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UPSC Mains 2015 GS IV

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Q1 · 12 marks

(a) What is meant by 'environmental ethics'? Why is it important to study? Discuss any one environmental issue from the viewpoint of environmental ethics. (10) (b) Differentiate between the following (10 marks) (200 Words) (i) Law and ethics (ii) Ethical management and management of ethics (iii) Discrimination and preferential treatment (iv) Personal Ethics and Professional Ethics.

GS IV · 2015 · Ethics and Human Interface

Revision summary

Environmental ethics judges human use of nature by duty to other beings and to future people, not only by this year's profit.

It matters because power and markets can destroy a river faster than custom can stop them; the dam and displacement case is one test.

Law is enforceable rule; ethics is the wider right, which may bind when the law is silent or too thin.

Ethical management is lived fairness; management of ethics is codes and cells that support it.

Discrimination is harmful bias; preferential treatment is a limited constitutional correction. Personal ethics is private conscience; professional ethics is the duty of the chair.

Introduction

Part (a) asks what we owe to nature and to people who live with damaged land and air. Part (b) asks four pairs that look similar and are not. A public servant needs both the green duty and the four distinctions.

Body

(a) Environmental ethics: meaning, importance, one issue

- Environmental ethics is the study of right and wrong in how humans treat land, water, air, plants, animals and future generations.
- It asks whether nature has value only as a store for us, or also as a community we belong to.

- Older Indian thought already had this duty in ideas of restraint, shared rivers and sacred groves; the modern name is new, the problem is larger.
- It is important to study because technology can now empty a river or heat a climate faster than custom can stop it.
- Without this study, a project is judged only by this year's rupees, and the cost is pushed onto a village, a species, or a child not yet born.
- **Article 48A** and **Article 51A(g)** of the Constitution of India already treat protection of the environment as a State direction and a citizen's duty; ethics explains why those lines are not decoration.
- The Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 and the requirement of environmental impact assessment are law. Ethics is the habit of not treating the clearance as a purchased stamp.
- **One issue:** large river dams and inter-linking that drown forests and displace Adivasi hamlets while promising power and irrigation to distant cities.
- From a purely economic view the dam is a national good if megawatts rise. From environmental ethics the questions are: who consents, who loses the river's fish and silt, what happens to downstream flow, and whether a smaller mix of efficiency, watershed work and solar can meet the need with less harm.
- Intergenerational justice says a storage that silts in forty years and leaves a toxic reservoir is a theft from the next public.
- The ethical answer is not "never build". It is honest assessment, least harm, rehabilitation that is real, and a no when the forest and the people cannot be made whole.

(b) Four differentiations

- (i) Law is a rule the State can enforce with a penalty. Ethics is a standard of right conduct that may be stricter than the statute and may exist where the statute is silent.
- A man may pay every tax and still humiliate a petitioner. That is legal enough and ethically empty. Civil disobedience against an unjust law is the other mismatch.
- (ii) Ethical management is running an organisation so that daily decisions already follow fairness, honesty and care for stakeholders.
- **Management of ethics is the toolkit:** codes, training, vigilance cells, ombudsmen and disclosure forms. The toolkit without the habit is a framed pledge. The habit without some toolkit is fragile when the boss changes.
- (iii) Discrimination is unequal treatment that harms a person because of caste, sex, religion, disability or similar status, against equality.
- Preferential treatment is a lawful extra chance given to a historically excluded group so that equality becomes real; reservation under the Constitution is this, not a private bias.
- **The test is purpose and limit:** a reserved seat for a Scheduled Caste candidate is preference as justice. A clerk who rejects a file because the applicant is Dalit is discrimination.
- (iv) Personal ethics is the conscience a person carries at home: truth to family, no cruelty, keeping a promise.
- **Professional ethics is the extra duties of a role:** confidentiality of a file, impartiality at a counter, no private practice that milks the posting, duty to the patient or the court.
- They should not fight. When they do, the professional role cannot be used as a licence for a domestic vice, and a personal loyalty cannot rewrite a public tender.

Flow diagram

Environmental ethics -> Duty to nature and future
Duty to nature and future -> Dam and displacement test
Law -> Enforceable minimum
Ethics -> Right conduct
Discrimination -> Unequal harm
Preferential treatment -> Constitutional repair

Conclusion

Environmental ethics makes nature and the unborn count in a file, as the dam example shows. Law is enforceable minimum; ethics can be higher. Codes manage ethics; ethical management lives them. Discrimination harms; constitutional preference repairs. Personal and professional ethics are two rooms of the same house.

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Q2 · 12 marks

Given are two quotations of moral thinkers/philosophers. For each of these bring out what it means to you in the present context. (a) "The weak can never forgive; forgiveness is the attribute of strong." (10) (b) "We can easily forgive a child who is afraid of the dark; the real tragedy of life is when men are afraid of the light" (10 marks).

GS IV · 2015 · Moral Thinkers and Philosophers

Revision summary

Forgiveness is the choice of someone who could retaliate and does not need revenge to remain whole.

It is not a command that victims of grave crime hug offenders; justice can come first.

In public life, strength is a firm file without spite, and peace after law, not a blood feud.

Fear of the light is adult refusal of truth, RTI, science and dissent.

The tragedy is punishing the lamp; administration should default to openness, not to a locked cupboard.

Introduction

Two sentences, often linked to **Gandhi** and to **Plato**, still test a republic that remembers injury and sometimes prefers a comfortable lie. Each quote asks for strength, not for theatre.

Body

(a) Forgiveness as strength

- The line means that forgiveness is not the surrender of a person who cannot hit back. It is the choice of a person who could hit back and does not need that hit to stay whole.
- Weakness here is the need to keep the wound open because the wound is the only identity left.
- **Strength is self-command:** you name the wrong, you seek justice where justice is due, and you refuse to live as a permanent enemy.
- In the present context this is not a demand that a rape survivor hug the accused, or that a riot widow forget a killing. Cheap "move on" talk from the powerful is not this quote.
- Forgiveness in public life is the end of a blood feud after law has worked: a truth-telling, a penalty, then a refusal to hunt the next generation.
- South Africa's truth and reconciliation idea, and India's own need after communal riots, show the same structure: memory without a licence for endless revenge.
- For a civil servant the quote is practical. A file delayed to punish a critic is weakness. A speaking order that is firm and not spiteful is strength.
- Between States, prisoner swaps and talks after a crisis can be strength if they do not erase accountability for terror. Humiliation of a whole people is weakness wearing a flag.

(b) Fear of the light

- A child fears the dark because the dark is unknown. An adult who fears the light fears truth, scrutiny and the end of a convenient story.
- Light here is knowledge, RTI, a free press, a court record, a scientific fact, and a citizen who asks why.

- **The tragedy is a society that punishes the lamp:** the whistle-blower, the honest auditor, the teacher who says the textbook is wrong, the officer who puts a dissent on the note.
- In the present context, fake news, paid news, and attacks on universities are forms of this fear. So is a company that destroys emails, and a ministry that stamps every inconvenient paper secret.
- **Plato's cave is the same picture:** people chained to shadows, angry at anyone who turns them toward the sun.
- For administration, fear of the light is the locked cupboard as default. The Right to Information Act, 2005 is a legal lamp; suo motu disclosure under **Section 4** is lighting the room before anyone knocks.
- **Personal ethics:** it is easier to stay in a caste myth, a communal rumour, or a family lie than to admit harm. The quote calls that adult fear a tragedy, not a private taste.
- Courage of conviction is walking into the light with a file that can be read, not with a slogan about transparency.

Flow diagram

Named wrong -> Justice
Justice -> Forgiveness as strength
Endless feud -> Weakness
Truth and scrutiny -> Adult duty
Comfortable lie -> Tragedy of fearing the light

Conclusion

Forgiveness is strength when it follows truth and justice, not when it is forced on the weak. Fear of the light is the adult refusal of scrutiny. Public service needs both: a firm peace after a wrong is named, and a habit of working in the open.

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Q3 · 12 marks

(a) "A mere compliance with law is not enough, the public servant also have to have a well developed sensibility to ethical issues for effective discharge of duties" Do you agree? Explain with the help of two examples where (i) an act is ethically right, but not legally and (ii) an act is legally right, but not ethically. (10 Marks) (b) How do the virtues of trustworthiness and fortitude get manifested in public service? Explain with examples (10).

GS IV · 2015 · Probity in Governance

Revision summary

Legal compliance is a minimum; ethical sensibility is needed where the section is silent or a paper lie looks complete.

An act can be ethically right and legally incomplete, as in a narrowly recorded rescue in a disaster.

An act can be legally regular and ethically wrong, as in paying a technically perfect false muster.

Trustworthiness is being reliable in figures, promises and impartiality.

Fortitude is lasting courage to record a lawful no; together they make public service more than a Gazette.

Introduction

A statute can tell an officer what is punishable. It cannot by itself create a sense of the person at the counter. Part (a) tests that gap. Part (b) names two virtues that make the gap smaller.

Body

(a) Law is not enough; two mismatched acts

- I agree. Law is a minimum map. Ethical sensibility is noticing harm, dignity and fairness where the section is silent or crude.
- A public servant who only asks "is it illegal?" will delay a dying patient for a missing photocopy, sell no bribe, and still fail the Constitution's spirit.
- Effective discharge of duties needs empathy, impartiality and courage, which no Gazette can fully write.
- **Example (i):** ethically right, not legally permitted in the strict sense. A forest officer lets a starving village take fallen dry wood that the letter of a ban still forbids, records the famine, and seeks a later regularisation. Or a doctor in a disaster uses ambulance-kit blood to save a life before the licensed bank can be reached. The ethic is rescue; the legal form is incomplete. Necessity is narrow and must be written down, not turned into a habit of lawlessness.
- A historical civic example is sheltering a person from a mob when a curfew order says nobody may move: the higher duty is life.
- **Example (ii):** legally right, not ethical. A contractor is paid on time because the papers are technically complete, while the officer knows the road was built with stolen earth and a false muster. The bill is lawful on the face; the act is ethically rotten.
- Evicting a slum on the exact date in a court order, at night, without shelter, is often legally covered and ethically cruel if alternatives were never tried.

- Tax avoidance through a clever but hollow company, where the statute has a hole, can be legal and still a breach of civic ethics.
- The two examples together show why Conduct Rules speak of conduct unbecoming, not only of listed crimes.

(b) Trustworthiness and fortitude in public service

- **Trustworthiness is the habit of being worth other people's reliance:** true figures, kept promises, no leak of a confidential file for a friend, no surprise betrayal of a colleague who followed your lawful order.
- It shows when a District Magistrate publishes a relief list that matches the camp, when a banker does not dip into a dormant account, and when a teacher does not sell marks.
- Citizens trust the State when the same rule hits a minister's relative and a stranger. That is trustworthiness as impartiality.
- **Fortitude is courage that lasts:** staying with a lawful no under threat of transfer, facing a riot without communal panic, and telling a superior that the note is false.
- It is not rudeness and not a hunger strike over a posting. It is steady nerve plus a recorded reason.
- Example: an officer who refuses to book a minority hamlet on a rumour, documents the facts, and accepts the transfer heat, shows fortitude.
- Example: a procurement officer who will not certify a fake machine, even when the file has already been "cleared" upstairs, shows both virtues: others can trust the stock register, and the officer had the spine to stop.
- The **Second Administrative Reforms Commission** treated such character as part of ethics in governance, not as optional heroism.

Flow diagram

Mere legal compliance -> Ethical gap
 Ethical sensibility -> Effective duty
 Trustworthiness -> Public can rely
 Fortitude -> Lawful no under pressure
 Public can rely -> Effective duty
 Lawful no under pressure -> Effective duty

Conclusion

I agree that law alone is a thin public servant. Ethical sensibility catches the famine wood and refuses the perfect false bill. Trustworthiness makes the public rely on the file. Fortitude keeps that file honest when fear arrives.

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Q4 · 12 marks

(a) Social values are more important than economic values. Discuss the above statement with examples in the context of inclusive growth of a nation. (10 Marks) (b) Some recent developments such as introduction of RTI Act, media and judicial activism, etc. are proving helpful in bringing about greater transparency and accountability in the functioning of the government. However, it is also being observed that at times the mechanisms are misused. Another negative effect is that the officers are now afraid to take prompt decisions. Analyse the situation in detail and suggest how the dichotomy can be resolved. Suggest how these negative impacts can be minimised. (10 Marks).

GS IV · 2015 · Probity in Governance

Revision summary

Inclusive growth is entry of the weak into development, which social values of dignity and equality must lead.

GDP without women's safety, clean water or fair land terms is not inclusion.

RTI, media and judicial review have increased transparency and can be misused as blackmail, trial by camera or endless stay.

Officers then fear prompt decisions.

Repair is suo motu disclosure, action on vexatious abuse, judicial self-restraint on administration, speaking orders and protection of bona fide reasoned action - not shutting the lamps.

Introduction

Part (a) asks what kind of growth is worth the name. Part (b) asks how lamps we needed - RTI, media, courts - can also frighten an honest file into sleep.

Body

(a) Social values and inclusive growth

- Economic values are output, profit, fiscal surplus and the growth rate. They matter. They are not the whole republic.
- Social values are dignity, equality, solidarity, trust, and care for those who cannot buy a market share.
- Inclusive growth is growth that the poor, women, Adivasis, persons with disability and backward regions actually enter, not only watch on television.
- If economic values sit first, a dam, a mine or a city can rise while a community loses land, school and health. The average looks fine; the bottom is out.
- Social values first does not mean poverty as a virtue. It means the extra rupee is judged by whether it widens capability: **Amartya Sen's** point that development is freedom to live a life one has reason to value.

- Example: a high GDP with falling female labour participation and rising crimes against women is not inclusive. Safety, education and property rights for women are social values that make later growth real.
- Example: the **Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005** spends money, but its ethical claim is a right to work and a village asset, not only a multiplier.
- Example: a factory that pays well and dumps effluent into a Dalit hamlet's pond has economic value and social failure. The National Green Tribunal cases are full of this split.
- Land acquisition that skips consent and livelihood is growth as capture. The Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, **Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act, 2013** tried to put social cost on the page.
- A nation that keeps social values first will still seek investment; it will not call a poisoned river a success because exports rose.

(b) RTI, media, judicial activism: help, misuse, fear, repair

- The Right to Information Act, 2005, a questioning press, and courts that stay an arbitrary demolition have pulled files into the light. That is a democratic gain.
- Misuse is real. RTI can be a tool of blackmail, of business rivalry, or of a flood of queries meant to freeze a desk. Media trials can destroy a career before a charge sheet. Public interest litigation can become private interest litigation with a camera.
- **Officers then delay:** every signature feels like a future summons. The honest become slow; the dishonest still move through informal routes.
- The dichotomy is not "people versus officers". It is accountability versus paralysis.
- Resolve it by quality, not by switching the lamps off.
- **RTI:** strengthen **Section 4** disclosure so routine data is public; penalise vexatious patterns without punishing a poor citizen's first application; protect bona fide decision notes that are already recorded.
- **Media:** a statutory or strong self-regulatory line against named trial before inquiry; officers should still brief facts, not hide. Contempt and defamation exist; they must not become a shield for graft.
- **Courts:** continue to strike down illegality; avoid running tenders and school boards from the bench. The executive must decide; the court must review.
- **Decision culture:** speaking orders, e-files, and a clear "reasoned dissent" practice so that a later inquiry sees judgement, not a blank.
- **Protection for honest error:** a defined safe harbour for bona fide decisions taken with reasons, as later company and public-servant debates have sought, so that fear of a fishing inquiry does not freeze a disaster order.
- **Training:** teach officers to write reasons, not to hide. Teach applicants that RTI is a right, not a weaponised delay.
- **Political example from the top:** if transfers punish the signer of an inconvenient true note, no Act will make officers brave.

Flow diagram

Economic values -> GDP and profit

Social values -> Inclusive growth

GDP and profit -> Inclusive growth

RTI media courts media courts -> Transparency

RTI media courts -> Misuse and fear

Disclosure safe harbour speaking orders -> Accountability without paralysis

Conclusion

Inclusive growth needs social values in the lead, with economic numbers as servants. RTI, media and courts remain necessary lamps. Cut misuse with disclosure, fair process and protection of honest reasoned decisions, not with darkness.

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Q5 · 12 marks

Two different kinds of attitudes exhibited by public servants towards their work have been identified as bureaucratic attitude and the democratic attitude. (10 Marks) (a) Distinguish between these two terms and write their merits and demerits. (b) Is it possible to balance the two to create a better administration for the faster development of our country?

GS IV · 2015 · Attitude

Revision summary

Bureaucratic attitude is rule-and-hierarchy first; it gives predictability and can freeze into red tape.

Democratic attitude is citizen-first within law; it gives dignity and can collapse into crowd-pleasing illegality.

- **Merits and demerits are twins:** impersonality can be fairness or cruelty.
- **Balance is possible:** simple published rules, timelines, e-service, hearings and speaking orders.

Faster development needs decisions that are both lawful and humane, not a war between the two habits.

Introduction

The same khaki file can be a wall or a door. Bureaucratic attitude and democratic attitude are two habits toward that file. Development needs a balance, not a slogan that abolishes rules.

Body

(a) Distinction, merits, demerits

- Bureaucratic attitude is rule-first, hierarchy-first, and paper-first. The citizen is a case. The clock of the office matters more than the clock of the queue.
- **Democratic attitude is citizen-first within the law:** hearing, explanation, equality, and a sense that power is borrowed from the republic.
- **Max Weber** described bureaucracy as specialised, impersonal and rule-bound. That impersonality can be fairness. It can also be coldness.
- **Merits of bureaucratic attitude:** predictability, a trail for audit, less open favouritism if rules are real, continuity when ministers change, and a brake on a populist illegal order.
- **Demerits:** delay, red tape, treating the poor as illiterate nuisances, hiding behind "the rule" when a lawful discretion could help, and ritual over result.
- **Merits of democratic attitude:** dignity at the counter, feedback, social audit, willingness to explain in the local language, and schemes that match need.
- **Demerits:** if "democratic" is misread as pleasing whoever shouts, rules collapse, majorities bully minorities, and an officer becomes a local politician in a government chair.
- A purely bureaucratic office will not hear a disabled applicant who cannot climb the stairs. A purely "democratic" office may skip the tender because a crowd wants a favourite contractor.

(b) Can they be balanced for faster development?

- **Yes. The balance is Weber plus Gandhi:** firm rules that are simple, and a face that is human.
- Faster development fails when files sleep and when files are sold. Both attitudes, unmixed, produce one of those two.
- **Practical mix:** published standard operating procedures and timelines (bureaucratic clarity) plus help-desks, online tracking and hearings for the affected (democratic access).
- **Sevottam and citizen charters tried this mix:** a promise of service, a time limit, and a complaint path.
- E-governance cuts the rude clerk without abolishing the rule. Direct benefit transfer is impersonal in a good bureaucratic sense and democratic in reaching the named person.
- Training should reward speaking orders that are kind and lawful, not only minutes that are long.
- Political executive must stop using "democratic pressure" to smash a tender, and stop using "procedure" to bury a drought.
- For faster development, the officer needs courage to decide inside the rule, and humility to explain the rule to the last person in the line.
- The **Second Administrative Reforms Commission** asked for citizen-centric administration, which is this balance in one phrase.

Flow diagram

Bureaucratic attitude -> Rules trail audit
 Democratic attitude -> Citizen dignity
 Rules trail audit -> Citizen-centric administration
 Citizen dignity -> Citizen-centric administration
 Citizen-centric administration -> Faster fair development

Conclusion

Bureaucratic attitude gives a spine of rules. Democratic attitude gives a spine of dignity. Development needs both: a file that moves on time, and a citizen who is not treated as dirt. That mix is possible and is already named in citizen charters and e-service.

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Q6 · 12 marks

Today we find that in-spite of various measures of prescribing codes of conduct, setting up vigilance cells/commissions, RTI, active media and strengthening of legal mechanisms, corrupt practices are not coming under control. (10 Marks) (a) Evaluate the effectiveness of these measures with justifications (b) Suggest more effective strategies to tackle this menace.

GS IV · 2015 · Probity in Governance

Revision summary

Conduct rules, vigilance, RTI, media and stronger statutes have worked where records exist and e-payment killed the counter.

They are weak against collusion, election finance and slow trials, and can freeze honest officers if misused.

Corruption continues because desperate demand still meets discretionary supply.

Better strategies shrink discretion, speed fair trials, audit assets, clean political funding and change social honour.

Example at the top and unsold postings matter more than one more pledge.

Introduction

India has piled tools against graft. The tools are not empty. They have also not ended the market in files. The question is why the pile is not enough, and what else must sit beside it.

Body**(a) Evaluate the measures**

- Codes of conduct (Central Civil Services (Conduct) Rules, 1964 and All India Services (Conduct) Rules, 1968) name integrity, gifts and unbecoming conduct. They work when inquiries are real. They fail when a violation is rewarded with a better posting.
- Vigilance cells and the **Central Vigilance Commission** create a specialist eye. They have caught traps and big files. They can also become a fear machine that freezes honest signatures, or a parking place for inconvenient officers.
- The Right to Information Act, 2005 has exposed ration theft, muster fraud and admissions scams. Effectiveness is high where records exist and Commissions are strong; it is weak where files are "not traceable" or applicants are threatened.
- Active media has made some scams unsustainable and has also run trials by headline. It deters the visible thief more than the quiet collusion.
- Legal strengthening - **Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988** (and later amendment), **Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act, 2013**, money-laundering law - raises the formal cost of crime. Trials that last a decade lower that cost again.
- Overall: these measures have reduced some open counter-bribes, especially where e-payment killed the clerk's window. They have not broken political-business collusion, election-time cash, or small everyday speed money where the citizen is desperate.
- **Justification:** corruption continues because demand (a citizen who must get a licence this week) and supply (discretion plus weak punishment) still meet. Tools that attack only the clerk leave the patron.

(b) More effective strategies

- **Shrink discretion:** e-procurement, faceless assessment, online permissions with published criteria, and direct benefit transfer so that a rupee does not pass through ten palms.
- Fast, fair trials for corruption, with specialised courts that actually sit, so that the Act is not a scarecrow.
- Protect whistle-blowers in practice, not only on paper; punish the leaking of an identity.
- Political funding transparency and a real ceiling that is enforced; much public corruption is the recovery of election cost.
- **Social norm:** stop celebrating the fixer as efficient. School and training must treat a stolen rupee as shame.
- Random third-party audit of high-risk works, geotagged assets, and social audit as in MGNREGA, with police follow-up, not a closed meeting.
- Blacklisting of firms that bribe, and corporate liability that the 2018 amendment already points toward.
- **Rotate and declare:** property returns that are verified, not filed and forgotten; conflict-of-interest recusal that is public.
- **Integrity in recruitment and transfers:** if the posting itself is sold, no code at the desk will hold.
- **Technology plus analog justice:** a camera that can be switched off is not a strategy. Pair digital trails with independent prosecution and a citizen who can reach a help-line that answers.
- Leadership example still outperforms a new circular. A minister who lives simply and does not call about a tender changes the price of honesty.

Flow diagram

Codes CVC RTI media law -> Some exposure and less open bribe
 Codes CVC RTI media law -> Collusion slow trials demand
 Less discretion fast courts clean funding norms -> Lower corruption

Conclusion

Codes, vigilance, RTI, media and law have dented open petty graft and exposed some large thefts. They fail where discretion, slow trials and political money remain. The next strategy is less cash at the window, faster punishment, cleaner politics, and a culture that does not clap for the fixer.

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Q7 · 12 marks

At the international level, bilateral relations between most nations are governed on the policy of promoting one's own national interest without any regard for the interest of other nations. This leads to conflicts and tension between the nations. How can ethical consideration help resolve such tensions? Discuss with specific examples. (10 Marks).

GS IV · 2015 · Ethics and Human Interface

Revision summary

Unrestrained national interest treats other nations as obstacles and produces spirals of distrust.

Ethics does not erase self-defence; it sets reciprocity, kept promises, shared climate and civilian dignity as limits.

Examples include the Paris climate pact, the Indus Waters Treaty, refugee protection, and vaccine sharing versus vaccine nationalism.

Opaque debt and downstream river harm are interest without regard.

Institutions and verification stop ethics from becoming naive surrender.

Introduction

States are not saints. They seek security and advantage. Ethics does not abolish national interest. It asks that interest be pursued without treating another people as waste.

Body**The problem**

- Realist practice says a State may lie, squeeze a neighbour's river, or dump carbon if it gains. That practice produces arms races, refugee crises and climate harm that return as costs.
- "National interest without regard for others" is often a short-term factional interest wearing a flag: a contractor, a vote bank, or a general's prestige.

How ethical consideration helps

- **Reciprocity:** do not do to a neighbour's civilians what you would call a crime if done to yours. This lowers spiral revenge.
- **Pacta sunt servanda:** keep treaties. A broken water treaty or a broken border pact teaches the other side to arm.
- **Common goods:** climate, pandemics, and oceans cannot be won as zero-sum loot. Ethics names the shared duty.
- **Human dignity:** even in rivalry, prisoners of war, fishermen and students are not hostages of mood.
- **Justice in trade:** dumping and beggar-thy-neighbour tariffs create the next political crisis. Fair rules are ethics with a calculator.
- **Truth in diplomacy:** secret extra-territorial killing and fake maps may "work" for a season and poison trust for a generation.

Specific examples

- **Climate:** the Paris Agreement, 2015 asks common but differentiated responsibility. Ethical consideration is why a high-emitting rich State cannot lecture a poor State while refusing finance. India's solar push and demand for climate finance sit in this frame.
- **Water:** the Indus Waters Treaty, 1960 survived wars because both sides treated a river as a shared life system, not only as a tap to punish. Threats to walk away raise ethical and strategic cost.
- **Refugees:** the 1951 Refugee Convention spirit (India is not a party but still hosts) says a drowning neighbour is not only a security file. Pushbacks that dump people into the sea fail that ethic and create lasting hate.
- **COVID-19:** vaccine nationalism and delayed COVAX supply showed interest without regard. Vaccine Maitri, when it was real supply and not only a headline, was the ethical counter-example - and it also built goodwill, which is interest rightly understood.
- **Development partnerships versus debt traps:** opaque loans that seize a port when unpaid are interest without regard. Transparent, demand-driven lines of credit are closer to justice.
- Humanitarian corridors in a war, and the Chemical Weapons Convention, show that even enemies can agree that some harms are not tools.
- River-linking or damming that ignores a downstream country's farmers is the environmental-ethics problem at the border. **Joint basin** institutions are the ethical instrument.

Limits

- Ethics is not appeasement of aggression. Self-defence remains a right. The point is that how you defend still has a ceiling: no targeting of markets as a method, no collective punishment of a minority across the fence.
- A State that is ethical alone while others cheat can be exploited. Hence institutions, verification and a public that will not cheer a cheap cruelty.

Flow diagram

Narrow national interest -> Conflict and tension

Ethical consideration -> Reciprocity treaties common goods dignity

Reciprocity treaties common goods dignity -> Lower tension and durable interest

Conflict and tension -> Lower tension and durable interest

Conclusion

National interest is not cancelled by ethics. It is civilised by reciprocity, kept treaties, shared climate and the refusal to treat another people as instruments. Paris, Indus, vaccines and basin talks are examples. Cruelty that looks clever usually returns as tension.

Open WRAP page — <https://wrapexams.com/upsc/mains-answers/gs-4/2015/at-the-international-level-bilateral-relations-between-most-nations-are-governed-on-the-policy-of-promoting-ones-own-national-interest-without-any-regard-for-the-interest-of-other-nations-this-leads-to-conflicts-and/>

Q8 · 12 marks

Public servants are likely to confront the issues of "Conflict of Interest". What do you understand by the term "Conflict of Interest" and how does it manifest in the decision making by public servants? If faced with the conflict of interest situation how would you resolve it? Explain with the help of examples. (10 Marks).

GS IV · 2015 · Ethics in Public Administration

Revision summary

Conflict of interest is a situation where a private stake could reasonably bias a public decision, even before a bribe.

It appears as kin in a lease, a spouse's business, post-retirement bargains, political donors and identity bias.

Resolution is disclosure, recusal, published criteria, speaking orders and no contractor gifts.

Examples include stepping off a cousin's mining file and stopping referrals to a family lab.

Conduct Rules and the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988 back the habit when it becomes a crime.

Introduction

A public chair is hired for other people's welfare. Conflict of interest begins when the officer's private stake can reasonably be seen to steer that chair.

Body**Meaning**

- Conflict of interest is a situation where official duty, public interest and personal interest pull against each other, and a fair observer would doubt the decision.
- It is not only a proved bribe. The bribe is the conflict after it has been sold. The conflict exists earlier, when a relative, a share, a future job or a caste loyalty sits on the same file.
- **Public servants hold fiduciary power:** licences, land, police, tax, contracts. The citizen cannot easily walk away to another State.

How it manifests in decision-making

- **Kin and clan:** a mining lease, a teacher posting, or a relief list that quietly favours a brother-in-law.
- **Pecuniary:** shares in a company that will win a tender the officer is judging; a spouse's diagnostic lab that receives all referrals.
- **Post-retirement promise:** a soft order today for a board seat tomorrow.
- **Political:** a ruling-party donor who needs a clearance this week.
- **Ideological or communal:** targeting one neighbourhood in a raid because of identity, not evidence.
- **Dual roles:** sitting on a trust that bids for a grant the same officer sanctions.
- Gift and hospitality culture that creates a debt before the file is opened.
- Each of these can look like a "technical" yes. The ethical failure is that the reason is private.

How I would resolve it

- **Declare:** written disclosure of property, relatives in the jurisdiction, and any link to a bidder, as Conduct Rules and Lokpal-related declarations expect.
- **Recuse:** leave the chair, record why, and send the file to the next competent authority. Do not "be fair in my heart" while still signing.
- **Reduce discretion:** published criteria, e-procurement, committees rather than a single signature where the risk is high.
- **Speak on the file:** a speaking order that a court can test.
- No private meetings with a bidder without a note. No festival gift from a contractor.
- If I discover a predecessor's conflict, I do not bury it to protect the service's name; I report on the file and seek a review.
- **Example 1:** I am to decide a sand-mining permit. My cousin is a silent partner. I disclose, recuse, and stay off the inspection team.
- **Example 2:** as a medical superintendent, I find referrals flowing to my spouse's scan centre. I ban that path, publish a panel, and request an inquiry into past bills.
- **Example 3:** a minister telephones about a college affiliation in which the minister's family has land. I put the call on the note, apply the same inspection checklist, and refuse a special sitting.
- The Central Civil Services (Conduct) Rules, 1964, All India Services (Conduct) Rules, 1968, and the **Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988** are the hard edge if the conflict becomes a crime.
- **Resolution is a habit, not a speech:** public interest first, duty as the lawful means, personal interest last and parked.

Flow diagram

Personal interest -> Conflict of interest
 Official duty -> Conflict of interest
 Conflict of interest -> Disclose
 Conflict of interest -> Recuse
 Conflict of interest -> Less discretion
 Disclose -> Public interest leads
 Recuse -> Public interest leads
 Less discretion -> Public interest leads

Conclusion

Conflict of interest is a foreseeable private pull on a public file. It shows as kin, money, future jobs and quiet gifts. The fix is disclose, recuse, shrink discretion and write reasons - with examples from mining, medicine and political pressure.

Open WRAP page — <https://wrapexams.com/upsc/mains-answers/gs-4/2015/public-servants-are-likely-to-confront-the-issues-of-conflict-of-interest-what-do-you-understand-by-the-term-conflict-of-interest-and-how-does-it-manifest-in-the-decision-making-by-public-servants-if-faced-with-the/>

Q9 · 20 marks

Case study. One of the scientists working in the R & D laboratory of a major pharmaceutical company discovers that one of the company's best selling veterinary drugs, B has the potential to cure a currently incurable liver disease that is prevalent in tribal areas. However, developing a variant of the drug suitable for human beings entailed a lot of research and development having a huge expenditure to the extent of f 50 crores. It was unlikely that the company would recover the costs as the disease was rampant only in poverty-stricken area having very little market otherwise. If you were the CEO, then- (a) identify the various actions that you could take; (b) evaluate the pros and cons of each of your actions.

GS IV · 2015 · Ethics Case Studies

Revision summary

A possible human cure for a tribal liver disease has little market; Rs 50 crore R&D may not be recovered.

Stakeholders include patients, the scientist, workers and owners.

Suppressing the finding is unethical; unaided spend that sinks the firm is imprudent.

The sound path is partnership with government, public science and philanthropy, with a binding access clause.

If partners fail, publish for public labs rather than bury the lead or sell it to be shelved.

Introduction

A laboratory accident of good news meets a profit-and-loss sheet. Tribal patients have a disease the market will not pay to cure. As CEO I still hold duties to workers, owners, regulators and those patients.

Body**Stakeholders**

- Tribal patients with the incurable liver disease, who have almost no purchasing power.
- The scientist who found the lead, and the R&D team.
- Shareholders, lenders and the workforce whose wages depend on a going concern.
- Existing veterinary customers who use drug B.
- The State, ICMR-type public research, and possible public-private partners.
- **You as CEO:** profit is a duty, not a licence to ignore a preventable death.

Values and issues

- **Beneficence and justice:** a molecule that could save the poorest should not die only because they are poor.
- **Fiduciary duty to the company:** Rs 50 crore is not play money if it bankrupts the firm and throws out jobs.

- **Transparency:** do not hide the finding to protect the veterinary cash cow.
- **Intellectual property:** a patent can be a tool for partnership, not only a wall.

(a) and (b) Actions with pros and cons

- **Option 1:** Suppress the finding and continue selling veterinary B only.
- **Merit:** protects current profit and avoids a Rs 50 crore risk.
- **Demerit:** conceals a possible human therapy; ethically a betrayal of the scientist's discovery and of patients. If the fact leaks, reputational ruin.
- **Option 2:** Fund the full human R&D from company cash alone and price the drug for a tribal market that cannot pay.
- **Merit:** maximum moral clarity if the science works.
- **Demerit:** may sink the firm, halt other useful drugs, and still fail if trials are negative. Heroism that destroys the company helps nobody in year three.
- **Option 3:** Open a structured partnership: licence or co-develop with government, ICMR, WHO-type programmes, a philanthropic foundation, or a larger firm, with a clear access clause for tribal patients (at-cost or free).
- **Merit:** shares cost and risk; uses public duty where the market is absent; keeps the company solvent; scientist stays engaged.
- **Demerit:** slower negotiations; partners may demand control; some profit is given up. Still the least bad mix of justice and prudence.
- **Option 4:** Ask the State for an advance market commitment, tax incentive, or orphan-disease style grant, while publishing the lead so that others may also try.
- **Merit:** honest science; public money for a public need; aligns with the National Health Mission logic of serving the poor.
- **Demerit:** political delay; competitors may free-ride. Free-riding is acceptable if patients live.
- **Option 5:** Sell the molecule outright to the highest bidder with no access condition.
- **Merit:** immediate cash, perhaps more than Rs 50 crore.
- **Demerit:** the buyer may shelf it (a veterinary rival) or price it as a luxury. Patients remain untreated. I would not choose this without a binding access covenant.
- **Option 6:** Create a not-for-profit subsidiary or patent pool for the human variant, keeping veterinary B as the commercial engine.
- **Merit:** ring-fences risk; states a public purpose; staff can see the firm's character.
- **Demerit:** governance complexity; still needs external money.

What I would do

- Do not suppress. Thank the scientist, protect the data, and take the finding to the board as a duty item, not as a hobby.
- Seek co-development and public or philanthropic finance first; put tribal access in the contract.
- **Keep veterinary production ethical and separate:** do not raise animal-drug prices to secretly fund a vanity project without disclosure.
- If every partner refuses and the firm cannot bear Rs 50 crore, publish enough for public laboratories to try, rather than bury the light.
- Measure success as patients on a safe therapy, not as a press conference.

Flow diagram

Veterinary B human lead -> Do not suppress

Do not suppress -> Public private philanthropic co-develop

Public private philanthropic co-develop -> Access for tribal patients

Solo Rs 50 crore -> Firm failure risk

Sell with no covenant -> Shelf or luxury price

Conclusion

The market will not pull a tribal liver cure by itself. Suppressing the lead is the worst act. Solo bankruptcy is not required. As CEO I would partner, bind access, and if need be give the science to the public system - profit as a going concern, not as a veto on the poor.

Open WRAP page — <https://wrapexams.com/upsc/mains-answers/gs-4/2015/case-study-one-of-the-scientists-working-in-the-r-d-laboratory-of-a-major-pharmaceutical-company-discovers-that-one-of-the-companys-best-selling-veterinary-drugs-b-has-the-potential-to-cure-a-currently-incurable-liver/>

Q10 · 20 marks

Case study. There is a disaster-prone State having frequent landslides, forest fires, cloudbursts, flash floods and earthquakes, etc. Some of these are seasonal and often unpredictable. The magnitude of the disaster is always unanticipated. During one of the seasons, a cloudburst caused devastating floods and landslides leading to high casualties. There was major damage to infrastructure like roads, bridges and power generating units. This led to more than 100000 pilgrims, tourists and other locals trapped across different routes and locations. The people trapped in your area of responsibility included senior citizens, patients in hospitals, women and children, hikers, tourists, ruling party's regional president along with his family, additional chief secretary of the neighbouring State and prisoners in jail. As a civil services officer of the State, what would be the order in which you would rescue these people and why? Give justifications.

GS IV · 2015 · Ethics Case Studies

Revision summary

Rescue ranks by inability to self-save, not by political office.

Hospital patients go first; then children, frail seniors, pregnant women and persons with disability.

Prisoners come before able-bodied tourists because the State locked the gate.

The party president and Additional Chief Secretary wait with other adults unless they are themselves vulnerable.

A coordination excuse must not steal the first helicopter from a ward.

Introduction

A cloudburst does not read political office. Rescue is a medical and humanitarian ranking, not a VIP list. The State already holds extra duty for those it has locked in and those it has put in hospital beds.

Body

Stakeholders

- Hospital patients who cannot walk out.
- Children, women, pregnant persons and senior citizens in the open or in weak shelters.
- Prisoners in a jail that may flood or lose power.
- Locals, pilgrims, tourists and hikers, including able-bodied adults.
- The ruling party's regional president and family, and the neighbouring State's Additional Chief Secretary, as human beings in the same storm.

- You as the officer of the State under the **Disaster Management Act, 2005**, with limited helicopters, boats and hours.

Values

- Right to life (**Article 21**) equally, not according to rank.
- **Vulnerability and dependence:** those who cannot self-evacuate come first.
- Special State duty to persons in custody and to patients already in its hospitals.
- **No VIP culture:** office is not a fast pass.
- Transparency of the triage so that rumour does not become a second disaster.

Rescue order and why

- **First:** patients in hospitals. They are already the sickest, often immobile, on oxygen or post-surgery. A flooded ward is a mass casualty. Move them with medical teams to higher or safer facilities. This is not a political choice; it is clinical triage.
- **Second:** children, their essential caregivers, pregnant women, persons with disability, and senior citizens who are frail. They tire first, drown first, and cannot wait for a second sorties wave. Women in this band are here as vulnerability, not as a slogan; able-bodied men who are sole carers of infants travel with them.
- **Third:** remaining women and other medically vulnerable persons still stranded on roads and slopes, then other locals who know the ground but are trapped by a cut road.
- **Fourth:** prisoners. They cannot open the gate. The State locked them in; the State must not leave them to drown while cameras follow a politician. Move them under guard to a safe lock-up, with records, so that a flood does not become a lynching or a disappearance. Their crimes do not cancel **Article 21**.
- **Fifth:** able-bodied pilgrims, tourists and hikers. They have a claim, but they can usually walk, wait in a cluster, and follow instructions. Prioritise the injured among them as in any triage, not as a tourist class.
- **Sixth as office, never as a jump:** the regional president, family, and the Additional Chief Secretary. If they are elderly, injured, or with children, they already rose in the earlier bands. If they are able-bodied adults, they wait with other able-bodied adults. A courtesy briefing and one liaison officer can prevent panic in the neighbouring secretariat; a dedicated helicopter before the hospital is corruption of triage.
- **Throughout:** communicate the order on wireless and to the press in one sentence - sick and helpless first, no queue for rank - so that cadres do not invent a private VIP list.

Options I reject

- **Option:** president and ACS first "for coordination".
- **Merit:** one phone to a capital.
- **Demerit:** a coordination cell can work from a radio; a dying patient cannot. The optics train every future disaster to hunt a chopper.
- **Option:** prisoners last after every tourist.
- **Merit:** public anger is avoided.
- **Demerit:** they are helpless by our lock. Leaving them is a State crime wearing popular taste.
- **Option:** locals before all outsiders.
- **Merit:** political ease.
- **Demerit:** a child tourist and a child local have the same lungs. Origin is not a triage category; injury and age are.

How I would run it

- Incident command, National Disaster Response Force / State Disaster Response Force, medical triage tags, geotagged clusters.
- Do not strip hospital staff to pose with a politician.
- Record every VIP request on the log. If a minister orders a jump, ask for it in writing and still follow medical triage unless a lawful disaster directive reassigns a specific asset for a specific clinical reason.

Flow diagram

Cloudburst trap -> Vulnerability triage
Vulnerability triage -> Hospital patients
Vulnerability triage -> Children frail pregnant
Vulnerability triage -> Prisoners in custody
Vulnerability triage -> Able-bodied pilgrims tourists
Office holders -> Same band as their vulnerability
Office holders first -> Unequal Article 21

Conclusion

The order is hospital patients, then children and frail persons, then other vulnerable women and stranded locals, then prisoners in State custody, then able-bodied pilgrims and tourists. Political and official rank does not buy a rotor blade. That is equality under a landslide, not discourtesy.

Open WRAP page — <https://wrapexams.com/upsc/mains-answers/gs-4/2015/case-study-there-is-a-disaster-prone-state-having-frequent-landslides-forest-fires-cloudbursts-flash-floods-and-earthquakes-etc-some-of-these-are-seasonal-and-often-unpredictable-the-magnitude-of-the-disaster-is-always/>

Q11 · 20 marks

Case study. You are heading a district administration in a particular department. Your senior officer calls you from the State Headquarters and tells you that a plot in Rampur village is to have a building constructed on it for a school. A visit is scheduled during which he will visit the site along with the chief engineer and the senior architect. He wants you to check out all the papers relating to it and to ensure that the visit is properly arranged. You examine the file which relates to the period before you joined the department. The land was acquired from the local Panchayat at a nominal cost and the papers show that clearance certificates are available from the two of the three authorities who have to certify the site's suitability. There is no certification by the architect available on file. You decide to visit Rampur to ensure that all is in order as stated on file. When you visit Rampur, you find that the plot under reference is part of Thakurgarh Fort and that the walls, ramparts, etc., are running across it. The fort is well away from the main village, therefore a school here will be a serious inconvenience for the children. However, the area near the village has potential to expand into a larger residential area. The development charges on the existing plot, at the fort, will be very high and the question of heritage site has not been addressed. Moreover, the Sarpanch, at the time of acquisition of the land, was a relative of your predecessor. The whole transaction appears to have been done with some vested interest. (a) List the likely vested interests of the concerned parties. (b) Some of the options for action available to you are listed below. Discuss the merits and demerits of each of the options: You can await the visit of the superior officer and let him take a decision. You can seek his advice in writing or on phone. You can consult your predecessor/colleagues, etc., and then decide what to do. You can find out if any alternate plot can be got in exchange and then send a comprehensive written report. Can you suggest any other option with proper justification?

GS IV · 2015 · Ethics Case Studies

Revision summary

The plot is on a fort, far from children, costly, and tied to a predecessor's relative as Sarpanch.

Likely interests are cheap heritage land, contractors, speculators and prestige stones.

Silent waiting on the superior is obedience that hides facts.

Phone advice lacks a trail; consulting the predecessor as guide is compromised.

- **Best path:** recorded inspection, written alert, heritage notice, and a real school site in the village.

Introduction

A school on a fort wall is not a paperwork slip. It looks like a land play using a children's building as cover. My job is to protect students, heritage and the file, not the predecessor's family story.

Body

Stakeholders

- Children who would walk to a fort far from the village, and parents.
- Heritage of Thakurgarh Fort and the public who own it.
- Present Sarpanch and villagers who need a real school.
- Your predecessor, the then Sarpanch (a relative), and possible private speculators on the village-side land.
- Superior officer, chief engineer and senior architect about to visit.
- You as the district head of the department, new to the chair.

(a) Likely vested interests

- **Predecessor and then Sarpanch:** a cheap transfer of fort land that should never have been sold as a "plot", perhaps with a later regularisation or a quiet private use of leftover ground.
- **Speculators on the habitable village-side land:** keep the school away so that residential expansion stays in private hands, or the reverse - use a future "failed school" to unlock fort-adjacent real estate.
- **Contractors:** high development charges on a ruin mean a fat civil work.
- **Local political actors:** a foundation stone on a historic site as prestige, regardless of children.
- **Officers who signed two clearances:** a past favour, a future silence.
- None of this is yet a proved crime. It is enough to stop a naive "all in order" note.

Values

- Children's best interest and **Article 21A (education that is actually reachable)**.
- Heritage protection; a fort is not a vacant lot.
- Integrity, courage, and a speaking file.
- Loyalty to the Constitution, not to a predecessor.

(b) Options given, merits and demerits

- **Option 1:** Await the visit and let the superior decide, saying nothing inconvenient.
- **Merit:** hierarchy; you look obedient; conflict is postponed.
- **Demerit:** you become a host for a possibly illegal inspection; children and heritage stay at risk; you may be treated as having hidden facts you already saw.
- **Option 2:** Seek the superior's advice in writing, or only on the phone.
- **Written advice:** merit is a trail and shared responsibility; demerit is delay if the visit is tomorrow, and a superior who is already committed to the site may dictate a cover-up on letterhead.

- **Phone only:** merit is speed; demerit is no record, easy denial, and you remain alone if the story turns.
- **Option 3:** Consult predecessor and colleagues, then decide.
- **Merit:** colleagues may know alternate land and the architect's silence; institutional memory.
- **Demerit:** the predecessor is a party in interest. Consulting him as a guide is like asking the fox about the coop. Informal chats can become a collusive story.
- **Option 4:** Find whether an alternate plot near the village can be exchanged, then send a comprehensive written report.
- **Merit:** solves the children's distance, flags heritage, puts costs and the missing architect certificate on paper, and offers a way forward rather than only a scandal.
- **Demerit:** exchange takes time and Panchayat politics; a written report may anger the superior before the visit. Still the least bad of the listed paths.

Other option I would add

- **Option 5 (preferred mix):** Immediately record a site inspection note: fort walls, distance, missing architect clearance, heritage risk, predecessor-Sarpanch relation as a fact to be inquired, not as gossip. Inform the superior in writing before the visit, with photographs, and request that the visit become an inquiry into suitability, not a foundation-stone rehearsal. Alert the competent heritage authority (Archaeological Survey of India or State archaeology, as the law of that fort requires) that a school is proposed on ramparts. Start a parallel, transparent search for a village-side site with the current Panchayat, not the old Sarpanch. If a crime appears, send a vigilance note through the proper channel; do not leak a media circus that destroys the school idea itself.
- **Merit:** truth before the VIP party arrives; children and monument both protected; you still offer a school, which is the public purpose.
- **Demerit:** you may be labelled obstructionist; that is cheaper than a collapsed wall or a CAG paragraph with your signature on the old file.

What I would not do

- I would not "regularise" the fort plot to save a visit's face.
- I would not sit on the architect's missing certificate.
- I would not hand the decision to the predecessor as a courtesy.

Flow diagram

Old file two clearances -> Site: fort not village
 Site: fort not village -> Written inspection note
 Written inspection note -> Inform superior before VIP visit
 Written inspection note -> Heritage authority
 Written inspection note -> Village-side alternate plot
 Silent wait -> Complicity

Conclusion

Vested interests likely sit in cheap fort land, village-side speculation, fat civil works and a family link at acquisition. Waiting silently is complicity. Phone advice without a record is weak. The workable path is a written site report, heritage alert, alternate land near children, and a visit that inspects rather than blesses.

Open WRAP page — <https://wrapexams.com/upsc/mains-answers/gs-4/2015/case-study-you-are-heading-a-district-administration-in-a-particular-department-your-senior-officer-calls-you-from-the-state-headquarters-and-tells-you-that-a-plot-in-rampur-village-is-to-have-a-building-constructed-on/>

WRAP Exams

Q12 · 20 marks

Case study. You are recently posted as district development officer of a district. Shortly thereafter you found that there is considerable tension in the rural areas of your district on the issue of sending girls to schools. The elders of the village feel that many problems have come up because girls are being educated and they are stepping out of the safe environment of the household. They are of the view that the girls should be quickly married off with minimum education. The girls are also competing for jobs after education, which have traditionally remained in boys' exclusive domain, adding to unemployment amongst male population. The younger generation feels that in the present era, girls should have equal opportunities for education and employment, and other means of livelihood. The entire locality is divided between the elders and the younger lot and further sub-divided between sexes in both generations. You come to know that in Panchayat or in other local bodies or even in busy crossroads, the issue is being acrimoniously debated. One day you are informed that an unpleasant incident has taken place. Some girls were molested, when they were en route to school. The incident led to clashes between several groups and a law and order problem has arisen. The elders after heated discussion have taken a joint decision not to allow girls to go to school and to socially boycott all such families, which do not follow their dictate. (a) What steps would you take to ensure girls' safety without disrupting their education? (b) How would you manage and mould the patriarchic attitude of the village elders to ensure harmony in the intergenerational relations?

GS IV · 2015 · Ethics Case Studies

Revision summary

Molestation is a crime; a boycott of school-going girls is intimidation, not culture.

Keep schools open; add escorts, lighting, protection and a real FIR, not a compromise panchayat.

Do not cut rations to enforce elders' dictate.

Mould patriarchy with respected local voices, women's separate hearings, and jobs for anxious young men - after justice, not as a swap for it.

Intergenerational peace is shared honour and equal education, not the girl's silence.

Introduction

A molestation is a crime. A boycott of families who send daughters to school is a second crime wearing custom. My duty is safety and **Article 21A** together, not a bargain that trades the girl for a quiet week.

Body

Stakeholders

- Girls who were assaulted and all girls who now fear the road.
- Families under threat of social boycott.
- Village elders, young men and women, and those who want jobs without sharing them.
- Schools, teachers, Panchayat, police, and women's groups.
- You as District Development Officer, with development tools and a duty to call in law and order.

Values and issues

- Right to education and equality (**Articles 14, 15, 21, 21A**).
- Bodily integrity; molestation is not a "social dispute".
- Dignity of the girl child; no peace that silences her.
- Emotional intelligence with elders without surrendering the Constitution to a boycott.

(a) Safety without disrupting education

- **First 48 hours:** criminal case for the molestation, medical care, in-camera statement, protection for witnesses and the girls' homes. Do not hold a "compromise panchayat" that withdraws the FIR.
- **Immediate safe passage:** police or home-guard beat on the school route at opening and closing hours; volunteer parent chains; where needed a temporary vehicle or escort, not a lock on the school gate.
- Keep the school open. Closing it "for peace" rewards the assailants and the boycott.
- Lighting, trimming of isolated stretches, and a staffed room in the school until parents arrive.
- **Protection against boycott:** public distribution and other entitlements must not be cut by a private edict. Tell ration dealers and Panchayat staff that a social boycott enforced through official goods is unlawful. If needed, move supplies through a camp or a neighbouring depot.
- Meet girls and mothers separately from the shouting crossroads, so that fear can be spoken.
- Fast-track the criminal process so that the village does not invent its own punishment of the victims.
- If some men block the road, it is a law-and-order offence, not a debate on culture.

(b) Moulding patriarchal attitude, harmony between generations

- Do not humiliate elders in public on day one; humiliation hardens them. Also do not sit at their feet and trade the girls' attendance for their blessing.
- Separate the assault from the employment fear. Jobs for women are not the cause of molestation; crime is.
- Use respected local voices who already educate daughters - a retired teacher, a woman sarpanch from a nearby panchayat, a faith leader who will quote dignity rather than seclusion.
- **Show numbers:** schemes, scholarships, and examples of local women who study without "ruining" the village. Fear of male unemployment is a real anxiety; answer it with skills and work

for youth, not with pulling girls out of class.

- **Gram sabha after the crime is charged, not instead of the charge:** a facilitated dialogue on safety, with women speaking, and a written village pledge that boycott is illegal.
- **Long term:** girls' toilets, female teachers, secondary school within reach, and **Beti Bachao Beti Padhao**-type mobilisation that is local, not only a banner.
- Intergenerational harmony is not silence of the young. It is elders keeping honour, and youth keeping rights, in the same street. Honour that needs an uneducated daughter is not honour.

Options I reject

- **Option:** close school until tempers cool.
- **Merit:** fewer clashes this week.
- **Demerit:** the Constitution loses; the molester learns the method.
- **Option:** only lectures on patriarchy without a charge-sheet.
- **Merit:** looks modern.
- **Demerit:** girls remain unsafe; elders call it insult.

What I should do as DDO

- Coordinate with the District Magistrate and Superintendent of Police; development officers do not run a crime scene alone.
- Fund the escort, lights and toilets from district schemes at once.
- Put the boycott on record as a threat to civil rights; use relevant penal provisions against criminal intimidation and against those who enforce a blockade of school-going children.

Flow diagram

Molestation -> FIR care protection care protection
 FIR care protection -> School stays open with escort
 Social boycott -> Stop blockade of entitlements
 Elders fear -> Dialogue after charge not instead
 Dialogue after charge not instead -> Youth skills without pulling girls out

Conclusion

Safety is a criminal investigation plus a guarded road, not a closed school. Patriarchal fear is answered with dialogue, female leadership and youth jobs, after the assault is treated as a crime. Harmony that needs a girl at home is not harmony.

Open WRAP page — <https://wrapexams.com/upsc/mains-answers/gs-4/2015/case-study-you-are-recently-posted-as-district-development-officer-of-a-district-shortly-thereafter-you-found-that-there-is-considerable-tension-in-the-rural-areas-of-your-district-on-the-issue-of-sending-girls-to/>

Q13 · 20 marks

Case study. A private company is known for its efficiency, transparency, and employee welfare. The company though owned by a private individual has a cooperative character where employees feel a sense of ownership. The company employs nearly 700 personnel and they have voluntarily decided not to form a union. One day suddenly in the morning, about 40 men belonging to a political party gatecrashed into the factory demanding jobs in the factory. They threatened the management and employees and also used foul language. The employees feel demoralized. It was clear that those people who gate-crashed wanted to be on the payroll of the company as well as continue as the volunteers/members of the party. The company maintains high standards in integrity and does not extend favors to civil administration that also includes law enforcement agencies. Such incidents occur in the public sector also. (a) Assume you are the CEO of the company. What would you do to diffuse the volatile situation on the date of gate-crashing with the violent mob sitting inside the company premises? (b) What could be the long-term solution to the issue discussed in the case? (c) Every solution/action that you suggest will have a positive and a negative impact on you (as CEO), the employees, and the performance of the employees. Analyze the consequences of each of your suggested actions.

GS IV · 2015 · Ethics Case Studies

Revision summary

Forty party men occupying a factory is extortion, not job counselling.

Diffuse the day with lockdown, a recorded demand for police, and talks only after they leave the floor - no panic appointments.

- **Long term:** transparent recruitment, lawful protection without bribing administration, and a completed trespass case.

Paying or hiring the mob demoralises 700 employees and wrecks performance.

A worker counter-attack risks blood and cases; it is not a strategy.

Introduction

A factory that refused to buy the police is now hosting a mob that wants a salary and a party card together. My first duty is the safety of 700 people inside. My second is not to purchase a permanent occupation of the rolls.

Body

Stakeholders

- Employees who feel demoralised and threatened.
- The 40 gatecrashers and the political party behind them.
- You as CEO, owners, and lawful job-seekers outside.
- Law enforcement, which this firm has not cultivated with favours.
- The public interest in a factory that pays taxes and does not become a party camp.

Values

- Rule of law, safety, dignity of workers, and refusal of extortion.
- Courage without a macho clash that gets someone killed today.
- Fair recruitment later, not a panic hire of a militia.

(a) Diffusing the day

- Do not start a physical fight with 40 men. Lock down inner production if needed, keep women and vulnerable staff away from the gate, and give one calm public instruction: we will talk, we will not be beaten into a roster.
- Call the police in writing and by phone, on speaker with a witness, recording the time. The firm's past refusal of favours does not cancel the State's duty to remove a trespass. If the local station delays, escalate to the Superintendent of Police and the District Magistrate with a written request for protection of life and property.
- **Offer a single meeting in a visible room:** two managers, no signing of appointment letters under threat, water, and a statement that jobs follow advertised process.
- Ask the group to leave the shop floor; talking continues only after the illegal occupation ends. If they refuse, that fact goes in the police complaint.
- Do not distribute cash, "token jobs", or a promise that they can remain party workers on the payroll. That is the demand; paying it today trains the next 40.
- Inform staff in one honest line so that rumours do not start a stampede or a counter-mob.
- Medical aid on stand-by; no hero speeches from the gate.

(b) Long-term solution

- **Institutionalise lawful recruitment:** public notice, criteria, local employment where skill fits, and a record that can be shown to any party.
- **Seek a standing, professional relationship with administration that is clean:** courtesy, compliance, and insistence on equal protection, not envelopes.
- **Worker voice without a captured union:** grievance committees, and if workers later choose a union, deal with it under labour law rather than pretending 700 people have no interests.
- **Legal follow-through:** trespass, intimidation, and, if facts support, unlawful assembly. A withdrawn complaint after a "settlement" invites a sequel.
- **Industry association and State:** ask for a published protocol on political occupation of workplaces.
- Physical security that is defensive, not a private army.

(c) Consequences of actions

- **Action:** immediate police help and refusal to hire under threat.
- **On CEO:** risk of political anger and a delayed rescue if the station is captured; also the only path that keeps the chair honest.
- **On employees:** fear during the wait; then restored dignity if the mob leaves. If police never come, morale falls further - which is why escalation must be real.

- **On performance:** a lost shift today; a saved firm tomorrow. Paying the mob would raise absenteeism of honest workers and destroy productivity through fear.
- **Action:** hire some of the 40 to "calm the day".
- **On CEO:** short peace, long blackmail, possible illegal appointment.
- **On employees:** demoralisation, two classes of staff, pressure to join the party.
- **On performance:** a politicised shop floor, quality fall, and likely a union of the wrong kind - a party cell.
- **Action:** pay cash to leave.
- **On CEO:** cheap today, endless tomorrow.
- **On employees:** shame; some may leave.
- **On performance:** the factory becomes a toll booth.
- **Action:** vigilante eviction by workers.
- **On CEO:** criminal liability if someone dies.
- **On employees:** injury and later cases.
- **On performance:** a war, not a plant.
- **Action:** long-term clean recruitment plus persistent lawful protection.
- **Cost:** time and some political noise.
- **Gain:** the cooperative character that the stem praised can survive.

Flow diagram

Gatecrash for jobs -> Staff safety lockdown
 Staff safety lockdown -> Recorded call to police and DM
 Recorded call to police and DM -> Talk after occupation ends
 Hire under threat -> Permanent blackmail
 Pay to leave -> Factory as toll

Conclusion

- **Today:** protect people, call the State on record, talk only after occupation ends, hire nobody under a stick. Long term: fair jobs, clean insistence on police duty, and a complaint that is not withdrawn. Buying the mob would end the firm's integrity faster than a lost shift.

Open WRAP page — <https://wrapexams.com/upsc/mains-answers/gs-4/2015/case-study-a-private-company-is-known-for-its-efficiency-transparency-and-employee-welfare-the-company-though-owned-by-a-private-individual-has-a-cooperative-character-where-employees-feel-a-sense-of-ownership-the/>

Q14 · 20 marks

Case study. You are the Sarpanch of a Panchayat. There is a primary school run by the government in your area. Midday meals are provided to the children attending the school. The Headmaster has now appointed a new cook in the school to prepare the meals. However, when it is found that the cook is from the Dalit community, almost half of the children belonging to higher castes are not allowed to take meals by their parents. Consequently, the attendance in the school falls sharply. This could result in the possibility of discontinuation of midday meal scheme, thereafter of teaching staff and subsequent closing down the school. (a) Discuss some feasible strategies to overcome the conflict and to create the right ambiance. (b) What should be the responsibilities of different social segments and agencies to create a positive social ambiance for accepting such changes?

GS IV · 2015 · Ethics Case Studies

Revision summary

Parents pulling children from a Dalit-cooked midday meal is caste practice, not a hygiene footnote.

Do not sack the cook or open a second kitchen; keep the meal running and eat it in public.

Mobilise same-community peers, teachers and the department so attendance rules do not kill the scheme.

Article 17 and the atrocities law back dignity; use them with facts.

Every group - parents, elders, teachers, Panchayat, district - has a duty to keep the school open as one republic at lunch.

Introduction

A child's plate has been turned into a caste test. If the school dies, the poorest child loses food and letters together. As Sarpanch I will not restore attendance by sacking a Dalit cook to please a prejudice.

Body

Stakeholders

- Children who still eat, children who are kept away, and the Dalit cook whose dignity is on the line.
- Higher-caste parents, Dalit families, teachers and the Headmaster.
- The midday meal scheme, which is a legal nutrition right, not a club lunch.
- You as Sarpanch, the Panchayat, revenue and education officers, and community elders.

Values

- Equality (**Articles 14, 15, 17**). Untouchability is abolished; a plate is not a temple from which a cook can be cast out.

- Right to food and education of every child.
- **Courage with persuasion:** a sarpanch who only lectures will lose the school; one who only surrenders will lose the Constitution.

(a) Feasible strategies

- Keep the cook. Removing her is the one strategy that looks easy and teaches caste that it still owns the kitchen.
- Keep the kitchen open every day. A closed meal is a victory for the boycott.
- **Immediate:** visit homes with a teacher, an ANM, and a respected person from the same caste groups that are boycotting, not as a beggar but as the head of the village: the meal is the State's, the cook is qualified, the child who stays home loses food and school.
- **Eat in public:** Sarpanch, Headmaster and willing parents take the same meal, same line, photographed only if it helps and does not humiliate the cook as an exhibit.
- **Separate the nutrition science from the prejudice:** the menu is the same; caste does not live in the grain.
- If some parents still refuse, do not starve the children who come. Do not run a "two-kitchen" solution that re-creates untouchability in stainless steel.
- Involve the education department and the midday meal authority so that attendance rules are not used mechanically to kill the scheme while a caste boycott is on. Ask for a recorded exception and extra mobilisation days.
- If there is incitement to boycott a public scheme, treat it as a rights issue; the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989 may apply where humiliation of a Dalit cook is caste-based. Use it with evidence, not as a first shout that empties the village.
- Children's clubs, baal sabhas, and a mothers' committee that includes Dalit mothers, with rotating tasting - dignity as routine, not as a one-day drama.
- If a rumour of hygiene is the mask, do a real, public hygiene audit and fix any true gap, without accepting caste as a proxy for cleanliness.

(b) Responsibilities of segments and agencies

- **Higher-caste parents:** send the child; prejudice is not a parental right over a public plate.
- **Dalit families:** they should not have to plead; the village owes the cook protection from insult.
- **Elders and faith leaders:** if they bless a boycott they own the school's death; they must say that a shared meal is not pollution.
- **Teachers:** eat the meal, stop coded remarks, and teach **Article 17** as a living rule.
- **Panchayat and Sarpanch:** budget, lighting, water in the kitchen, and a spine.
- **School management committee:** minutes that name the boycott as the cause of absence, so that a distant official does not blame the cook.
- **District education and food departments:** do not withdraw the scheme for a caste-created attendance dip without a field inquiry; support the sarpanch.
- **Police and revenue:** only if intimidation is organised; a heavy lathi on day one can freeze positions, but a documented threat cannot be ignored.
- **Media and NGOs:** amplify the child's right, not a caste war as entertainment.
- **The State:** midday meal is an entitlement under national policy and Supreme Court directions in the PUCL right-to-food line; local caste custom is not a permitted exemption.

Options I reject

- Sack the cook or hide her behind a "helper" from a "accepted" caste.

- Run parallel plates.
- Wait silently for the school to close and blame "social realities".

Flow diagram

Caste boycott of meal -> Keep cook and kitchen
Keep cook and kitchen -> Public shared meal
Keep cook and kitchen -> Home visits with peers
Two kitchens -> Recreates untouchability
Sack Dalit cook -> Caste wins the school

Conclusion

The conflict ends when the Dalit cook stays, the kitchen stays, and parents who boycott are pressed by peers, teachers and the scheme's officers. Every segment has a duty; none has a right to close a school to keep a plate "pure".

Open WRAP page — <https://wrapexams.com/upsc/mains-answers/gs-4/2015/case-study-you-are-the-sarpanch-of-a-panchayat-there-is-a-primary-school-run-by-the-government-in-your-area-midday-meals-are-provided-to-the-children-attending-the-school-the-headmaster-has-now-appointed-a-new-cook-in/>

Compiled answer key

Last pages of this pack. Each question links to the WRAP model answer on wrapexams.com.

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Q1 12 marks	Q2 12 marks	Q3 12 marks	Q4 12 marks
Q5 12 marks	Q6 12 marks	Q7 12 marks	Q8 12 marks
Q9 20 marks	Q10 20 marks	Q11 20 marks	Q12 20 marks
Q13 20 marks	Q14 20 marks		

Question-wise key

Q1 · 12 marks Solution

Q2 · 12 marks Solution

Q3 · 12 marks Solution

Q4 · 12 marks Solution

Q5 · 12 marks Solution

Q6 · 12 marks Solution

Q7 · 12 marks Solution

Q8 · 12 marks Solution

Q9 · 20 marks Solution

Q10 · 20 marks Solution

Q11 · 20 marks Solution

Q12 · 20 marks Solution

Q13 · 20 marks Solution

Q14 · 20 marks Solution

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