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Q5

(a) "One who is devoted to one's duty attains highest perfection in life." Analyse this statement with reference to sense of responsibility and personal fulfilment as a civil servant. (b) To achieve holistic development goal, a civil servant acts as an enabler and active facilitator of growth rather than a regulator. What specific measures will you suggest to achieve this goal?

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2025 · GS IV · 10 marks · Ethics and Human Interface

Ethics and Human Interface: Essence, determinants and consequences of Ethics in-human actions; dimensions of ethics; ethics - in private and public relationships. Human Values - lessons from the lives and teachings of great leaders, reformers and administrators; role of family, society and educational institutions in inculcating values.

Core demand of the question

- (a) Duty, responsibility, fulfilment - Gita, Kant, role morality of a civil servant
- (b) Enabler not only regulator: specific measures - ease, voice, partnership, still a red line on capture

Revision summary

Devotion to lawful duty, owned outcomes and competence together make a civil servant's 'perfection'.

Fulfilment is public trust, not a bribe or a trend.

Blind obedience to an illegal order is not duty.

As an enabler the officer uses single windows, SLAs, risk-based inspection and open data.

The officer still forbids harm; facilitation must not become capture for a nephew or a donor.

Introduction

The Gita says **dedicated work** leads toward **perfection**. A civil servant's 'perfection' is not a miracle. It is **a file that is complete, a queue that is fair, a night that was spent on a flood**. Part (b) then asks the same person to be an **enabler of growth**, not only a **stamp of no**.

Body**(a) Devotion to duty, responsibility, fulfilment**

Duty (dharma of role) for an All-India officer is the **Constitution and the law**, not a family business. **Responsibility** is **ownership of outcome**: a collapsed bridge is not "the contractor's karma" if the quality check was yours. **Fulfilment** is the **eudaimonia** of a job well done - **Aristotle's** flourishing - which in public life is **trust earned**, not a viral reel.

- **Kant's** duty for duty's sake **matches nishkama karma**: do the right allocation **even if** the MLA is angry. The quote is abused if it means **blind obedience** to an illegal order (the Nuremberg lesson). Highest perfection in this service is **conscience plus competence**. A devoted officer who cannot read a balance sheet is a pious danger. A clever officer without devotion is a **clever leak**.

Personal fulfilment that needs a **bribe or a transfer-on-demand** is not the Gita's perfection. It is **artha without dharma**.

(b) Enabler and facilitator, with measures

Holistic development is **income, health, ecology, voice**. An enabler **clears a lawful plant in time, explains a standard, sits with an FPO, uses Jan Samvad**. **Specific measures: time-bound single-window** with published SLAs; **pre-consult** so EIA is not a surprise ambush; **risk-based inspection** instead of inspector raj; **open data** of licences; **grievance** with a named officer; **public-private** where the contract is **transparent**; **self-certification** with **heavy penalty for lying**; **district development coordination** that includes panchayats.

- **The red line**: enabling is not **regulatory capture**. A facilitator who writes a **tailored exemption** for a nephew is a **corrupt enabler**. The State remains a **regulator of harm** (pollution, fraud, labour). The shift is from **discretion as a throne** to **discretion as a service**.
- **Kautilya** wanted the king's officers to be watched. **So should we**: enable, and **audit the enabler**.

Flow diagram

Duty Gita Kant -> Fulfilment
 Enabler SLAs window -> Growth
 Regulator of harm -> Growth
 Enabler SLAs window -> Not capture

Conclusion

Duty done with responsibility gives a civil servant a rightful fulfilment. Growth needs that officer as a time-bound facilitator with open rules, not as a gate who sells yes and hides no.

Facts & figures

Nishkama karma

The Gita's teaching to act without clinging to the fruit; in office it means doing the right file without farming a photo.

Single window

A time-bound clearance system so a lawful investor is not sent on a pilgrimage of desks.

Regulatory capture

When the facilitator becomes the industry's agent; an ethical failure dressed as 'ease of doing business'.

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