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Q12

Case study. As a senior officer in the Ministry, you have access to important policy decisions and upcoming big announcements such as road construction projects before they are notified in the public domain. The Ministry is about to announce a mega road project for which the drawings are already in place. Sufficient care was taken by the planners to make use of the government land with the minimum land acquisition from private parties. The compensation rate for private parties was also finalized as per government rules. Care was also taken to minimize deforestation. Once the project is announced, it is expected that there will be a huge spurt in real estate prices in and around that area. Meanwhile, the Minister concerned insists that you realign the road in such a way that it comes closer to his 20 acres farmhouse. He also suggests that he would facilitate the purchase of a big plot of land in your wife's name at the prevailing rate which is very nominal, in and around the proposed mega road project. He also tries to convince you by saying that there is no harm in it as he is buying the land legally. He even promises to supplement your savings in case you do not have sufficient funds to buy the land. However, by the act of realignment, a lot of agricultural lands have to be acquired, thereby causing a considerable financial burden on the government, and also the displacement of the farmers. As if this is not enough, it will involve cutting down of a large number of trees denuding the area of its green cover. Faced with this situation, what will you do? Critically examine various conflicts of interest and explain what your responsibilities are as a public servant. (250 words).

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2018 · GS IV · 20 marks · Ethics Case Studies

Case Studies on above issues.

Facts & figures for this PYQ only.

Numbers move. Confirm the latest Budget, Economic Survey or census round. This sheet is for revision, not a substitute for the model answer.

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Unpublished price-sensitive official information

Knowing a corridor before notification makes a cheap nearby plot a conflict and, in substance, a bet on a public secret.

Central Civil Services (Conduct) Rules, 1964

Restrict gifts, speculative investment and conduct unbecoming; a minister's topped-up savings and a spouse plot on a live project fail those rules.

Public purpose in land acquisition

Extra agricultural taking for a farmhouse approach is not the public purpose the original, land-sparing plan served.

Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988

Obtaining a valuable thing or pecuniary advantage by abusing official position is the criminal shadow of this supposedly legal sale.

Environmental minimisation

The stem already records that the official line cut fewer trees; volunteering a greener loss for a private house is a second ethical breach.

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