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Q10

Case study. You are a municipal commissioner of a large city, having the reputation of a very honest and upright officer. A huge multipurpose mall is under construction in your city in which a large number of daily wage earners are employed. One night, during monsoons, a big chunk of the roof collapsed causing instant death of four labourers including two minors. Many more were seriously injured requiring immediate medical attention. The mishap resulted in a big hue and cry, forcing the government to institute an enquiry. Your preliminary enquiry has revealed a series of anomalies. The material used for the construction was of poor quality. Despite the approved building plans permitting only one basement, an additional basement has been constructed. This was overlooked during the periodic inspections by the building inspector of the municipal corporation. In your enquiry, you noticed that the construction of the mall was given the green signal despite encroaching on areas earmarked for a green belt and a slip road in the Zonal Master Plan of the city. The permission to construct the mall was accorded by the previous Municipal Commissioner who is not only your senior and well known to you professionally, but also a good friend. Prima facie, the case appears to be of a widespread nexus between officials of the Municipal Corporation and the builders. Your colleagues are putting pressure on you to go slow in the enquiry. The builder, who is rich and influential, happens to be a close relative of a powerful minister in the state cabinet. The builder is persuading you to hush up the matter, promising you a fortune to do so. He also hinted that if this matter is not resolved at the earliest in his favour there is somebody in his office who is waiting to file a case against you under the POSH Act. Discuss the ethical issues involved in the case. What are the options available to you in this situation? Explain your selected course of action.

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2020 · 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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Article 21

A municipal permission that foreseeably drops a roof on labourers is a life-and-liberty failure, not a planning footnote.

Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988

Applies to the inspector and to any public servant in the nexus; the builder's fortune is an offer of undue advantage.

Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace Act, 2013

Creates a civil-criminal process for real harassment; using a threatened complaint to stop a death enquiry is intimidation, and a proven false complaint is itself actionable.

Child and Adolescent Labour Act, 1986

Two dead minors on a mall site are a standalone offence alongside the collapse.

National Building Code and municipal building bye-laws

Basement limits, material standards and zonal green-belt/slip-road reservations are safety law; they were not optional.

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