **prosecution** for defamation should only be at the **instance** of the **aggrieved** person, and there can be no police FIR. The case **highlights** the continuing **hazard** of having defamation on the criminal **statute** to be **exploited** by **influential state-backed actors** rather than a civil **remedy** to aggrieved individuals. The Court's **refusal** to decriminalise defamation **does** add state power to the **armoury** of those waiting for **occasional** lapses in the media. The **absence** of **malice**, a key **defence** in such cases, **is** quite obvious in The Wire case, as no one would **wilfully** publish a report based on fabricated proof and fake **validation** by experts under the clear risk of **exposure**. At the same time, media **outlets** should **acknowledge** the perils of the **interplay** between editorial laxity and confirmation **bias** in **assessing a potential** story. [Practice Exercise]

- Red/blue coloring of words in the sentence indicates subject verb relationship; where 'red' denotes 'subject' and 'blue' denotes 'verb'
- **The Wire** (noun) – an Indian nonprofit news and opinion website which publishes in English, Hindi, Marathi, and Urdu. It was founded in 2015 by Siddharth Varadarajan, Sidharth Bhatia, and M. K. Venu.

Vocabulary

1. **Heavy-handed** (adjective) – not showing much understanding of other people's feelings संवेदनशीलता-रहित
2. **Hurry** (noun) – great haste; flurry, confusion, hustle जल्दी/हड़बड़ी
3. **Fiasco** (noun) – failure, disaster, debacle, flop, washout असफलता
4. **Peril** (noun) – hazard, -risk, danger, menace, jeopardy खतरा
5. **Laxity** (noun) – lack of strictness or care. शिथिलता, ढील
6. **Defamation** (noun) – Insult, denouncement, calumny, vilification, denigration मानहानि
7. **Decriminalise** (verb) – stop treating (something) as illegal or as a criminal offence अपराधमुक्त करना
8. **Grave** (adjective) – serious, important, all-important गंभीर
9. **Lapse** (noun) – failure, failing, slip, error, mistake, blunder चूक, भूल
10. **Wield** (verb) – have and be able to use (power or influence) प्रयोग करना
11. **Concerned** (adjective) – connected, related, involved सम्बंधित
12. **Critic** (noun) – reviewer, columnist, commentator, evaluator, reporter, appraiser आलोचक
13. **Turn out (to be)** (phrasal verb) – Emerge, transpire, come about, happen, become, come to pass उभरना, निकलना
14. **Disproportionately** (adverb) – Excessively, unreasonably, too, overly, suspiciously अत्यधिक
15. **Severe** (adjective) – harsh, serious, acute, grave, critical गंभीर
16. **Precisely** (adverb) – exactly, accurately, right, just, absolutely ठीक /हूबहू
17. **Predicament** (noun) – plight, difficulty, quandary, pickle, dilemma कठिन परिस्थिति
18. **Discredited** (adjective) – brought into disrepute; having lost respect or credibility. बदनामी
19. **Admit** (verb) – accept, confess, acknowledge, allow, concede स्वीकार करना
20. **Fabricated** (adjective) – false, fake, invented, fictitious, contrived, made-up गढ़ा हुआ/ मनगढ़ंत
21. **Consultant** (noun) –advisor, mentor, counsellor, guide सलाहकार
22. **Alleged** (adjective) – so-called, supposed कथित

23. **Privilege** (noun) – the special right
विशेषाधिकार
24. **Purported** (adjective) – supposed, alleged,
ostensible, so-called कथित
25. **Beneficiary** (noun) – recipient, receiver,
payee, done लाभार्थी
26. **Take down** (phrasal verb) – the removal of
a website, web page, or file from the
internet, typically in response to a formal
request हटाना
27. **Debacle** (noun) – fiasco, disaster, failure,
catastrophe, drubbing पराजय, शिकस्त
28. **Allege** (verb) – claim, assert, declare, state,
proclaim आरोप लगाना
29. **Conspiracy** (noun) – plot, intrigue, scheme,
cabal, collusion साजिश
30. **Forgery** (noun) – fake, counterfeit,
imitation, falsification, sham जालसाजी
31. **Perpetrate** (verb) – commit, carry out,
perform, execute, do (अपराध) अंजाम देना
32. **Elaborate** (adjective) – containing a lot of
careful detail विस्तृत
33. **Hoax** (noun) – a humorous or malicious
deception; Trick, deception, fraud, ruse
धोखाधड़ी
34. **Seize** (verb) – Take hold of; grab जब्त करना
35. **Regime** (noun) – government,
administration शासन
36. **Deal with** (phrasal verb) – cope with,
handle, manage, attend to, see to निपटना
37. **Vocal** (adjective) – often expressing
complaints and opinions in speech: मुखड़
38. **Dissenter** (noun) – dissident, rebel,
objector, maverick विरोधी
39. **Seizure** (noun) – the action of capturing
someone or something using force.
बरामदगी
40. **Byline** (noun) – a line in a newspaper
naming the writer of an article.
41. **Concerning** (preposition) – about; on the
subject of के विषय में; के विषय पर
42. **Angle** (noun) – viewpoint, perspective,
point of view, outlook दृष्टिकोण
43. **Prosecution** (noun) – litigation, prosecute,
lawsuit, pursuance, trial मुकदमा
44. **Instance** (noun) – a particular situation or
fact उदाहरण, घटना
45. **Aggrieved** (adjective) – offended, upset,
peevish, injured व्यथित/ पीड़ित
46. **Highlight** (verb) – underline, underscore,
call attention to, focus attention on, stress,
emphasize प्रमुखता से दिखाना

47. **Hazard** (noun) – danger, risk, peril, threat
खतरा
48. **Statue** (noun) – a written law passed by a legislative body. कानून
49. **Exploit** (verb) – Use (a situation) in an unfair way अनुचित लाभ उठाना
50. **Influential** (adjective) – powerful, important, persuasive, dominant, leading प्रभावशाली
51. **State-backed** (adjective) – Supported by government सरकार समर्थित
52. **Actor** (noun) – Participant
53. **Remedy** (noun) – solution, answer, cure, antidote, corrective उपाय
54. **Armoury** (noun) – the things that somebody has available that can help them achieve something कुछ प्राप्त करने के लिए उपलब्ध साधन
55. **Occasional** (adjective) – Infrequent, rare, irregular कभी-कभार
56. **Malice** (noun) – the desire to harm someone; ill will, hatred, meanness द्वेष
57. **Defence** (noun) – Argument, justification, vindication, plea, excuse बचाव, सफाई
58. **Willfully** (adverb) – deliberately, intentionally (intention of causing harm) जान-बूझकर
59. **Validation** (noun) – confirmation, proof, authentication, endorsement सत्यापन
60. **Exposure** (noun) – the act of making something public; the thing that is made public. रहस्योद्घाटन, प्रदर्शन
61. **Outlet** (noun) – an organization that broadcasts or publishes journalism.
62. **Acknowledge** (verb) – recognize, admit, accept, concede, confess स्वीकार करना
63. **Interplay** (noun) – the effect that two or more things have on each other परस्पर क्रिया
64. **Bias** (noun) – prejudice, partiality, unfairness, favoritism, predisposition. पक्षपात
65. **Assess** (verb) – evaluate, judge, gauge, rate, estimate, appraise आकलन करना
66. **Potential** (adjective) – possible, likely, prospective, latent, probable, budding संभावित

Practice Exercise

Direction (Q1 – Q3): Select the best express synonym of the given words [Editorial page]

1. **Perils** of editorial laxity are obvious, but defamation should be decriminalised
 - A. Sardonic
 - B. Cryptic
 - C. Affinity
 - D. Danger

2. What happens when there is a grave **lapse** in editorial judgment and something false gets published?
 - A. Chasm
 - B. Failure
 - C. Philistine
 - D. Maudlin

3. the report is against someone who **wields** influence, and the media institution concerned is a known critic of the Government
 - A. Transgress
 - B. Servile
 - C. Employ
 - D. Transcend

4. **Idioms & Phrase**
 You have to start meeting your minimum monthly repayments if you want to **keep your creditors at bay**.
 - A. To prevent someone or something unpleasant from harming you
 - B. To criticize someone or ask them to explain their actions
 - C. To end gradually or to cause something to do this
 - D. To be mindful of or consider something

5. **Direction: Five 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 Supreme Court's ruling holding that single and unmarried women have the same right to a medically safe abortion as married women is a necessary intervention to set right an anomaly between the letter of the law and its practice.
 - P. Anchored on the equality clause in the Constitution, as well as on the right to dignity, privacy and bodily autonomy of women,
 - Q. The High Court took a technical view, as Rule 3B, which listed the women eligible for termination of pregnancy — such as rape survivors, minors,
 - R. The reason cited was that being unmarried, and the pregnancy having occurred consensually, she was not eligible for the benefit of the amendment under the rules.
 - S. those with physical disabilities and mental illness — did not explicitly include single women who had become pregnant in a consensual relationship.

T. the Court has ruled that there is no rationale for excluding single or unmarried women from the categories of women who could seek abortion care after the completion of 20 weeks of pregnancy, but before 24 weeks.

U. The Delhi High Court had declined to allow the termination of the pregnancy of a 25-year-old woman who was in a consensual relationship, but did not want to carry the pregnancy to term after her partner declined to marry her.

Which among the following will be the **Second** sentence of the paragraph after the rearrangement?

- A. P B.S C.T D.Q E.R

Direction (Q6 – Q9): Read the given sentences to find out whether there is any grammatical error in them

6. If I were him (A)/ I would not have (B)/ accepted the offer. (C)/ No error(D)
7. What the nation (A)/ Needs (B)/ is the people of character. (C)/ No error(D)
8. Now we come to the important (A)/ question of where this (B)/ great swarm of galaxies have come from. (C)/ No error (D)
9. I did not wait for (A)/ him because (B)/ he went out before I arrived. (C)/ No error(D)
10. **Find out the misspelt word**
 - A. Arbitratary
 - B. Disregard
 - C. Voluntary
 - D. Unviable

Direction: Read the passage given below and answer the following questions.

(The Hindu Editorial: Don't lure, but persuade– Oct 7, 2022)

The Election Commission of India's proposal to require political parties to disclose the financial implications of the promises they make in their manifestos will add meaning and depth to electoral campaigns. **(1)**/ The idea that parties should communicate to electors the fiscal rationale for promising delivery of goods or services that would involve a significant outgo from the exchequer is already part of the Model Code of Conduct from 2015. **(2)**/ The ECI is now proposing a proforma for such disclosures. **(3)**/ If parties agree and the idea is included in the Model Code, they will have to spell out the section of society that a particular promise is targeted at, the extent of coverage and the number of likely beneficiaries, and the cost of implementing it. **(4)**/ They must also spell out how the required resources will be raised. To give the parties an idea of the fiscal challenge that their promised schemes may pose, the Centre and the States have been asked to disclose details of the budget revenue receipts and expenditure as well as the outstanding liabilities. The information, it is **believed(A)**, will provide a framework under which a manifesto can be **assessed(B)** by the voter from the **perspective(C)** of its financial **viability(D)**. It may also make parties treat manifesto preparation as a responsible exercise meant to persuade rather than lure the voter.

There is bound to be some **resentment** among sections of the political class. It may be argued that the ECI should not get into (A)/ the nitty-gritty of manifesto formulation, especially (B)/ the manner of its

implementation, as that will be the political and administration responsibility (C)/ of the party that comes to power on the basis of its promises.(D)

The guideline itself arose from a Supreme Court judgment in 2013, ____11____ the right of parties to make electoral promises even if they involved distribution of consumer goods. It was held that such a promise would not amount to a corrupt practice, and as long as these were financed by budgetary allocations cleared by the legislature, they could not be invalidated. The Court also suggested that to prevent ____12____ promises from upsetting the electoral level playing field, the ECI could lay down some guidelines. In practice, however, the ECI's guidelines did not elicit enough information, as parties made only routine and ____13____ disclosures. If implemented, detailed financial disclosures may help in informed voter choice, as rival parties are likely to subject manifesto promises to intense scrutiny. It may also have a more meaningful impact, be it positive or negative, on the prospect of a party winning over the electorate with a single ____14____ promise.

Fill in the blank with the most appropriate word given in the option (From Q11 – Q14)

11. The guideline itself arose from a Supreme Court judgment in 2013, _____ the right of parties to make electoral promises even if they involved distribution of consumer goods.
 - A. Introspective
 - B. Approbation
 - C. Exemplify
 - D. Upholding
12. The Court also suggested that to prevent _____ promises from upsetting the electoral level playing field, the ECI could lay down some guidelines.
 - A. Conjecture
 - B. Extravagant
 - C. Fraternal
 - D. Desiccating
13. In practice, however, the ECI's guidelines did not elicit enough information, as parties made only routine and _____ disclosures.
 - A. Impeccable
 - B. Purported
 - C. Egregious
 - D. Ambiguous
14. It may also have a more meaningful impact, be it positive or negative, on the prospect of a party winning over the electorate with a single _____ promise.
 - A. Sublime
 - B. Flagship
 - C. Facile
 - D. Artifice
15. **The following sentence may or may not contain an error in one of its parts. Identify the part containing the error. If the sentence is correct, select 'No error' as your answers.**

It may be argued that the ECI should not get into **(A)**/ the nitty-gritty of manifesto formulation, especially **(B)**/ the manner of its implementation, as that will be the political and administration responsibility **(C)**/ of the party that comes to power on the basis of its promises.**(D)**

- A. (A)
- B. (B)
- C. (C)
- D. (D)
- E. No Error

16. **Rearrange the sentence to form a meaningful sentence.**

The Election Commission of India's proposal to require political parties to disclose the financial implications of the promises they make in their manifestos will add meaning and depth to electoral campaigns. **(1)**/ The idea that parties should communicate to electors the fiscal rationale for promising delivery of goods or services that would involve a significant outgo from the exchequer is already part of the Model Code of Conduct from 2015. **(2)**/ The ECI is now proposing a proforma for such disclosures. **(3)**/ If parties agree and the idea is included in the Model Code, they will have to spell out the section of society that a particular promise is targeted at, the extent of coverage and the number of likely beneficiaries, and the cost of implementing it.**(4)**/

- A. 1243
- B. 4231
- C. 1234
- D. 2143
- E. 3214

17. Given below is a word, followed by three sentence that consist of that word. Identify the sentence (S) that best express (es) the meaning of the word. Choose option 5 'None of the above' if the word is not suitable in any of the sentence

RESENTMENT

- (i) **Resentment** is what made him successful at negotiating foreign cultures.
- (ii) The **resentment** behind her conclusion is impossible to fault.
- (iii) There is some community **resentment** toward the school's new policy

- A. Only (i)
- B. Only (ii)
- C. Only (iii)
- D. (i), (ii)
- E. (ii), (iii)

18. **In the following question, a sentence is given with four words marked as (A), (B), (C), and (D). These words may or may not be placed in the correct order. Four options with different arrangements of these have been provided. Mark the option with the correct arrangement as the answer. If no rearrangement is required, mark option (5) as your answer.**

The information, it is **believed(A)**, will provide a framework under which a manifesto can be **assessed(B)** by the voter from the **perspective(C)** of its financial **viability(D)**.

- A. A – B
- B. A – D
- C. B – C
- D. D – C
- E. No arrangement

19. **Select the connector from the given options which can be used to form a single sentence from the two sentences given below, implying the same as expressed in the statement sentence.**

- (i) All the artful maneuvers suggested by our generals meant fresh movements of the army and a lengthening of its marches
- (ii) The only reasonable aim was to shorten those marches.
 - A. Whereas
 - B. But
 - C. Conversely
 - D. Unless
 - E. Likewise

20. **Fill the appropriate preposition in the given blanks**

Please don't get offended _____ her as she is honest..

- A. Of
- B. In
- C. With
- D. To
- E. None of the above

Answers

1. D 2. B 3. C 4. A 5. C 6. A 7. C 8. B 9. C 10. A 11. D
 12. B 13. D 14. B 15. C 16. C 17. C 18. A 19. C 20. A

[\[Practice Exercise\]](#)

Explanations

4. **Keep something at bay** (phrase) – to prevent someone or something unpleasant from harming you दूर रखना

5. **PTURQS**

The Supreme Court's ruling holding that single and unmarried women have the same right to a medically safe abortion as married women is a necessary intervention to set right an anomaly between the letter of the law and its practice. Anchored on the equality clause in the Constitution, as well as on the right to dignity, privacy and bodily autonomy of women, the Court has ruled that there is no rationale for excluding single or unmarried women from the categories of women who could seek abortion care after the completion of 20 weeks of pregnancy, but before 24 weeks. The Delhi High Court had declined to allow the termination of the pregnancy of a 25-year-old woman who was in a consensual relationship, but did not want to carry the pregnancy to term after her partner declined to marry her. The reason cited was that being unmarried, and the pregnancy having occurred consensually, she was not eligible for the benefit of the amendment under the rules. The High Court took a technical view, as Rule 3B, which listed the women eligible for termination of pregnancy — such as rape survivors, minors, those with physical disabilities and mental illness — did not explicitly include single women who had become pregnant in a consensual relationship.

6. (A) 'if I were him' के बदले 'if I were he' का प्रयोग होगा।

➤ 'if I were he' will be used instead of 'if I were him'.

7. (C) 'is' के बदले 'are' का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि 'what' का अर्थ यदि 'that which' हो, तो what के लिए Singular Verb, किन्तु 'what' का अर्थ यदि 'those which' हो तो 'what' के लिए Plural Verb का प्रयोग होता है;

➤ 'are' will be used instead of 'is' because if 'what' means 'that which', then Singular Verb for what, but if 'what' means 'those which' then the Plural Verb is used for 'what';

8. (B) 'have' के बदले 'has' का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि Verb 'has come' का Subject 'this swarm' है और यह Singular है।

➤ 'has' will be used instead of 'have' because the subject of the verb 'has come' is 'this swarm' and it is singular.

9. (C) 'went out' के बदले 'had gone out' का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि 'arrived' past की घटना है और 'he' के बाहर जाने की घटना 'past of the past' की है, अर्थात् 'I' के 'arrive' के पहले की है, और past of the past की घटना के लिए Past Perfect का प्रयोग होता है; जैसे-

a. The bell had rung before he reached the school.

➤ 'had gone out' will be used instead of 'went out' as 'arrived' is an event of the past and 'he' is an event of 'past of the past', i.e. before 'arrive' of 'I', and Past Perfect is used for the event of the past of past; As-

i. The bell had rung before he reached the school.

10. **Arbitrary** (adjective) – based on chance rather than being planned or based on reason
मनमाना

11. **Uphold** (verb) – support, endorse, sustain, defend, back बरकरार रखना

12. **Extravagant** (adjective) – Profligate, spendthrift, overgenerous, wasteful, excessive, prodigal
फिजूल खर्च

13. **Ambiguous** (adjective) – vague, unclear, equivocal, uncertain, obscure अस्पष्ट

14. **Flagship** (noun) – the best or most important product, idea, building, etc प्रमुख

15. 'Administration' के बदले 'Administrative' का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि Adjective (i.e. Administrative) का प्रयोग होगा !

16. (C) **1234**

The Election Commission of India's proposal to require political parties to disclose the financial implications of the promises they make in their manifestos will add meaning and depth to electoral campaigns. The idea that parties should communicate to electors the fiscal rationale for promising delivery of goods or services that would involve a significant outgo from the exchequer is already part of the Model Code of Conduct from 2015. The ECI is now proposing a proforma for such disclosures. If parties agree and the idea is included in the Model Code, they will have to spell out the section of society that a particular promise is targeted at, the extent of coverage and the number of likely beneficiaries, and the cost of implementing it.

17. **Resentment** (noun) – bitterness, animosity, pique, indignation, rancor क्रोध

According to the given options only (iii) is contextually correct.

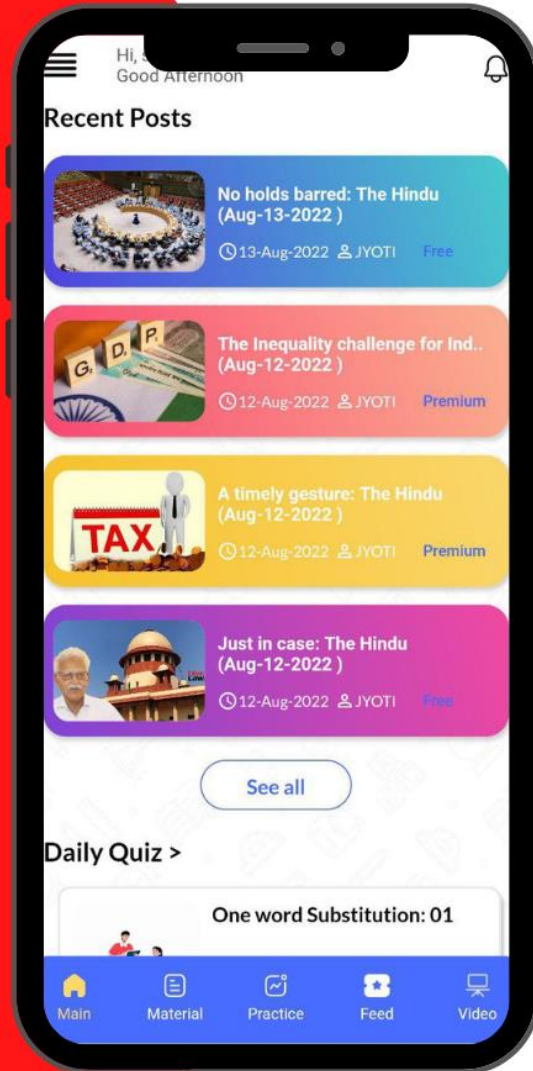
Because the (i) and (ii) sentences are not giving any meaning and correct sentences should be like

(i) Astuteness is what made him successful at negotiating foreign cultures.

(ii) The reasoning behind her conclusion is impossible to fault.

18. The information, it is believed, will provide a framework under which a manifesto can be assessed by the voter from the perspective of its financial viability.

19. All the artful maneuvers suggested by our generals meant fresh movements of the army and a lengthening of its marches, **whereas** the only reasonable aim was to shorten those marches.



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