

WRAP Exams · wrapexams.com

Prelims PYQ, Mains model answers, and copy evaluation. Write to the desk for this paper, a doubt, or the AI waitlist.

ask@wrapexams.com · +91 85951 84903 · wrapexams.com

Q5

(a) Russia and Ukraine war has been going on for the last seven months. Different countries have taken independent stands and actions keeping in view their own national interests. We are all aware that war has its own impact on the different aspects of society, including human tragedy. What are those ethical issues that are crucial to be considered while launching the war and its continuation so far? Illustrate with justification the ethical issues involved in the given state of affair. (b) Write short notes on the following in 30 words each : (i) Constitutional morality (ii) Conflict of interest (iii) Probity in public life (iv) Challenges of digitalization (v) Devotion to duty.

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2022 · GS IV · 10 marks · Ethics in Public Administration

Public / Civil service values and Ethics in Public administration: Status and problems; ethical concerns and dilemmas in government and private institutions; laws, rules, regulations and conscience as sources of ethical guidance; accountability and ethical governance; strengthening of ethical and moral values in governance; ethical issues in international relations and funding; corporate governance.

Core demand of the question

- (a) Ethical issues crucial while launching and continuing the Russia-Ukraine war, with justification
- (b) Short notes of about 30 words each: constitutional morality; **conflict of interest**; probity in public life; challenges of digitalization; devotion to duty

Revision summary

Launching war needs just cause, last resort and lawful authority; continuation needs distinction, proportionality and truth.

National interest does not erase civilian and global food harm.

Constitutional morality binds power to the Constitution, as in the NCT Delhi reasoning of **2018**.

Conflict of interest is a private stake in a public duty; the remedy is recusal.

Probity, humane digitalisation and devotion to duty complete the short notes.

Introduction

Part (a) treats a war already months old when the paper was set, as a test of just cause, just means and civilian harm. Part (b) is five compact public-ethics notes, not essays.

Body

(a) Ethical issues in launching and continuing the Russia-Ukraine war

- Launching a war is an ethical act, not only a strategic one, because it decides who will be killed, displaced and impoverished.
- Just-war tradition asks a just cause, lawful authority, right intention, last resort, proportionality, and a reasonable chance of success. A war of conquest or of regime humiliation fails that test at the start.
- The United Nations Charter forbids the use of force against another State's territorial integrity except in self-defence or with Security Council authority. That legal floor is also an ethical floor for States that claim a rules-based order.
- **Continuation raises a second test:** even a claim of initial grievance does not license endless bombardment of cities, energy and grain that civilians need.
- **Discrimination:** combatants and civilians must be distinguished. Targeting apartments, theatres, hospitals or using civilians as shields fails that duty on whichever side does it.
- **Proportionality:** military advantage cannot be bought at mass civilian death, famine risk, or nuclear brinkmanship.
- National interest, which many States invoked, is not a moral blank cheque. Interest that ignores another people's right to exist is predation.
- **Humanitarian ethics:** refugees, prisoners of war, and grain corridors are duties under the **Geneva Conventions**, not favours.
- **Truth:** propaganda that denies atrocities, or that inflates them for recruitment, is itself an ethical failure because democratic consent to war is then based on a lie.
- **Global spillover:** inflation, fertilizer and food-price shocks hit people who never voted for either government. Continuation that treats those lives as externalities is unjust.
- **Nuclear signalling for coercion is an ethical red line:** it threatens species-level harm for a territorial aim.
- India's own public line of dialogue and diplomacy is ethically stronger when it is consistent about civilian harm on all sides, not only about energy prices.

(b) Short notes

Constitutional morality

- Constitutional morality is the habit of holding public power to the Constitution's values - liberty, equality, fraternity and due process - even when popular feeling or a majority wants otherwise. The Supreme Court in **Government of NCT of Delhi v. Union of India (2018)** treated it as a check on arbitrary power, not as a slogan.

Conflict of interest

- **Conflict of interest** is a situation where a public or professional duty can be bent by a private stake - kin, shares, a post-retirement job, or a gift. Ethics requires disclosure, recusal and refusal, not a claim that one can "manage" both loyalties in secret.

Probity in public life

- **Probity is uprightness in office:** honest money, impartial files, and no mixing of public power with private gain. It is essential to trust; without it, tenders, postings and data become a market.

Challenges of digitalization

- **Digitalization speeds service and creates new harms:** exclusion of those without devices, biometric failure, surveillance, data leaks, and automated refusal without a speaking order. The ethical duty is assisted access and a human appeal.

Devotion to duty

- Devotion to duty is professional completion of the lawful task, including inconvenient facts and the weakest claimant. It is not unlimited availability, not a lie for the boss, and not cruelty performed in the name of zeal.

Flow diagram

Launch and continue war -> Just cause last resort
Launch and continue war -> Distinguish civilians
Launch and continue war -> Proportionality
Constitutional morality -> Constitution over crowd
Conflict of interest -> Disclose and recuse
Probity -> Public trust

Conclusion

A war's launch and its continuation are both answerable to just cause, civilian distinction, proportionality and truth. The five notes name the inner furniture of a republic: constitutional morality, clean interest, probity, humane digitalisation, and duty that is work rather than theatre.

Facts & figures

United Nations Charter, Article 2(4)

Requires Members to refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State.

Geneva Conventions

The core humanitarian treaties on wounded, prisoners and civilians in armed conflict; distinction and humane treatment are legal duties.

Government of NCT of Delhi v. Union of India (2018)

A Constitution Bench discussion of constitutional morality as a restraint on power in the National Capital Territory's governance design.

Just-war criteria

Classical tests of just cause, right intention, last resort, proportionality and discrimination between combatants and civilians.

Conflict of interest

A structural clash between official duty and private advantage; Nolan-type principles of public life treat it as a disclosure and recusal problem.