

General Studies : Paper – IV

Model Answers

Section – A

Q1. (a) “Small acts of kindness are subtle and usually go unnoticed but they are the most clear signs of an ethical human personality.” What are the ethical consequences of such small acts of kindness in our daily lives? (Answer in 150 words)

10

Ans: Small acts of kindness are simple, moral gestures in our daily lives, done to help or bring joy to others without any expectations.

Ethical consequences of such small acts of kindness:

- Small acts of kindness are based on **self-less altruism similar to Nishkama Karma**. They lead to empathy and moral development of self and others.
 - E.g. Offering one's seat in a bus or train to an elderly.
- These acts **reinforce community relations and promote social bonding** maximising overall happiness (**utilitarianism**)
 - E.g. helping a disabled person cross the road etc.
- Small acts of kindness also **inspire others to act kindly**. People are influenced by social conditioning.
- It leads to an increase **in happiness, better mental health, and purpose** in life.
 - E.g. Helping underprivileged children in their studies with free tuition.
- It also **builds upon the emotional intelligence** of an individual by better understanding and responding to the emotions of others.
 - E.g. checking on the health of an unwell neighbour.
- Small acts of kindness can **quietly challenge social barriers** of gender, class, caste or religious divisions.
- Such acts could **restore dignity and offer hope** to those in distress.
 - E.g. listening patiently to a victim of domestic violence.

Small acts of kindness not only promote moral upliftment but also result in a more inclusive and cohesive society.

UPSC

Q1. (b) “The initial bonds in the family based on love, care and cooperation experienced during childhood prove crucial in the development of the value of service in the later stages of life.” Examine the statement with relevant examples. (Answer in 150 words) 10

Ans: Initial bonds in the family build a foundation of trust, security and attachment that shapes the value system of an individual later.

Initial bonds in the family leading to the development of the value of service:

- Children receive their parent’s love and care and grow lifelong relations. They **reciprocate with service** in the latter stages of life.
 - Ex- Children closer to parents tend to be more responsible towards them in future.
- Children experience **ethical bonds at home** such as parents caring for elders, **helping** neighbours or preparing food for guests.
 - Transforms into value of service by **internalised behaviour**.
- Loving families **lead to more emotionally stable** children. They naturally **develop** the tendency of service towards others **recognising their emotional needs**.
 - Ex- A child assisted in need will more likely volunteer time for the **community** in the future.
- Families **instill the idea of giving and sharing**.
 - This value of **generosity transforms into a larger attitude of service towards** the society later.
- Strong **bonds among siblings** lead to enhanced understanding and sharing **of feelings**.
 - It evolves into the idea of relieving others’ pain through service.
 - Ex- caring for an injured sibling.
- Initial bonds teach children that **responsibilities towards each other in the family extends to the society**, to be practiced through service.
 - Ex- serving as a cleanliness volunteer in future.
- In close families, love and care is expressed through **spending more time together** with stories, telling of epics, scriptures, etc.
 - Children mature to take up acts of service in the later stages of life as a moral duty.

Early family bonds form the basis of growth of service as a value in maturing children who have retained the family values in their lives.

UPSC

Q2. (a) There can be two broad models of international relations, one that is based upon partnership and shared growth and the another based upon isolation and national self-interests. What ethical considerations could motivate to choose either of the approaches? Explain. (Answer in 150 words) 10

Ans: International relations broadly involves two major approaches. They are **Liberalism**, which promotes cooperation and **Realism**, which cares for national interests.

Ethical considerations that could motivate to choose partnership and shared growth:

- Respect for values like **sovereignty and equality** of nations irrespective of their size or power.
 - Ex- India's Panchsheel principles.
- **Peaceful resolution of conflicts** and adopting the **attitude of negotiations** rather than aggression.
 - Ex- The principle of Ahimsa in Jainism.
- **Respect towards international laws and treaties** with a commitment to justice and fairness.
 - Ex- Ratifying and joining legally binding international treaties.
- Ensuring **sustainable development through collective action and cooperation** as problems have become global in nature.
 - Ex- collaboration over environmental efforts in Amazon forest.

Ethical considerations that could motivate to choose isolation and national self-interests:

- **Protecting one's sovereignty** from powerful nations e.g. in the case of the **isolationist** attitude of North Korea.
- Need for **prioritising citizens' interest** as they have the first claim over national resources.
 - Ex- US' America First policy under President Trump.
- **Preservation of national identity and heritage** from cultural hegemony of other powerful countries.
 - Ex- Iran promoting its national interest adopting a cautious approach **towards** the West.
- **Moral obligation** towards national welfare before assisting others.
 - Ex- border controls, immigration checks etc.
- Pursuing isolation and national interests also **helps in maintaining a neutral attitude** and acting without bias.

There can be ethical justifications for both approaches to international relations. Nations must have clear priorities and commitment towards values to achieve a balance between both models.

UPSC

Q2. (b) “The rapidly growing web of e-commerce has penetrated deep into our daily lives transforming the market relations and consumer attitude.” Discuss from an ethical point of view the key changes e-commerce has brought in this context. (Answer in 150 words) 10

Ans: India is witnessing a rapid growth of e-commerce with an average annual growth rate of about 20%. E-commerce has penetrated deeper with expansion in tier-II and tier-III cities and instant delivery apps.

Key changes e-commerce has brought in context of market relations and consumer attitude:

Market relations

- There are **ethical concerns like exploitation** of delivery workers, warehouse staff etc.
 - Instant delivery apps have **increased stress levels** of delivery agents.
- Frequent **allegations of lack of fair competition and equal playing field** among established companies and new entrants.
 - Ex- anti-competitive lawsuits against Amazon.
- **Misleading ads, hidden costs and fake reviews** are considered as unethical practices.
 - There is a significant demand for **transparency and fair pricing**.
- **Increased concern for cultural and environmental sensitivity** in marketing and product listing.

Consumer attitude

- Tendency of **instant gratification and lack of human emotional connection** in economic transactions.
 - Ex- Delivery agents seen as supply robots.
- Consumer **laziness, dependency, unorganised life and over-consumption** are byproducts of rapid growing e-commerce.
- **Absence of long-term actual relationship** between customer and goods or service providers; customer **loyalty** constantly shifting.
 - Ex- Individual customer relations part of the local physical economy.
- Increased consumer **awareness** regarding **ethical sourcing** of products and **environmental** ethics.
- Consumers have become more concerned about **data privacy and security**.
 - Ex- more preference for secure apps or sites.

Rapidly growing e-commerce requires companies to be ethical by the practice of fairness and authenticity. Customers need to be more responsible and empathetic towards the involved workers.

UPSC

Q3. Given below are three quotations of great thinkers. What do each of these quotations convey to you in the present context?

(a) “If you cry because the sun has gone out of your life, your tears will prevent you from seeing the stars.” - Rabindranath Tagore (Answer in 150 words)

10

Ans: Optimism is the quality of looking upon the brighter side of things in the middle of challenges in life and expecting positive outcomes. Tagore is highlighting the importance of optimism in this quote.

Message this quotation convey to me in the present context:

- Holding on to a loss **can deny us the new possibilities** waiting to be discovered.
 - Looking forward to **uncovering hidden paths** and opportunities.
 - E.g. in case of losing a job opportunity, failure in an exam etc.
- Life is **full of ups and downs**. Challenging times can open doors to chances we might not have noticed otherwise.
- **Not all light comes from the same source**. If one is lost, we shouldn't panic and should look towards the other different facets of life.
 - E.g. loss of a loved one, breakdown of a partnership etc.
- We should wipe away our tears to **gather hope, resilience, and inspiration, instead** of being stuck in sadness.
 - E.g. collective hope displayed during COVID-19 pandemic.
- We should **feel the loss, but don't allow it to consume us**. Life doesn't stop **anywhere**, it keeps moving.
 - To prevent mental agony, depression and attain good mental health which has become crucial in the present times.
- Letting go of what we can't change would allow us to **develop alternate perspectives** towards life making it richer and more holistic.
 - E.g. Adopting a comprehensive view is essential for hope in the present times.
- Staying stuck is a reflection of our **ego which prevents future growth** in life.
 - E.g. The ego to not accept loss in a failed project would weaken other goals .

The quote conveys that beyond the tears of sorrow lies the other blessings of life which we must not miss for a cheerful existence.

UPSC

Q3. (b) “There is a higher court than courts of justice and that is the court of conscience. It supercedes all other courts.” - Mahatma Gandhi (Answer in 150 words) 10

Ans: Conscience is our inner moral compass, the most fundamental agency of ethical judgement which guides and evaluates our actions.

Message this quotation convey to me in the present context:

- The **inner moral judge is the highest authority** compared to the legal courts.
 - We must obey our conscience irrespective of the external situation.
- Courts of justice have **strict legal boundaries**; laws can be imperfect or outdated.
 - Conscience directly deals with the moral situation **without the limitations of law**.
 - Ex- absence of law on data protection shouldn't be misused by companies.
- At times, the **conscience requires to go beyond law** to demand and secure greater justice.
 - Ex- peaceful protests tend to break laws but serve a higher moral purpose.
- There should be **personal accountability to our actions** even when no one is looking.
 - Ex- following traffic rules even if no one is watching.
- In the present times, **modern life is full of moral dilemmas** involving technology, public and private ethics, social responsibilities etc.
 - When laws are silent or unclear, conscience becomes our guide.
 - Ex- our conduct on social media must be guided by conscience.
- We **cannot escape the court of conscience**; it doesn't rely on judges or lawyers.
 - Ex- one can get rid of legal courts but not of moral guilt such as in cases of environmental pollution.
- At times laws can also be unfair and biased and judges act accordingly.
 - This doesn't make such actions moral as they fall short of conscience.
 - Ex- the process of inquiry of conduct of judges themselves involve bias in their favour.
- If we act more according to our conscience, there would be **less requirements of courts of law**.
 - Ex- important for building an ethical society in the present context.
- **Listening to conscience can unite communities** when legal systems fail to bring people together.
 - Ex- breakdown of state machinery after ethnic conflicts.

Conscience is the highest court of justice as moral perception begins inside us. It is more important in the present times as ethical questions are becoming more complex and laws have their limitations.

UPSC

Q3. (c) “Absolute identity with one’s cause is the first and great condition of successful leadership.” - Woodrow Wilson (Answer in 150 words) 10

Ans: Leadership is the quality which enables larger vision, the value to stay firm on one’s own path and the ability to guide and inspire people through challenges and opportunities.

Message this quotation convey to me in the present context:

- Absolute identity with cause **reflects total commitment and passion** towards the purpose.
 - Attracts people towards the leader and maintain their faith in him/her.
 - Ex- Greta Thunberg emerged as a global voice for environment protection.
- Total identity with the cause **inspires others** to take up the cause which is **essential to build a movement**.
 - Ex- Kailash Satyarthi inspired many for the cause of child rights.
- Challenges and setbacks are part of life. Identity with cause **gives hope and resilience** to fight back.
 - It leads to earning respect of others and acting as a role model, both crucial for leadership.
- Actions and decisions become **clear and consistent** as there is unity with the cause.
 - Ex- People follow leaders more who are consistent in actions as it builds trust.
- It gives the **capacity to serve collective interest** and not just personal selfish goals.
 - In the present times, corruption, nexus are the greatest challenges to genuine leadership.
- Identity with cause **gives courage which motivates others**. Leaders during war and conflicts earn respect for living up to the cause of nation’s security and pride.
 - E.g. Volodymyr Zelenskyy, the President of Ukraine.
- A leader’s deep connection with the cause **unites people giving them a common goal** to work for.
 - They also tend to have similar attachment to the purpose e.g. dreaming big and nation building as emphasised by Dr. Kalam.
- In present times, leadership **shouldn’t only stress on performance** at any cost but having the **substance to create meaningful changes**.
 - This comes with absolute identity with the cause.

Leadership requires giving one’s heart and soul for a cause. It forms the basis of an **enduring** and successful leadership.

UPSC

Q4. (a) “A civil servant is not the owner but the handler of the keys of administration. This notion can strengthen foundational values and develop the required attitude for civil services.” Examine the above statement with suitable examples. (Answer in 150 words) 10

Ans: Civil services places public authority and resources in the hands of an **administrator** not as its owner but a trustee of people’s faith. This approach naturally involves the attitude essential for public life.

This notion can strengthen foundational values and develop the required attitude:

- Development of the **value of service**, viewing administration as a duty to uplift society.
- Reinforcement of foundational values like **integrity and fairness**, which guides civil servants to make **non-partisan decisions** and develop an **objective attitude**.
 - Ex- fair allocation of resources to beneficiaries.
- Builds **accessibility and trust** and reduces the gap between public and the **government**.
 - Ex- regular interactions and meeting with the public.
- Civil servants as **caretakers**, not owners, of administrative authority, hence they should **use power responsibly**.
 - Ex- handling protestors with empathy and within law.
- This notion brings the **attitude of being accountable** to the public.
 - Decisions of civil servants must be in accordance with justice and **transparency**.
- If civil servants see themselves as owners, they **may become arrogant, rigid or even corrupt**.
 - A humble and flexible attitude is key for public engagement and **participation**.
- Develops the **attitude of being change-makers** instead of becoming gatekeepers.
 - Innovation, risk-taking attitude builds efficiency and drives growth.
 - Ex- crowdfunding for a public road by an IAS in Manipur.
- When civil servants understand their position as a part of a larger democratic system, they are **more respectful** towards laws, public opinion and political **leadership**.

Civil servants must act as humble custodians of public office. This attitude not only strengthens governance but overall public faith in democracy.

UPSC

Q4. (b) “Different sets of norms for oneself and others cannot build a positive work environment. Equality in norms is the first step towards equality at the workplace.” Examine the above statement with suitable illustrations. (Answer in 150 words) 10

Ans: Norms are informal, unwritten rules of social behaviour expected from members of a group or society in general.

Equality of norms, positive work environment and equality at workplace:

- Gender, caste or religion based biases disturb the work environment.
 - **Consistent norms for all** create an inclusive workspace.
 - E.g. equal treatment of all religions.
- Everyone subjected to equal norms **promotes a feeling of respect and dignity** which increases productivity.
 - E.g. equal overtime norms for workers and management.
- **Increases morale and satisfaction** of employees as they don't get jealous of each other or harbour ill-will.
 - E.g. norms for offline participation on a rotation basis.
- Promotion norms **should consider both seniority and merit**. It would lead to equal opportunities at the workplace creating positive competition.
- Equal norms for oneself and others lays down the **foundation of teamwork and mutual trust**.
 - Dispels the environment of rigid hierarchy.
 - E.g. similar leave policies for everyone.
- **Norms get down from the top level across the workplace** developing a positive environment.
 - Leadership by example such as Dr. Kalam is known as the People's **President**.
 - Made Rashtrapati Bhavan more accessible to the public.
- The same set of norms **restrict workplace bullying or harassment** by codifying expectations.
 - Companies like TCS have detailed code of conducts.
- Employees feel equally **inspired and valued** due to the same set of norms which builds cohesion and long-term loyalty.

Equal norms builds an inclusive and progressive workplace where employees can grow together with equal opportunities and common goals.

UPSC

Q5. (a) Corruption arises when the larger purposes of life are taken over by small pleasures of being. The root solution of corruption would be achieved through moral force as compared to sole reliance on legal force. Suggest measures to continuously orient the civil servants towards the higher objectives of the civil service. (Answer in 150 words) 10

Ans: Corruption is the abuse of entrusted power for individual, personal benefits. It primarily stems through a weak moral compass which can't be reset only legally.

Measures to continuously orient civil servants towards higher objectives of civil service:

- **Regular training at various stages of career**, starting from induction, to develop the notion of public welfare.
 - E.g. mid-career ethical training module highlighting ethical best practices.
- **Periodic workshops, particularly in remote areas, to keep them connected** with problems of the public and develop empathetic solutions.
 - Can include **refresher courses** in such workshops of **community engagement**.
- **Mentorship by linking new officers with seniors** for constant orientation and ethical guidance for higher purposes of **service with integrity**.
- **Encouraging the tendency of self-reflection** by writing articles, essays, peer discussions, podcasts to emphasise higher purposes of civil services beyond **immediate** glamour.
- **Regular interactions with selfless activists, grassroots workers** and also seeking their support in policy formulation and implementation.
- Incentivising ethical conduct with **awards, departmental citations and public appreciation**.
- Providing a strong **support mechanism to report and resolve conflict of interests**, expose wrongdoings e.g. Whistleblower protections etc.
 - These would act as institutional systems for moral reinforcement.
- Creating **clear standard operating procedures (SOPs)** to foster accountability and public trust.

Focused moral training with practical ethical exposures would lead civil servants to retain the higher purposes of service in the long-term.

UPSC

Q5. (b) “Public Services Guarantee Acts ensure the actual delivery of commitments made by the government as well as underscore citizens’ entitlement to services.” How do these legislations empower the citizens? Discuss from an ethical point of view. (Answer in 150 words) 10

Ans: Public Services Guarantee Acts are legislations to ensure timely delivery of **government** services to citizens not as a favour but as fulfillment of their rights.

Empowerment of citizens by these legislations:

- Underscores the **Constitutional entitlement of citizens** departing from **bureaucratic patronage** in delivery of services.
 - Develops **dignity, equality** and rejects **arbitrary authority** of officials.
- These laws introduce **transparency** as well as **accountability**. They **protect citizens from corrupt demands** to provide government services.
 - E.g. prevents corruption in issuance of ration cards as under Punjab Right to Service Act, 2011.
- Ends the harassing exercise of **running from pillar-to-post** for access to services.
 - From **door step delivery** to **one stop centres or kiosks**, these acts take away the burden from citizens putting it on the officials.
- With **gain in self-confidence**, citizens hold officials **answerable** to their actions, thus, **increasing citizen oversight and ownership** of governance.
 - E.g. provision of social audit of performance of Acts involving civil society.
- The marginalised sections face greater difficulty in access to services.
 - Public Service Guarantee Acts work as a **tool of social justice and empowerment** by equalising the process for all sections of society.
- They encourage **demands among citizens for further ethical reforms in administration** to improve their lives.
 - The idea of **citizen-driven governance** can be realised.
 - E.g. Nationwide movement for Lokpal in light of popular RTI, RTE Acts etc.
- They also have a moral influence on citizens **promoting cooperation, volunteerism and seeking justice** not only for oneself but others also.
 - E.g. Civic protests on denial of services to others create community bonds.

Public Service Guarantee Acts provide tools to citizens to assert their claim to the **governance** process and be an integral part of it rather than being passive beneficiaries.

UPSC

Q6. (a) “The practice of bringing domain experts into the government is based on the rationale to bring in fresh ideas, talents, and diverse experiences into civil services. But such attempts in the recent past in India have generated much controversy.” Discuss the statement in light of principles that form the philosophical basis of governance. (Answer in 150 words) 10

Ans: Lateral entry to civil services are based on the premise to infuse talent and new **ideas** in bureaucracy with increasing complexity and interlinked domains, **requiring** specialised expertise.

The issue of lateral entry in light of philosophical basis of governance:

- Lateral entry **creates new opportunities** but must be balanced with the **principle of fairness**.
 - **John Rawls’ idea of justice** and **veil of ignorance** should be applied.
- Governance is based on **public trust and accountability**.
 - Domain experts mostly from private sectors face the **conflict of interest situation** when posted in government positions.
 - E.g. A private sector defence expert posted as a joint secretary in the Ministry of Defence.
- Innovation and diverse experience is essential for a rapidly changing world but **diversity of representation** can only ensure an **inclusive** civil service.
 - Absence of reservation provisions for marginalised sections raises **controversy**.
- Specialised expertise must be brought in but the fundamental principle of **legitimacy of appointments** shouldn’t be missed.
 - **Political favouritism** in shortlisting of candidates takes away the legitimacy of such actions.
- Appointment of domain experts should bring **meritocracy** but it shouldn’t change the character of civil services as **elitist**.
 - The philosophy of governance in a democracy rests on **participation** and **bottom-up decentralisation**.
- The government has to fulfill the commitment of **social welfare** through its actions which includes recruitments and appointments.
 - Public positions are a tool of welfare and empowerment.

UPSC

- E.g. increase in social status of an individual.
- **Camaraderie, cohesion and cooperation** among officers is the key to **performance** of civil services.
 - Inclusion of outside experts raises concerns and mistrust among officers.
- **Efficiency** is sought to be introduced through lateral entry but a **constitutional perspective** is the foundation of civil services.
 - Proposals and actions must comply with laid provisions and couldn't be **neglected**.

Inducting domain experts is the need of the rapidly changing governance scenario, but the principles of inclusivity, welfare, representation, constitutionalism etc must be integrated in such appointments.

UPSC

Q6. (b) Respect and care for elderly is integral to Indian culture and ethos. Though there is an increasing trend of admitting parents to old-age homes particularly among well-off sections of the society. Discuss this trend in light of changing value systems and social realities. (Answer in 150 words) 10

Ans: Indian culture and ethos have a deep respect for life lived through ages and the wisdom and value developed in that journey. Moreover, parents are considered earthly manifestations of God.

Increasing trend of sending parents to old-age homes:

- Joint families have become rare particularly among urban well-off sections, due to **migration** and increasing notion of **privacy**.
 - Caring parents is considered as a joint and not individual duty so old-age homes are preferred.
- Increasing demand for separate living spaces with values like **comfort and luxury**.
 - In these limited living spaces, elderly get sidelined.
- There is a lack of time for proper care and attention in dual-income households. **Career success** has gained precedence over **familial duties**.
 - An old-age home comes as an option for those who can afford it.
- India's elderly population is projected to reach 20% by 2050 with **increased risk of social isolation, chronic illness and lack of adequate geriatric care** facilities.
 - Well to do individuals, particularly those shifted abroad, consider old-age homes as a one-stop solution to these problems.
- A **professional transactional attitude towards relations** has emerged with growing dominance of the market in social mindset and behaviour.
 - The role of parental relation being reduced to a service provider is also seen in the case of children.
- Changing social values look upon **youth as an opportunity and prospect** and treat **elderly as a liability**.
 - This leads to neglect and indifference towards them, with old-age homes as the final destination.
- Empathy and compassion are the victims in a **society running behind material pleasure**.

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- The real pleasures of life with strong family bonds are missed, leading to parents being cruelly left behind in public places.
 - End-up in old-age homes with intervention of NGOs, government agencies etc.
- At times, **generational shift in lifestyles, priorities and values** makes home an incompatible space for different generations with rise in conflicts and soured **relations**.
 - An old-age home seems to be a compromise where resources for care are **assured** without the emotional connect of relations.

This trend particularly among well-off should be seen in the light of practical complexities of changing family structure, urbanisation, longer life span as well as decline in family values and worth of relations.

UPSC

Section – B

Q7. (a) Divya is a young IAS officer recently posted as a District Magistrate in a rural district. She had earned a reputation of getting projects completed on time in a short span of career in civil services. The state government has identified four villages in that district as the location for a flagship solar farm project to be developed by a well-known private company. The project requires acquiring 2,500 acres of productive agricultural land which will displace hundreds of farming families, most of them being small and marginal growers. It will also indirectly affect others as the district supports a vibrant local economy of landless labourers, small traders and agricultural input suppliers.

On the other hand, the solar park will generate hundreds of MW of clean energy providing much needed electricity to the energy deficient state. It also has the potential to stabilise the district's erratic electricity supply as it currently faces frequent outages. The project has the potential to create thousands of direct and indirect jobs such as solar panel technicians, maintenance staff, security personnel, logistics and supply chain roles etc. Additionally, the company has committed to corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives, including establishing a skills centre, upgradation of local schools, installing solar-powered irrigation systems etc.

However, the project has sparked widespread protests from farmers, who fear loss of their ancestral land, unfair acquisition process, inadequate compensation and uncertain future livelihoods. Their concern got credence in a recent meeting between villagers, company representatives and government officials where they had to face highhanded behaviour from the authorities. Those leading the protests were called out and threatened with severe consequences in presence of government officials. Incidents of the meeting went viral online and also widely reported in the media which received backlash from various quarters and intensified the protests. Farmer organisations, environmental activists and local citizens, while supportive of clean energy, criticize the choice of fertile land over degraded or non-agricultural alternatives. Meanwhile, Divya is facing pressure to expedite the entire process as the Chief Minister is personally monitoring it on a regular basis. He has already made announcements regarding the project's potential to meet national renewable energy deadlines and attract further investments.

- (a) Discuss the ethical issues involved in the above case.
- (b) What are the options available to Divya to tackle the above situation?
- (c) What particular measures Divya should take to ensure that interests of different stakeholders are adequately met? (Answer in 250 words)

UPSC

Ans: The given situation highlights the **conflict between development and other socio-economic interests**. It also brings the **clash between various environmental concerns** such as green energy at the cost of productive land.

(a) Ethical issues involved in the case:

- Acquisition of productive agricultural land for non-agri purposes involves **loss of limited natural resources**.
 - Threat to **agri and environmental sustainability**.
- **Threat to the livelihood** of those dependent, directly or indirectly, on the local agri economy.
 - E.g. small farmers, landless workers, small traders etc.
- **Social interests under pressure due to corporate interest** as the acquired land would be allocated to a well-known private company.
- **Lack of consensus** between public and government as farmers are protesting the project.
 - **Fear of loss of ancestral land**, traditional sources of income etc.
 - **Lack of trust** in the government over the acquisition process, compensation etc.
- **Highhanded behaviour of authorities** reflects use of **coercion and threat** to force them accept the project conditions.
 - Threatening severe consequences is a **criminal act** punishable under law.
 - **Lack of respect for public opinion** and misuse of authority.
- Law and order situation with **social unrest** due to intensified protest by farmers.
 - **Role of social media** as a platform for spreading unrest.
- **Absence of wider stakeholder consultations** before announcing the project is **undemocratic**, leading to **lack of public participation** in government initiative.
- **Pressure on Divya** to expedite the project while handling multiple challenges.
 - Her **reputation** as a performer would come under question if the project faces hurdles.

(b) Options available to Divya to tackle the above situation:

1. Deal with the protestors strictly and go ahead with the acquisition process.
2. Persuading the protestors highlighting benefits of the project and inviting wider consultations.
3. Exploring other alternate sites in the district and suggesting the government to shift the proposed plant there.
4. Request the government to shift the project to another district or reconsider the project altogether.

UPSC

(c) Particular measures Divya should take to meet the interests of different stakeholders:

1. Start **immediate talks** with protesting farmers and organisations **assuring them proper compliance of provisions** regarding acquisition, compensation and rehabilitation.
 - (a) **Creating a joint committee** including government officials, farmers' representatives, environmentalists etc, to oversee the project processes.
 - (b) **Persuading them to consider benefits** of the solar project for their **livelihood** and the entire district.
1. Creating a **dedicated grievance redressal cell in the DM's office** to personally monitor any complaint regarding the project.
2. **Taking strict action against company representatives and government officials** who misbehaved with farmers and threatened the protestors of consequences.
3. **Taking action against protestors** who take law and order in their hands despite offers of talks.
4. Requesting the government to allow exploring **degraded or non-agricultural land alternatives**.
5. **Creating awareness and mobilising public opinion** through regular multimodal campaign drives, including digital medium.

It is the duty of a civil servant to work for sustainable progress of the society while **upholding** rights of different stakeholders ensuring fairness and justice in government actions.

UPSC

Q8. (a) Mr. Ajit is the Registrar of a prestigious public university renowned for its contributions to social sciences and international research collaborations. The university receives significant funding from global institutions, including a prominent US-based foundation, which supports its Center for Policy Studies. Recently, the university has been rocked by a serious allegation of sexual harassment. A 22-year-old female postgraduate student has filed a formal complaint with the university's Internal Complaints Committee (ICC). She accuses Dr. Vinayak, a distinguished professor and the Director of the Center for Policy Studies, of sexual harassment. Dr. Vinayak, a well-known academic with numerous publications, is politically connected to a senior leader of the ruling party. He has secured over ₹ 50 crore in international grants for the university over the past five years, making him a key figure in its financial and academic standing.

The student's complaint details multiple incidents over six months which includes inappropriate comments during private mentoring sessions, unsolicited late-night messages and an incident where the professor allegedly touched her inappropriately during a closed-door meeting in his office. She claims these actions created a hostile environment, forcing her to avoid classes and affecting her academic performance. She has provided screenshots of messages and a witness, a fellow student, who overheard some remarks. However, the complaint has triggered conflicting narratives. Two colleagues of Dr. Vinayak, who are also senior faculty, claims the student has a history of "exaggerating" issues and suggests her allegations may be motivated by poor grades in his course. Dr. Vinayak denies the allegations, stating that his interactions were professional and that the messages were taken out of context. He has influential supporters including a Member of Parliament who has publicly praised his contributions. The MP also privately contacted Mr. Ajit, hinting that pursuing the case could jeopardize the university's funding and reputation.

The ICC, chaired by a senior female professor, is under pressure to expedite the inquiry within the 90-day timeline mandated by the POSH Act. The US-based foundation has expressed concern, stating that continued funding depends on the university maintaining its reputation for ethical governance. Additionally, an internal email leak suggested an offer by a senior faculty to the student for "settling" the matter and a scholarship in return to withdraw her complaint. It has further escalated tensions. As Registrar, Mr. Ajit is responsible for ensuring that the ICC process is fair, transparent and compliant with the POSH Act, while managing the university's reputation, funding and internal academic structure. The Vice-Chancellor, under pressure from the governing council, has asked the registrar to recommend a course of action that balances justice for the student with the university's interests. There is a widespread concern over the complaint amidst rise in heinous sexual crimes against female students in educational institutions across the country.

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- (a) Identify the ethical issues involved in the case. What are the options available to Mr. Ajit to tackle the above situation?
- (b) How can the registrar ensure a fair and impartial investigation into the matter?
- (c) What long-term institutional reforms should he propose to prevent sexual harassment and ensure a safe, inclusive environment for students? (Answer in 250 words) 20

Ans: There is an alarming rise in acts of sexual violence in educational institutions across the country. It violates the idea of centres of education as safe spaces for students, particularly women.

(a) Ethical issues involved in the case:

- **Safety and dignity of student under threat** due to regular incidents of sexual harassment as alleged in the complaint.
- **Loss of trust** between students and faculty members as well as university administration.
 - **Lack of ethical governance** in the institution.
- **Reputation of university under question**, not only domestically but internationally also.
- **Political interference** in proceedings of inquiry highlight **nexus and attempts to pressurise** the ICC.
- **Authenticity of complaint under question** by counter-allegations of senior faculty.
 - Attempts of **victim-shaming**.
- **Illegal attempt to seek a compromise** by making offers as leaked in the email.
- **Academic activities and growth of the university faces challenges** in the future as fund flow could get restricted.

Options available to Mr. Ajit to tackle the situation:

1. Going ahead with a **fair and impartial inquiry** without any interference in ICC's investigation.
2. Suggesting the ICC to **consider the funding situation and political involvement** also while inquiring the complaint.
3. Taking a **balanced posture** as asked by the university's Governing Council.
4. Initiating a **complaint against the MP and concerned faculty members** for **interfering** in the legal process under POSH Act.

(b) How can the Registrar ensure a fair and impartial investigation?

- **Let the ICC inquire the matter** without any pressure or interference.
- **Look into any additional evidence in the possession of the University** e.g. CCTV footage, meeting logs etc related to the case and handing it over to the ICC.

UPSC

- **Encourage other witnesses or evidence** to be submitted to the ICC with **assurance** of confidentiality and protection.
- **Ask faculty members to submit factual basis** of their counter allegations.
- **Detailed inquiry into the email leak** and compromise offer.
- **Lodging formal complaint against the MP** for interfering in legal proceedings.
- **Separate meetings with students and faculty members** to assure an impartial investigation of the issue.

(c) Long-term institutional reforms:

1. **Encouraging other students to register formal complaints** of any sexual **harassment** faced by them in the campus or elsewhere.
2. **Creating a dedicated gender issues cell** in the university campus to look into the broader safety issues, particularly of female students.
 - (a) Mandating the cell to identify any such incident of harassment, support and encourage the victim to report the matter.
1. **Enhanced campus security** through installing AI-enabled CCTVs to raise auto-alarm.
 - (a) Deploying an adequate number of security guards and wardens.
1. **Regular sensitisation of students, faculty and staff members** with respect to legal provisions, professional and workplace ethics.
2. Developing a **clear and comprehensive code of conduct** for students and staff.
3. **Mandatory requirement to submit an affidavit** at the time of joining the **university**, to not engage in acts of sexual harassment.

Safety and dignity of students can't be compromised at any cost. The reputation of an **organisation** shouldn't be only for high-end research and collaborations but also for **meeting** the highest standards of ethical governance.

UPSC

Q9. You are the District Collector of a rapidly urbanising district known for its mix of urban centers as well as forested hilly areas in a state sharing international border. The district faces multiple pressing challenges such as rising petty crimes of theft and chain-snatching in crowded urban markets, illegal sand mining along riverbanks, frequent flash floods in low-lying villages, and occasional smuggling activities across the border. There were recent incidents where drones were used to drop contraband like drugs and small arms. To tackle these issues, the state government has approved a pilot project, “Safe District Drone Program,” to deploy drones for surveillance, disaster response and border monitoring. The drones would be equipped with high-resolution cameras, facial recognition and thermal imaging, capable of real-time data transmission to police and disaster management units. The project operates under the Drone Rules 2021, requiring registration and flight permissions via the Digital Sky platform, but lacks clear guidelines on data privacy.

The initiative has stirred controversy since the very beginning. Urban residents complain about drones hovering over markets capturing footage of shoppers without their consent, raising fears of privacy invasion. Last month, a drone recorded a private family event in a village, and the footage was accidentally leaked online by a contractor, sparking outrage. Farmers near the riverbanks, where drones monitor illegal sand mining, are upset because the company managing drone operations shared their crop data with an agribusiness without permission.

The police, however, have reported a 30% drop in petty crimes in markets since drone deployment and disaster management teams credit drones with saving 20 lives during a recent flood by locating stranded villagers. Border security forces insist on expanding drone use, citing two intercepted smuggling attempts last month. The private company claims its technology is secure but a recent incident where a drone was hacked and diverted over a residential area exposed cybersecurity gaps. There are also reports of police allegedly using drone footage to target activists. Civil society groups had demanded stricter regulations and public consultation before rolling out the pilot project. As District Collector, you are tasked with overseeing the Safe District Drone Program, ensuring it addresses crime, disasters and border security while protecting citizens’ rights and addressing community concerns. You must develop a practical framework to manage drone operations, engage stakeholders, and prevent misuse, all while complying with existing regulations.

- (a) What would be your immediate response to the demand of halting the pilot project from citizens’ groups?
- (b) What ethical principles would guide your decisions in implementing the pilot project?

UPSC

- (c) What steps would you take to prevent misuse of drones, like unauthorized surveillance or targeting of activists, while ensuring their benefits for public safety?
- (d) How would you design a public awareness campaign to educate citizens about the drone program's benefits and safeguards, reducing fears and misconceptions? (Answer in 250 words) 20

Ans: The above case involves ethical issues regarding disturbed law and order **situation**, violation of privacy and consent of citizens, breach of cybersecurity, misuse of technology, lack of trust among public etc.

(a) Immediate response to the demand of halting the pilot project:

- The **demand to immediately halt the project wouldn't be agreed to.**
 - New **government initiatives face initial challenges** of implementation and lacunae emerge.
 - But this shouldn't be the ground to abruptly halt any project.
- **Citizens' concerns regarding the project** would be considered and inquired into immediately.
 - **Specific complaints of violations should be looked** into and accountability should be fixed for any breach of legal provisions.
 - **Initiating legal action** against those held responsible.
- **Regular interaction with different stakeholders** to receive constant feedback to improve project implementation.
 - E.g. Citizen groups, cybersecurity experts, security agencies, service providers etc.

(b) Ethical principles to guide my decisions in implementing the pilot project:

- Maintaining **authority of law** and dealing with crimes in a **prompt, responsive and effective** manner.
- **Right to Privacy and consent** of citizens, **security** and **sanctity of public data**.
- **Responsibility and accountability** of the government and other service providers including private parties.
- **Public participation, cooperation** and **trust** in government initiatives.
- **Innovation and adaptability** in governance with use of new technologies.
- **Ethical use of technology** with adequate safeguards.
 - **Collaboration, openness and integrity** in the implementation process.
- Maintaining **professionalism** in civil services.

(c) Steps to prevent misuse of drones while ensuring their benefits for public safety:

1. Creating a **dedicated programme implementation cell** to personally monitor the pilot project.
2. Starting a **complaint portal** with a nodal officer for online/offline submission of any complaint regarding the project.

UPSC

(a) Fast-track resolution of grievances with strict action against those held accountable.

1. **Procurement and installation of advanced cybersecurity tools/solutions** to strengthen data safety and address technical problems.
2. **Training and sensitisation** of personnel associated with the implementation of the project **regarding legal provisions and ethical aspects** involved in the pilot project.

(a) Including both government and private employees.

1. **Developing a clear code of conduct** regarding operations and compliance while implementation.
2. **Recommending clear guidelines** with respect to data privacy under Drone Rules 2021 to **remove regulatory loopholes**.
3. Promoting **wider public awareness** for cybersecurity and data privacy issues.

(d) Designing a public awareness campaign to educate citizens and reduce fears and misconceptions:

- **Objective, fact-based illustrations** of project benefits to be highlighted using banners, hoardings and wall paintings with comprehensive coverage of the district.
- **Social media driven** digital publicity campaign in **local, regional languages**.
- **Using drones during national day celebrations, festivals, local events** to dispel any misconception.
- Involving **reputed tech experts and innovators** in the drone sector to organise a series of **public talks, seminars and workshops** in the district.
- Organising **drone and related technology demonstrations** through **exhibitions, drone air-shows** in collaboration with the security agencies and private sector.
- **Competitions in educational institutions** such as drone designing and modelling, essay writing etc.

Adoption of new technologies has become essential with increasing challenges of security and safety. But, it must include safeguards for citizens' constitutional and legal rights as well as ethical use of technology.

UPSC

Q10. Ratna is a 38-year-old senior manager in a rapidly growing start-up specialising in skincare makeup products. The company, founded in 2020, has gained popularity for its eco-conscious branding, targeting millennials with a promise of “clean, cruelty-free, and sustainable” cosmetics. The company’s latest flagship product, a premium face scrub called “GlowPure,” has been a massive success, contributing ₹10 crore to the company’s revenue in 2024 alone and creating 200 local jobs through its supply chain. However, as senior manager overseeing product development and compliance, Ratna is facing a troubling issue. GlowPure contains microplastics (polyethylene microbeads) at a concentration marginally exceeding the regulatory threshold. This violation, though small, could lead to penalties and damage the company’s reputation as an environmentally responsible brand. The issue surfaced during an internal audit and safety team’s analysis confirmed the presence of polyethylene microbeads in GlowPure, used for exfoliation. These microplastics, when washed off pass through wastewater treatment systems and pollute aquatic ecosystems. Microplastics are linked to health risks, including endocrine disruption and cardiovascular issues, as they absorb toxic chemicals and accumulate in the food chain, affecting marine life and humans consuming seafood.

Ratna faces a complex ethical situation. The company’s CEO is unaware of the violation as the product was fast-tracked to meet market demand during the festive season. Reporting the issue to the regulators could lead to a recall of the product causing immense financial losses to the company, layoffs of employees and reputational damage. It could also jeopardise investment from a reputed venture capital firm, which insists on compliance with global sustainability standards. However, concealing the violation risks harm to consumers’ health and the environment as well as legal action and public backlash if exposed by NGOs. The production team argues that marginal excess is negligible and suggests reformulating the product gradually over six months to avoid disruption. Ratna’s seniors in the company, focused on profitability, urge a discreet resolution to protect the brand’s market share, while the marketing team warns that a public recall could alienate customers.

- (a) As a close friend, Ratna contacted you for suggestions. What course of action would you suggest to her?
 - (b) Provide reasons to justify your suggestions.
 - (c) In this case, how does corporate values conflict with consumer values?
- (Answer in 250 words) 20

Ans: The above situation involves ethical issues of threat to professional and environmental ethics, loss of public trust and brand reputation, legal non-compliance etc.

UPSC

(a) As a close friend, course of action I would suggest to her:

- **Inform the CEO and senior management** about the marginal violation.
 - presenting the audit findings and safety concerns clearly.
- **Offering resignation on moral grounds** taking responsibility as a senior manager.
 - Wait for any inquiry, if instituted against Ratna, and accept the punishment with grace.
- If resignation is not accepted, **put an immediate halt to new GlowPure production.**
 - Press for **reformulating the product to eliminate microplastics** faster than the suggested timeline of six months.
- **Recall of existing** stock from the market with **release of due apology** addressed to the public.
- **Engage with regulators proactively**, disclosing the issue and outlining corrective steps to avoid penalties and show good faith.
- **Create a positive narrative** through the marketing team.
 - Highlighting the **company's commitment to sustainability** and **zero-tolerance** towards any non-compliance.

(b) Reasons to justify my suggestions:

- **Corporate ethics** requires protecting public health and environment in the company's operations and products.
 - especially given the company's eco-conscious branding.
- **Duty of a manager to lead from the front** and take **complete responsibility** for any failure or violation.
- **An honest and proactive recall** of the product would reflect the company's **commitment to sustainability.**
 - can turn a crisis into a trust-building moment.
- Disclosing the non-compliance and reporting the issue to regulators **ensures future funding and jobs** as well.
- Disclosing the violation would **prevent lawsuits and penalties**; it also **shows integrity and genuine concern** for public interest.

(c) Corporate values conflicting with consumer values:

- Profitability of the company conflicts with customer safety and environment.
- Credibility as an eco-safe brand against the value of authenticity of the product.
- Efficiency with better competition in contrast to consumers' Right to Know.
- Corporate health with a good funding situation and employee retention against customer's Right to health.
- Corporate value of **risk minimisation** vs consumer value of **justice.**

Ratna's dilemma is a classic test of ethical leadership in new-age companies. She must choose integrity, transparency, compliance and public safety over convenience and short-term gain.

UPSC

Q11. Dinesh is a HR Manager in a company based in one of the major software hubs in India. He is increasingly concerned about a disturbing trend in the young workforce in general and his company's employees in particular. Three employees of his company, all under 30, suffered heart attacks in the past year, with one fatality. Medical reports and employee feedback point to multiple factors including high work pressure due to tight project deadlines, sedentary lifestyles, poor dietary habits, and inadequate work-life balance. The company's culture of intense competition, fueled by performance-based bonuses and a "hustle" ethos, has led to employees working extended hours often late into the night. This aligns with recent national debates, sparked by proposals to increase the standard workweek 70 hours to boost productivity and support India's ambition to become a \$5 trillion economy by 2027. The issue came to a head when a 26-year-old software engineer, Nikhat collapsed during a late-night coding session and was hospitalized for a heart attack. Her colleagues revealed she regularly skipped meals, relied on energy drinks, and faced immense pressure to meet project milestones. An internal survey by Dinesh conducted showed about two-thirds of employees report some form of stress and half of them lack regular exercise and one-third have irregular sleep patterns. Meanwhile, many CEOs are pushing for longer hours to compete with global tech giants, arguing that employee wellness programs (e.g., free yoga classes, mental health webinars) are sufficient. However, these programs are underutilised due to time constraints. Additionally, a prominent industry association is lobbying for extended work hours, claiming it will enhance national productivity, while workers' and trade unions and health experts warn of long-term health risks and reduced life expectancy.

Employees have started voicing concerns on social media, with some anonymously criticizing the company's "toxic work culture," drawing media attention and risking the company's reputation. Dinesh faces pressure to align with the company's growth goals but employees are demanding better work-life balance, and one group has threatened to escalate the issue at various forums if conditions don't improve.

- (a) Discuss various ethical dilemmas faced by Dinesh.
 - (b) Examine various options available to him in this situation.
 - (c) What long-term policy measures Dinesh should propose to create a healthy and sustainable work environment aligning with global best practices?
- (Answer in 250 words) 20

Ans: Imbalanced lifestyle due to extreme work stress and 'performance-oriented' corporate culture has enhanced health risk for employees.

(a) Various ethical dilemmas faced by Dinesh:

- **Health and well-being** of employees against **profit and performance** of the company.
 - Company's push for productivity would increase work-life imbalance further.

UPSC

- **Professional duties** as an HR Manager vs **commitment** towards employees.
 - Need to align with company's goals but employees' health issues can't be **ignored**.
- Company's **interest** doesn't go along with **individual conscience**.
 - Dinesh is himself concerned about the issue but faces pressure to meet the company's goals.
- **Reputation** of the company against **trust** of employees.
 - If Dinesh acts upon the internal survey, it may come out in public risking the company's reputation but not acting would betray employees trust.
- **Supporting** the industry's voice or **aligning with employees'** demand.
 - Industry representatives want increased working hours; employees want better work-life balance.
- Building a long-term **better work culture** goes against the company's short-term growth goals.

(b) Various options available to Dinesh in this situation:

1. **Intervene immediately** to take both short-term and long-term measures to improve employees' well-being.
 - (a) The health situation has become critical as highlighted in the report and **ignoring** it can worsen it further.
 - But focusing on that can delay company growth and put his own career under pressure.
2. **Maintain status quo** to align with the company's demand.
 - (a) Would earn faith of the company management but matters can escalate as **employees** are threatening action.
 - Would hit personal and company's image both.
1. **Present the internal report** to the company management and **wait for their guidance**.
 - (a) Objective persuasion can change policies from the top without threat of action on Dinesh.
 - But it may take time and the situation needs to be handled urgently.
1. **Make quiet, discreet changes** to balance interests of both the company as well as employees.
 - Would ease pressure from both sides while fulfilling twin goals but such silent measures would deny holistic interventions.
 - Requires open discussions and wider solutions.

(c) Long-term policy measures Dinesh should propose:

- **Adopt global best practices to limit work hours** allowing for a harmonious **work-life** balance.
 - discouraging late-night emails or calls unless absolutely essential.

UPSC

- **Collaboration with nutritionists, mental health professionals**, and regular health screenings with time off to attend them.
- **Health initiatives** like yoga breaks, fitness sessions, subsidised nutritious meals, etc at the workplace.
 - Create rest, recreation and activity areas in the office.
- **Celebrating** creativity, efficiency, teamwork and healthy work habits.
 - Sensitisation of workforce to spot burnout, recognise overwork and encourage open well-being dialogue.
- **Maintaining a hybrid work model** with work-from-home days also, to ease **commutes** and family balance.
- **Involving employees** in setting deadlines, allowing for buffer periods and spreading work evenly to limit last-minute crunches.
 - **Regular feedback mechanisms** using anonymous surveys.
- **Tying up with NGOs** for social engagement of employees for mental well-being.

Healthy and satisfied employees would lead to a more creative and productive workplace. Corporate goals should be to achieve efficiency and growth as well as develop a humane work environment.

UPSC

- Q12.** Kirti is a young town planner recently appointed as the Assistant Commissioner of the Urban Development Department in a metropolitan city in India. The city has a burgeoning middle class eager to transform it into a “world-class” urban center, free of slums and unauthorized colonies, to rival global cities like Singapore. Receiving feedback from various Resident Welfare Associations (RWAs) of gated societies, the corporation has ordered the demolition of a 20-year-old slum housing thousands of families, mostly migrant workers employed in construction and domestic services. The slum located on prime land near a new business district is seen as an eyesore by the city’s elite and middle-class residents, who have petitioned for its removal to enhance property values and aesthetics.

Last week, without prior notice or adherence to protocols, bulldozers demolished hundreds of homes in the slum settlement, displacing residents, including women, children and elderly individuals. The demolition was executed on the orders of the Municipal Commissioner, who cited “public interest” and pressure from the state government to expedite the project before an upcoming international trade summit. Residents were given only hours to evacuate, leaving many without shelter, personal belongings, or access to basic amenities. Local media reported harrowing scenes of families sleeping on streets and a viral video showed a pregnant woman pleading with officials as her home was razed, sparking public outrage. NGOs have condemned the action, alleging violations of human rights. Kirti was not consulted before the demolition but is now tasked with overseeing the next phase, which involves clearing the remaining homes in that slum. Her conscience is troubled as she joined the civil service inspired by a vision of inclusive development but the demolition’s lack of empathy and disregard for legal protocols conflicts with her values. She visited the locality and met residents like a single mother who lost her tailoring business in the demolition, a daily-wage labourer who fears his children will drop out of school without a home. The Residents’ Welfare Association (RWA) of an adjacent affluent neighborhood, backed by a powerful real estate developer, is pressuring Kirti to complete the demolition swiftly, arguing it will boost the city’s global image. Meanwhile, the Municipal Commissioner has hinted that compliance is crucial for her career progression. However, a group of slum dwellers, supported by NGOs, has filed a petition in the High Court, seeking a stay on further demolitions and demanding rehabilitation. The state government, keen on showcasing a “slum-free” city, is pushing for rapid action, but rehabilitation plans are vague, with only 500 temporary shelters available, far short of what’s needed.

- (a) What are the ethical issues involved in this case?

UPSC

- (b) What course of action should Kirti choose to address the ethical conflict in her conscience?
- (c) What are the ethical problems with a world class city with no inclusive spaces for weaker sections of society? (Answer in 250 words) 20

Ans: The above situation creates a clash between aspirations of one section of **population** with the basic human rights of others. Kirti faces the challenge to accommodate her conscience and values with official duties.

(a) Ethical issues involved in this case:

- **Lack of empathy and violation of right to dignity** as demolitions called out without prior notice.
 - Loss of shelter and livelihoods of residents.
- **Violation of legal procedures** without proper rehabilitation shows **disregard for fairness** and undermines **governance ethics**.
- **Prioritising urban aesthetics** at the cost of social justice and basic human rights.
- **Misuse of power** by Municipal Commissioner under political, corporate and social pressure.
 - Directions from the government.
- **External pressure** on Kirti in conduct of official duties; **foundational values** of civil services challenged.
 - Would have to **compromise her conscience** if she moves ahead with given orders.
- **Violation of a democratic and inclusive urban space** open for all income groups particularly migrants.

(b) Course of action Kirti should choose to address the ethical conflict in her conscience:

1. **Document the demolition's irregularities** such as lack of advance notice, **inadequate** rehabilitation and **submit a report** to the Municipal Commissioner.
 - (a) **urging a pause on further demolitions** until the High Court rules.
1. **Proceed only on the basis of legal procedures** if the next phase of demolitions is not halted.
 - (a) Ensure serving of prior notices, conducting a thorough survey and **guaranteeing** adequate and fair rehabilitation.
1. **Joint meeting** with different stakeholders e.g. department officials, NGOs, RWAs, legal experts and slum residents.
 - (a) to chalk out a humane, transparent plan.

UPSC

1. **For immediate relief**, provide temporary shelters with water and sanitation for displaced families.
2. **Work towards a transparent rehabilitation plan** collaborating with NGOs, **ensuring** resettlement meanwhile preserving livelihoods.
3. Kirti should also **engage with the RWA**, emphasizing **inclusive urban models** to reduce differences.
 - (a) Highlight the issue of shortage of workers in future and their importance in the local economy.

(c) Ethical problems with a world class city with no inclusive spaces for weaker sections:

- **Development of an elitist culture** with only consideration of economic status as the parameter of human worth.
- **Distorted notion of development** which views weaker sections as an unpleasant presence and burden.
- **Restricted social mobility** for weaker sections as opportunities for livelihood and growth gets limited.
- A 'world-class' city excluding vulnerable sections would **amount to hypocrisy** as being 'world-class' involves equity, inclusion and dignity.
 - denying equal rights to urban resources.
- Removing slums for aesthetic reasons **deepens marginalisation** of vulnerable sections.
 - **Increasing alienation and resentment.**
- Gated societies served by invisible workers, who are treated as undesirable after work, degrades **social cohesion**.
 - Amounts to **selfishness** and **lack of human values**.

Cities are built by collective labour and enterprise where all sections of societies have equal rights. The problems of slums should be addressed with long-term urban planning along with empathy and humane approach.