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Q9

Case study. In one of the districts of a frontier state, narcotics menace has been rampant. This has resulted in money laundering, mushrooming of poppy farming, arms smuggling, and near stalling of education. The system is on the verge of collapse. The situation has been further worsened by unconfirmed reports that local politicians as well as some senior police officers are providing surreptitious patronage to the drug mafia. At that point of time a woman police officer, known for her skills in handling such situations is appointed as superintendent of police to bring the situation to normalcy. If you are the same police officer, identify the various dimensions of the crisis. Based on your understanding, suggest measures to deal with the crisis.

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2019 · GS IV · 20 marks · Ethics Case Studies

Case Studies on above issues.

Core demand of the question

- Frontier district with narcotics, money laundering, poppy, arms, stalled education, possible patronage by local politicians and some senior police. You are the new woman Superintendent of Police known for handling such crises
- Identify dimensions of the crisis. Suggest measures

Revision summary

Dimensions include organised crime, laundering, alleged political and police patronage, addiction and dead schools.

A woman SP must first secure a leaky force and refuse private political advice.

Do not only crush poor poppy growers or leak unconfirmed names.

Pair NDPS action with treatment (Nasha Mukh Bharat), school protection (**Samagra Shiksha**) and PMLA trails for patrons.

Success is a reopened school and a fair independent inquiry, not a headline raid.

Introduction

A frontier district is collapsing under narcotics, laundering, poppy, arms, and empty schools. Unconfirmed reports say local politicians and some senior police protect the mafia. You take charge as Superintendent of Police. The task is to name the crisis fully and to act without becoming either a crusader without law or a guest of the cartel.

Body

Stakeholders

- Children and parents whose schools have stalled; addicts who need treatment, not only handcuffs.
- Farmers tempted into poppy; transporters and small traders caught in laundering.
- Honest constables and the few clean officers who will be your only spine.
- Local politicians, some of whom may be patrons; the ones who are not must still be kept on the lawful side of the table.
- Senior police named in rumours; the State government; narcotics and financial-intelligence agencies.
- **Across the frontier:** communities who will pay if you start a war without a hospital and a school behind you.

Dimensions of the crisis

- **Law-and-order dimension:** arms smuggling and mafia violence, so ordinary policing has already lost the street.
- **Criminal-economy dimension:** poppy, heroin or other narcotics, and money laundering that can buy a booth and a posting.
- **Governance dimension:** alleged patronage by politicians and senior police, which means the organ meant to cut the tumour may be feeding it.
- **Social dimension:** addiction, dropouts, and a generation that sees the teacher as weaker than the peddler.
- **Gender and safety dimension:** a woman SP in a militarised narcotics belt faces both the cartel and a force that may test her authority.
- **Intelligence dimension:** reports are unconfirmed; a false raid on a rival of the mafia would make you their tool.
- **Federal and border dimension:** a frontier crime is rarely only a district crime; agencies and neighbouring jurisdictions matter.
- **Ethical dimension:** courage versus survival; impartiality versus the patron who posted you; compassion for addicts versus a war on the poor farmer only.

Options

- **Option 1:** Immediate spectacular raids on the poor poppy fringe, while leaving alleged patrons untouched.
- **Merit:** television.
- **Demerit:** you crush the weak, confirm the mafia's protection, and lose the village.
- **Option 2:** Wait for written proof of every patron before any arrest.
- **Merit:** caution.
- **Demerit:** the district finishes collapsing while you polish a file.
- **Option 3:** Go public with names of politicians and seniors on unconfirmed reports.
- **Merit:** fear.
- **Demerit:** defamation, a transfer by morning, and a ruined trial.
- **Option 4:** Build a lawful, layered campaign: verify, hit the logistics, protect schools, treat addicts, and send patronage leads to independent agencies while you secure your own force.
- **Merit:** law, legitimacy, and a chance of lasting order.

- **Demerit:** slower headlines; you will need State cover.

Measures (reasoned action)

- **Secure the force first:** identify compromised officers, mix duties, use outside contingents for sensitive raids, and put your own movements on a need-to-know map. A woman SP must also enforce a zero-tolerance line on internal harassment so the force does not leak her plans as gossip.
- **Verify before you brand. Treat patronage reports as intelligence:** surveillance, financial trails, and the **Prevention of Money-Laundering Act, 2002** route through the Enforcement Directorate where facts fit, not as a press note.
- **Use the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985** for supply, but separate the addicted user toward treatment. **Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyaan** and State de-addiction centres are the lawful health door so that policing is not only a body count.
- Hit arms and intercepts with the **Arms Act, 1959** and, if the case is inter-State or organised, seek the State's nod for specialised agencies rather than a lone-hero file.
- **Restore education as a security measure:** protect schools, run enrolment drives with the district education officer, and use **Samagra Shiksha** so a child has a daytime alternative to the cartel's errand.
- Give farmers a lawful crop and credit door with the district agriculture officer and existing schemes, so destruction of poppy is paired with a living, not only a burning.
- Keep politicians at a public, minuted meeting on peace and schools; do not take private envelopes of "advice". If a minister issues an illegal oral order, record a written note and inform the Director General of Police.
- Witness protection, in-camera statements, and fast-track production of seized samples to the forensic lab so cases do not die in the malkhana.
- **Values to hold:** justice, courage, impartiality, compassion for the addict and the child, and humility about unconfirmed reports.
- You succeed when a school reopens, a clean constable is not transferred as punishment, and a patron is inquired by a competent independent body - not when you become a slogan.

Flow diagram

Narcotics and arms -> Crime money patronage schools
 Crime money patronage schools -> Verify intelligence
 Verify intelligence -> NDPS and logistics hits
 NDPS and logistics hits -> Nasha Mukh treatment
 NDPS and logistics hits -> Protect and reopen schools
 Patronage leads -> Independent agencies

Conclusion

The crisis is crime, money, captured policing, and a stalled childhood at once. Raid the logistics, not only the poor fringe; treat addicts; protect schools; and send patronage trails to independent financial and vigilance agencies. Lawful doors include the NDPS Act, PMLA, Nasha Mukh Bharat and **Samagra Shiksha**.

Facts & figures

Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985

The principal criminal statute on narcotics supply, possession and trafficking in India.

Prevention of Money-Laundering Act, 2002

The statute through which laundered narcotics proceeds can be attached and investigated with the financial-intelligence machinery.

Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyaan

A Union-supported de-addiction and demand-reduction campaign; the health door that should sit beside NDPS supply control.

Samagra Shiksha

The integrated school-education scheme that can resource enrolment, teachers and facilities when a district's classrooms have stalled.

Arms Act, 1959

The criminal frame for illegal weapons that travel with a narcotics frontier economy.

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