

ETHICS

— **Classroom Study Material 2025** —
— June 2024 to May 2025 —





ETHICS

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Preface

To the Aspirant Who Dares to Dream

The UPSC Civil Services Mains Examination is not merely a test of knowledge but a challenge of precision, clarity, and smart revision. Within the vast General Studies syllabus, the **Ethics section** remains a key determinant in boosting overall scores. Recognizing this, **VISION IAS** presents **Mains 365 – Ethics**—a meticulously curated document crafted as the ultimate revision companion.

More than just a current affairs compilation, it is a **strategic** tool aimed at enhancing answer quality, integrating current ethical issues with conceptual clarity, and securing those crucial extra marks that often determine final selection. Designed to be exam-**centric, crisp, and** insightful, this compilation enables quick yet comprehensive revision, even in the final days before the exam. **Mains 365 – Ethics** is your shortcut to smart preparation and a **strategic edge** in the examination hall.

Let it be your trusted guide—for clarity, for revision, and for success.

Q.1 Why 90% of UPSC aspirants fail to crack mains?

- **Scattered Information:** Jumping between multiple sources creates confusion
- **Outdated Content:** Using materials that don't reflect current developments
- **Lack of Integration:** Inability to connect static knowledge with current affairs
- **Poor Answer Structure:** Not knowing how to present knowledge effectively
- **Missing the UPSC Mindset:** Failing to understand what examiners actually want

But what if you could overcome ALL these challenges with ONE comprehensive resource?



Q2. Why Mains 365 Ethics?

- A one-stop annual compendium that distills major ethical debates into concise, exam-oriented notes—systematically mapped to the GS-IV syllabus of UPSC CSE Mains.
- The document enriches your preparation not just for GS-IV but also enhances essay writing by providing real-life civil servant examples, and contemporary ethical dilemmas in areas like governance, media, technology, etc.



Q3. I already have static books. Why do I need this?

Static concepts in ethics gain value only when applied to real-life contexts. Mains 365 – Ethics bridges that gap by linking ethical theories and values to recent issues—making your answers more relevant, analytical, and impactful.



Q4. Will it actually save my time in the exam hall?

Yes. Infographics (covering values, concepts, infographics, etc.), Introduction blocks, quote etc. act like visual flashcards; you recall a picture, not a paragraph. That shaves minutes off every 10 marker.



Objectivity



Meaning

Objectivity is **sticking** to the **facts** – the evidence. It means evaluating a situation **fairly**, based on facts, **without any bias**, personal belief, feelings or external influence.

Therefore, it is rational and most of the times

Concise and easily understandable definitions




3.5. CORRUPTION

Can be used as introduction

Introduction

Recently, Central Vigilance Commission released its 60th annual report. According to the report, as many as **74,203 corruption complaints** were received against all categories of officers/employees in 2023, of which 66,373 were disposed of and 7,830 were pending.

Key Stakeholders and their Interests

Stakeholders	Interests
 Public Officials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public officials make efforts to make system corruption free, however, some officer misuse power for personal gain.
 Citizens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unrestricted access to public services.
 Civil Society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anti-corruption advocacy. Demand for good governance and transparency.

The document provides a structured list of stakeholders and their interests, helping you develop a more nuanced and analytical approach to such questions.

“

There is **one and only one social responsibility of business**—to use its resources and engage in activities designed to **increase its profits**.

—Milton Friedman



Relevant quotes are provided at the end of each article to help you understand how to use them effectively for value addition in your answers.



Q5. What gives my answers extra credibility?

Ready-to-use ethical quotes (e.g., Gandhi, Rawls), real-life examples of civil servants, etc. lend instant credibility. Examiners value ethical depth backed by precise references.



Q6. How is it structured for the 3-hour examination?

Every sub-topic follows the golden sequence—Introduction(context)→Stakeholder→Ethical Issues/Dilemma→so you can lift the framework, plug in your insights, and write at full speed while others are still outlining.



Q7. Can you demonstrate with an actual question?

PYQ: “The application of Artificial Intelligence as a dependable source of input for administrative rational decision-making is a debatable issue. Critically examine the statement from the ethical point of view.”

Quick extract from Mains 365 – Ethics →

- **AI and Technology:** Bias in algorithms, etc.
- **Ethical principles:** Autonomy, accountability, transparency, non-maleficence
- **Example:** Delhi Police’s facial recognition tech—raises concerns on fairness and due process
- **Philosophical lens:** Kantian ethics (ends vs means), Utilitarianism (maximizing efficiency vs harm)

Plug these into Intro–Body–Conclusion:

- Begin by defining ethical rationality in administration.
- Critically assess AI’s role—efficiency vs ethical risks (bias, lack of empathy).
- Use real examples and ethical theories to analyse both sides.
- Conclude with a need for human-AI complementarity, ethical oversight, and accountability frameworks.

Result: A focused, enriched answer grounded in theory and contemporary ethical discourse—exactly what UPSC expects.

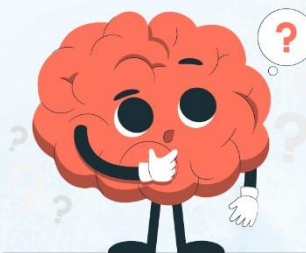


Q8. Any final pro tip?

Think of Mains365 as a ready answer bank: it’s pre-curated—your job is just to pick, organise, and add your own insight.

Best Wishes,

Team VisionIAS



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1. ETHICAL VALUES

1.1. ACCOUNTABILITY

Accountability

"However good a Constitution may be, if those who are implementing it are not good, it will prove to be bad." – **Dr. B.R. Ambedkar**



Meaning

Accountability means making the public officials **answerable for their actions and choices** and **responsive to the entity** from which they derive their authority.

→ Different Forms of Accountability:

- **Vertical Accountability:** Principal-agent relationship, e.g., elections, where the voters (principals) hold the governments (agents) to account.
- **Horizontal Accountability:** Exercised through a network of institutions, including both traditional mutual control among different branches of power (executive, legislature, and judiciary) and independent institutions.
- **Social Accountability:** Control exercised by multiple civil society organizations and independent media on public sector officials.

In public services accountability is a **legal concept**, as its contours are fixed by **the law**, and ideally it includes 3 things:



Answerability:

It means one is legally bound to give answers with respect to his commissions, omissions.



Enforceability:

It means the respective civil servant is liable to be punished according to the law, if he found to be guilty in discharging his official duties.



Grievance redressal:

It means the aggrieved person should have sufficient institutional mechanism to be heard and resolving his grievances.

→ Effectiveness of Accountability:

- **Prevents** the public servants from holding **arbitrary power** as they are held answerable.
- **Avoids conflict of interest** by clearly demarcating area of one's actions.
- **Promotes justice, equality and fairness** in public service delivery.
- **Brings legitimacy to public services** and motivates public servants to discharge their duty with honesty, integrity and efficiency.

→ Accountability and Responsibility:

- Responsibility implies **accountability to oneself**, i.e. where a person feels the answerable to oneself for all his actions, even if it is not covered by any law.
- Accountability requires a person to be **liable and answerable** for the things, he/she does. Conversely, responsibility expects a person to be **reliable and dependable** to complete the tasks

Accountability in Action



Morarji Desai believed in the cut and thrust of debate as well as the freedom of the fourth estate – the media. He had **regular press conferences where journalists were given full freedom to ask questions.**



Lal Bahadur Shastri, when served as Railway Minister, tendered his resignation on two occasions of **major railway accident**. Though not personally responsible for the accident, he took the **moral responsibility** and tendered his resignation.

1.2. LEADERSHIP

Leadership

"A leader is one who knows the way, goes the way, and shows the way." – John C. Maxwell



Meaning

A person who **successfully marshals his collaborators** to achieve particular ends **is a leader**.

➤ Leadership **stems from social influence**, rather than authority or power and it **includes a goal** with an intended outcome.

- ➔ **Effectiveness of Leadership:** Critical ingredient of good governance, improves participation of people in decision-making, ensures equal application of rule of law, maintains transparency and accountability.
- ➔ **Transformational leadership** is a type of leadership in which leaders inspire and encourage their team/ followers to induce a positive change.

Transformational Leadership



Intellectual Stimulation

- Innovation
- Creativity
- Goals
- Challenge



Individualized Consideration

- Mentorship
- Empathy
- Purpose
- Strength & Skills



Idealized Influence

- Role Model
- Walk the Walk
- Enthusiasm
- Embody Value



Inspirational Motivation

- Clear Vision
- Optimism
- Inclusion
- Productivity

Effective Leadership in Action



Dr. Verghese Kurien, regarded as the **father of India's White Revolution**, set up a successful cooperative structure "**Amul**", where the organisation is not owned by an individual but by all producer members and they are stakeholders and decision-makers at every stage.



E. Sreedharan's, popularly known as the "**Metro Man of India**", attention to detail, commitment to timelines, and focus on quality have made him a symbol of effective project management and engineering leadership.

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18 JULY, 5 PM | 22 JULY, 11 AM | 25 JULY, 2 PM | 30 JULY, 8 AM

GTB Nagar Metro (Mukherjee Nagar): 10 JULY, 8 AM | 29 JULY, 6 PM

हिन्दी माध्यम 15 जुलाई, 2 PM

AHMEDABAD: 12 JULY

BENGALURU: 22 JULY

BHOPAL: 27 JUNE

CHANDIGARH: 18 JUNE

HYDERABAD: 14 JULY

JAIPUR: 24 JUNE

JODHPUR: 2 JULY

LUCKNOW: 22 JULY

PUNE: 14 JULY

1.3. SELFLESSNESS

Selflessness

"The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others." – Mahatma Gandhi



Meaning

Selflessness is the tendency to give more consideration to others' needs than oneself. However, it doesn't mean that one is completely surrendering his/her needs.

- ➔ In Governance, the idea of Selflessness means that those engaged in public roles **act solely in the public interest**. This means **placing the needs of the public ahead of their own personal needs** and progression.
- The principle of selflessness **addresses the potential conflict between the benefit to the provider and the recipient of the public sector service**.

Personality Traits
associated with Selflessness



Empathy



Compassion



Kindness



Respect

Selflessness in Action



Shaheen Mistri, founder of **Akanksha Foundation and Teach For India (TFI)**, left her top-notch liberal arts education at Tufts University in the US to teach low-income children in India. In 1991, she opened **first Akanksha Centre** for teaching children from slums.



Tukaram Omble, of the **Maharashtra Police** demonstrated exemplary courage and selflessness during the 26/11 Mumbai attacks. By tackling one of the terrorists, he prevented further harm to his fellow servicemen, ultimately sacrificing his life for the nation.

फाउंडेशन कोर्स सामान्य अध्ययन

प्रारंभिक एवं मुख्य परीक्षा 2026

इनोवेटिव क्लासरूम प्रोग्राम

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- नियमित क्लास टेस्ट एवं व्यक्तिगत मूल्यांकन
- प्री फाउंडेशन कक्षाएं
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नोट: ऑनलाइन छात्र हमारे पाठ्यक्रम की लाइव वीडियो कक्षाएं अपने घर पर ऑनलाइन प्लेटफॉर्म पर देख सकते हैं। छात्र लाइव चैट विकल्प के माध्यम से कक्षा के दौरान अपने संदेह और विषय संबंधी प्रश्न पूछ सकते हैं। वे अपने संदेह और प्रश्न नोट भी कर सकते हैं और दिल्ली केंद्र में हमारे कक्षा सलाहकार को बता सकते हैं और हम फोन/मेल के माध्यम से प्रश्नों का उत्तर देंगे।

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1.4. EMPATHY

Empathy

"Feel, my children, feel; feel for the poor, the ignorant, the downtrodden... Let these be your God." – Swami Vivekananda



Meaning

Empathy is generally defined as the **ability to sense other people's emotions**, coupled with the ability to imagine what someone else might be thinking or feeling.

➤ Simply put, it is about understanding another person's condition from their perspective and feel what they must be feeling in the circumstances they are faced with.

➔ Different natures of Empathy:

- **"Affective empathy"** is the ability to experience others' emotions as one's own and respond accordingly.
- **"Cognitive empathy,"** sometimes called "perspective taking," refers to our ability to identify and understand other people's emotions.

➔ **Effectiveness of Empathy:** Enhances bureaucratic effectiveness, people-centric administration, improves emotional intelligence and decision-making capabilities, and enhances social cohesion and inclusivity.

➔ Empathy and Sympathy:

- **Sympathy is instinctive** and largely involves cognitive aspect. For example, seeing a poor man at raining winter night you would think to do something for him, but may not necessarily do anything.
- **Empathy is deeper and stronger** than sympathy as it **includes emotions** as well, apart from that cognitive aspect.

➔ **Empathy and Compassion:** While Empathy puts oneself in someone else's position to understand what they are going through, the **Compassion spurs one to action** to help the other person.

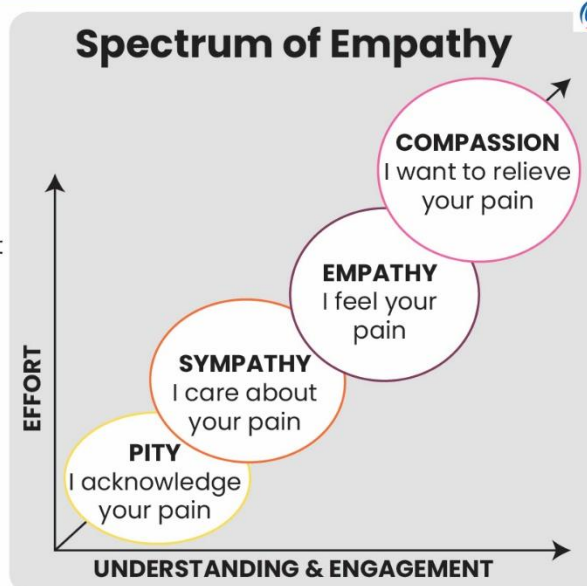
Empathy in Action



Rata Tata, After 1984 riots against the Sikh Community, Former Tata Group Chairman Rata Tata presented an exemplary act of empathy by offering new trucks to the surviving Sikh Truck Drivers.



Ayushman Bharat Scheme, the world's most extensive health insurance programme, can be seen as an **example of empathetic policymaking** which aims to provide health coverage of ₹ 5 lakh per family per year for secondary and tertiary care hospitalization to over 12 crore poor and vulnerable families.



1.5. JUSTICE

Justice

"Justice is truth in action." – Benjamin Disraeli

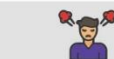


Meaning

Justice is often defined as **"fairness" or "equal treatment."** However, it means different things to different groups.

- Simply, Justice means choosing what the right thing to do is without fear or favor. Classically, justice was counted as **one of the four cardinal virtues** and **John Rawls** famously described it as **'the first virtue of social institutions'**.
- **Most fundamental principle** of justice – defined by **Aristotle** – is that **"equals should be treated equally and unequals unequally."**

Four Cardinal Virtues



Temperance



Justice



Prudence



Courage

Justice in Action



Sagarmal Gopa, (leader of Praja Mandal) mentioned **Jawahar Singh's (Jaisalmer's ruler) atrocities** in his book **"Jaisalmer Mein Gundaraj,"** as he stood up for justice for people of Jaisalmer.



P Narhari, (IAS Officer, 2001 Batch) showcased value of social justice by playing **key role in making Gwalior District barrier-free to help persons with disabilities, senior citizens, women easily access public spaces.**

ABHYAAS

MAINS 2025

ALL INDIA MAINS

(GS + ESSAY + OPTIONAL)

MOCK TEST (OFFLINE)

PAPER	GS - I & II	GS - III & IV	ESSAY	OPTIONAL - I & II
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ORAI | PATNA | PRAYAGRAJ | PUNE | RAIPUR | RANCHI | ROHTAK | SHIMLA | THIRUVANANTHAPURAM | VARANASI | VIJAYAWADA | VISAKHAPATNAM

1.6. PROBITY

Probity

"It is the bounden duty of a civil servant to remain honest, impartial, and devoted to duty." – **Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel**



Meaning

Probity originates from the latin word 'probitas', meaning good and is usually regarded as being incorruptible.

➤ Probity is defined as the **quality of having strong moral principles** and strictly following them, such as integrity, honesty, uprightness of character or action.

➔ Effectiveness of Probity:

- **Good Governance:** A vital requirement to ensure an **efficient and effective system of governance** and for socio-economic development.
- **Legitimacy of System:** It builds trust in the institutions of the state and a belief that actions of the state will be for social welfare.
- **Objectivity:** It provides for an objective and independent view on the fairness of the process.
- **Reduces bureaucratic hurdles:** It helps address nepotism, favoritism, political partisanship and facilitates participatory governance.

Absence of Probity

Corruption

Increased Gap between haves and have-nots

➔ **Probity and Integrity:** While **integrity is a broader concept encompassing overall moral character**, **probity tends to be more specific to uprightness and incorruptibility**, particularly in professional settings.

Probity in Action



Jacinda Ardern (former Prime Minister of New Zealand) resigned in 2023 stating that she **no longer had "enough in the tank" to do justice to the job**. This display of **self-awareness and prioritizing the country's needs over personal ambition** exemplifies probity.



Shanmugam Manjunath (an Indian Oil Corporation officer) fought against widespread adulteration of petrol at several fuel stations, despite facing severe threats. Later, he was shot dead by the owner of a petrol pump. His **commitment to honesty and his courage in the face of danger** exemplify probity in its truest sense.



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Performance and Progress Analysis

1.7. HONESTY

Honesty

"Honesty is indeed the best policy. But he who is not honest to himself cannot be honest to others."

– Mahatma Gandhi



Meaning

Honesty, **speaking and acting truthfully**, is more than not lying, deceiving, stealing, or cheating.

➤ It entails showing respect towards others and having **self-awareness**.

➤ Honesty is the **foundation for trust** and is key in social relationships.

➔ Honesty in classical ethical frameworks:

➤ In **Aristotelian virtue ethics**, honesty is a virtue that also permeates many other virtues.

⊙ According to it, a severe lack of honesty would result in an untrustworthy person, while too much honesty might result in someone who says unnecessary truthful things at the expense of people's feelings.

➤ **Middle ground** is where you would frame your honesty in a way that is moderate and constructive.

➤ **Deontology**, on the other hand, following in the footsteps of **Immanuel Kant**, holds honesty as an **absolute moral obligation, irrespective of the cost**.

Honesty in Action



Anil Swarup (retired IAS Officer), implemented transparent e-auction system for coal block allocations, increased transparency in teacher appointments and transfers, etc., exemplifying unwavering honesty in governance.



Sachin Tendulkar, during the 2011 ICC World Cup match was given not out by the on-field umpire for a caught behind. Despite the high stakes of the World Cup, Tendulkar voluntarily walked off the field, effectively giving himself out. This **act of honesty and sportsmanship**, especially in such a crucial tournament, was widely praised and reinforced his reputation for honesty in the sport.



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1.8. DEDICATION TO PUBLIC SERVICE

Dedication to Public Service

"A civil servant is not supposed to function like a machine but must bring to his task a sense of dedication and a spirit of service." – **Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel**



Meaning

Dedication is the quality of being able to give or apply **one's time, attention, or self, entirely to a particular activity, person or cause.**

- Dedication to Public Service means **putting public interests first** – ahead of personal interests.
- ➔ Public Servants work for government and citizens and thus **require a high spirit of service** (feeling of contributing to the society or country) and **sacrifice** to better fulfil people's aspirations.
- For Kant, **an action done from duty has its moral worth, not from the results** it attains or seeks to attain, but from a moral principle or maxim– the **principle of doing one's duty whatever that duty may be.**
- ➔ **Dedication and Commitment:** Dedication is different from commitment, in that, **commitment is formally obligated/bound**, whereas **dedication is guided by sense of duty**, inspired by some ideals, like that of state or society.

Dedication to Public Service in Action



Dr. A P J Abdul Kalam, dedicated his life in the service to the nation in many different forms. His most significant contribution is in heralding the **indigenous missile programme** of India and contributions to the **nuclear programme.**



Dr. M S Swaminathan, dedicated his life to public service in many forms including collaboration with Dr. Norman Borlaug for Green Revolution in India, giving key recommendations such as National Food Guarantee Act as Chairperson of National Commission on Farmers, etc.

CSAT

क्लासेस

2026

ENGLISH MEDIUM

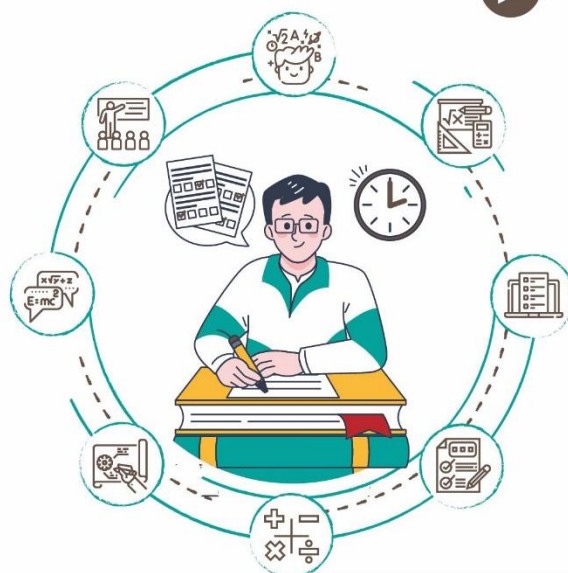
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1.9. INTEGRITY

Integrity

"Integrity is the essence of a good human being." – Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam



Meaning

'Integrity' originates from word integer (Latin) which means being whole or complete.

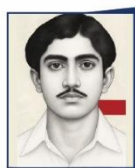
- Being person with integrity has **strong moral principles** such as honesty, fairness, etc., that one refuses to change.
- Integrity **means adherence to principles** and choosing the right conduct, acting consistently when even when it is unprofitable and openly declaring where one stands.

Integrity Traits	 Honesty / Truthfulness	 Fairness	 Decency / Respectfulness	 Adherence to moral principles	 courage	 Responsibility / Trustworthiness
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→ Integrity and Honesty:

- While Honesty means holding the facts as they are i.e. upholding the truth, Integrity means doing what is right at all times irrespective of the consequences.
- Sometimes, a person has to **choose between integrity and honesty**. For example, in a town rife with communal riots, a man running from a mob asks for a shelter in your home when the mob is not in sight. You ask the man to hide inside your house and when the mob wielding arms arrive at your house, you are presented with two choices:
 - **Honesty** demands that you tell the mob that the man they are looking for is hiding in your house.
 - **Integrity** demands that you point at a wrong direction or show your ignorance that you have not seen the man.
- **Effectiveness of Integrity:** Promotes accountability, deters corruption, enhances transparency in decision-making, improves administrative efficiency, and strengthens public service delivery.

Integrity in Action



Shaheed Hemu Kalani, a revolutionary and freedom fighter, after planning the **derailment of a train**, he was subjected to third-degree torture by the British to expose the identities of his associates and his organisation (Swaraj Sena). Still, he resisted and bravely took the brunt of the suffering.



IAS Officer K.K. Pathak, credited with beginning a positive transformation in Bihar's government school, resigned when he could not continue with his principles in the Bihar Education Department. He worked with integrity to provide good mid day meals, reduce absenteeism, and ensuring teacher accountability in Bihar's government schools.

1.10. OBJECTIVITY

Objectivity

"A wise man should ascertain objective facts by direct observation, by inference, and by the evidence of reliable persons." – **Kautilya**



Meaning

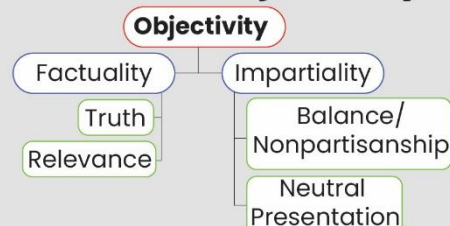
Objectivity is **sticking** to the **facts** – the evidence. It means evaluating a situation **fairly**, based on facts, **without any bias**, personal belief, feelings or external influence.

➤ Therefore, it is rational and most of the times, empirical in nature.

➔ Objectivity in Civil Services

- It allows Public Servants to **uphold rule of law, reason, merit, and accepted standards, practices, and norms.**
- **Absolute objectivity**, however, **may not always be desirable in practical situation** from ethical perspective.
- Objectivity is considered as a **mean-value** to achieve **end-values of equity, justice, and fairness.**
- **Objectivity and Impartiality:** Objectivity focuses on facts and evidence in observations and information analysis while impartiality ensures that judgements or decisions are taken without bias or prejudice.

Criteria for Objectivity



Objectivity in Action



Evidence-based decision-making for implementation of POSHAN Abhiyan based on POSHAN Tracker dashboard showcases an example of **objectivity in public policy formulation and implementation.**



Digital portals – PROBITY, SPARROW, and SOLVE – to assess performance of Central Government officers showcases an example of **objectivity in Personnel management.**

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1.11. IMPARTIALITY

Impartiality

"Tolerance and impartiality are the hallmarks of a truly civilized society." – Dr. S. Radhakrishnan



Meaning

Impartiality refers to the act of **not supporting an individual or a group more than the others** and not allowing personal biases to creep into actions.

- It simply means **not taking any sides** and is commonly understood as a **principle of justice**.
- It holds that decisions should be based on objective standards, instead of on the basis of bias, prejudice.

- ➔ **Impartiality and Non-Partisanship:** While Impartiality refers to the not taking any sides, Non-partisanship (a narrow concept) conveys **apolitical behaviour or political neutrality** by a civil servant.
 - In India, these are ensured through Constitution, Central Civil Services Conduct Rules 1964, All India Services Conduct Rules 1968, and Code of Ethics 1997.
- ➔ **Effectiveness of Impartiality and Non-partisanship:**
 - **Public Trust:** Brings credibility and trust in the public with respect to functioning of public service.
 - **Good Governance:** Impartiality empowers public officials to present alternative ideas of governance thus improving public service.
 - **Justice:** Ensures equality, fairness and justice among different sections of society.

Impartiality in Action



T. N. Seshan, former Chief Election Commissioner of India (1990-1996), implemented several electoral reforms and ensured free and fair elections in a non-partisan manner without succumbing to any political pressure.



Nandan Nilekani, former Chairman of the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI), worked with different governments at the Centre regardless of the ruling party to focus on the technological and administrative aspects of Aadhaar. This showcases his non-partisan approach to governance in India.

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1.12. TOLERANCE

Tolerance

"If we want to cultivate a true spirit of democracy, we cannot afford to be intolerant. Intolerance betrays want of faith in one's cause." – **Mahatma Gandhi**



Meaning

It refers to fair, objective, and permissive attitude towards those whose opinions, practices, race religion, nationality, etc. are different from one's own.

- Tolerance and mutual respect for diversity and various social groups are **critical to foster harmony and social cohesion in a pluralistic society** like India.
- Lack of tolerance (Intolerance) is a reflection of **narrow mindedness** and is **antagonistic to free thinking**.
- **Tolerance in Civil Services**
 - Tolerance is, in fact, a **precondition to uphold several other values in civil services** including, objectivity, impartiality, non-partisanship, compassion, justice, etc.
 - Tolerance also aid civil servants in **inclusive policy formulation and implementation** and develop **stronger social capital** within the society.

Tolerance in Action



Nelson Mandela, (First President of South Africa), leadership, after his release from prison and election as President, was **characterized by tolerance and reconciliation**. He established the Truth and Reconciliation Commission to address past injustices, **without seeking vengeance**.



Navtej Singh Johar Case, Supreme Court of India showed remarkable tolerance in its various judgments including granting **recognition of 'Third-Gender' to transgender people (NALSA vs. UOI Case, 2014)**, **decriminalizing consensual same-sex relationship**, etc.

1.13. CONSCIENCE

Conscience

"The voice of conscience is the voice of God." – **Mahatma Gandhi**



Meaning

Conscience is a special ability of the mind that enables a person to judge how moral his/her own actions are.

- Simply, Conscience is our innate, invariant and **moral capacity to recognize ethical values and principles**.
 - A conscience which is both well-formed and well informed enables us to know ourselves and our world and act accordingly.
- Conscience describes **two things – what a person believes is right and how a person decides** what is right. It is like an empty box that can be filled with any type of moral content.
 - For instance, while some health practitioners raise conscientious objection to abortion, someone else's conscience might demand performing abortions.
- **Crisis of Conscience**
 - The crisis of conscience is a situation of inner dilemma or the inner conflict between the voice of conscience and the influence of external motivations that compel a person to make a contrary decision.

Conscience in action



Fali Nariman, who was Additional Solicitor General of India during the **1975 Emergency**, listened to his conscience and refused to defend the suspension of constitutional rights during the Emergency. He took a stand, maintained his integrity and resigned from his post.

2. KEY CONCEPTS

2.1. ATTITUDE

Attitude

»»» **Meaning:** Attitude can be defined as the way in which a person views and evaluates something or someone, a predisposition or a tendency to respond positively or negatively toward a certain idea, object, person, or situation.

Components of Attitude



Cognitive: Represents an individual's knowledge held with varying degrees of certainty about what is true or false, good or bad, desirable or undesirable.



Affective: Emotional component that makes up feelings towards attitudinal objects such as likes and dislikes, or evoked emotions.



Behavioral: Actions or expressed intentions toward the object based upon the "cognitive" and "affective" responses.

»»» Factors determining Attitude



Classical conditioning: A neutral stimulus comes to elicit an unconditioned response when repeatedly paired with an unconditioned stimulus.

⊕ **e.g.,** when a child repeatedly listens from his father that Pakistan is an enemy country, child gradually develops a negative attitude towards Pakistan, even though initially the word Pakistan was a neutral word for him.



Instrumental conditioning: Individuals learn those responses that are rewarded and show an increased probability of repeating such responses and vice-versa.

⊕ **e.g.,** Children learn that holding similar attitudes to parents is instrumental for desired results.



Cognitive appraisals: Involves evaluating information and experiences to form attitudes.

⊕ **e.g.,** Voters form opinions on political candidates by analyzing their policies and debate performances.



Observational learning: Learning attitudes through peer behaviours and their consequences.

⊕ **e.g.,** 'Give It Up' campaign for LPG Subsidy followed by PM Ujjwala Yojana.



Persuasions: Deliberate attempts to change attitudes through communication.

⊕ **e.g.,** Change in consumer's attitude towards a product after watching compelling advertisement(s).

»»» Functions of Attitude



Knowledge: Serves as a framework for organizing and interpreting new information allowing us to quickly process and respond to our environment.

⊕ **e.g.,** In absence of knowledge towards a person people use stereotyped attitude for judging them.



Utilitarian: Guides behaviour in ways that maximize benefits and minimize costs in our social and physical environments.

⊕ **e.g.,** Positive attitude towards ISRO's successful space missions serves a utilitarian function by encouraging support for science education and careers in STEM fields.



Ego-defense: Helps protect self-esteem, maintain a positive self-concept and cope with emotional conflicts.

⊕ **e.g.,** Body Positivity Movement encouraged positive attitudes towards diverse body types protecting against feelings of inadequacy fostered by unrealistic beauty standards.



Value-expression: Allows validating our personal sense of self and communicating our values to others.

⊕ **e.g.,** Value of peaceful coexistence with nature by Bishnoi community is reflected in their positive attitude towards environment conservation.

2.2. SOCIAL INFLUENCE

Social Influence

»» **Meaning:** Social influence is the process by which **individuals adapt** their opinion, **revise their beliefs**, or **change their behavior** as a **result of social interactions** with other people.

- A Social Influencer is a person who has an audience that they entertain through a channel and who uses blogs, posts, tweets, and other methods on social media to impact the audience.

Models of Social Influence

	Behaviour	Attitude	Values
Compliance	✓	✗	✗
Identification	✓	✓	✗
Internalization	✓	✓	✓

»» Types of Social Influence



Conformity: Adjusting one's behaviour or beliefs to **match those of a group**.

- e.g., Implementation of biometric attendance systems in government offices, leading to widespread adoption of punctuality norms.



Self-fulfilling prophecy: A prediction that causes itself to become true due to people's beliefs and resulting behaviours.

- e.g., Perception of certain cities (like Bangalore for IT or Mumbai for finance) as industry hubs, attracting more companies and skilled professionals, further cementing their status.



Obedience: Changing behaviour in response to a **direct order** from an **authority**.

- e.g., Implementation of policy directives from higher authorities, such as the sudden shift to online education during the COVID-19 pandemic.



Persuasion: Deliberate attempt to change an individual's thought or motivate them to act in a certain way by presenting information, feelings, or reasoning.

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2.3. PERSUASION

Persuasion

»»» **Meaning:** Persuasion refers to efforts to change another person's beliefs, attitude, behaviour or preferences in receivers conforming to intentional efforts by a communicator.

- It is mostly intentional, explicit and verbal, based on ideas of perceived friendship through similarities in language and interests.
- Principles:** reciprocity, consistency, social proof, authority, liking, scarcity, and unity.
- Techniques used:** eye-catching photos and videos, interesting stories, social proof, and the promotion of positive social norms.

Modes of Persuasion

Ethos (Appeal to credibility)	Pathos (Appeal to emotions)	Logos (Appeal to logic)
E.g., Researchers citing their qualifications and previous work before presenting new findings.	E.g., Use of national symbols or historical events to stir pride and unity.	E.g., Showing lung cancer rates to discourage smoking in anti-tobacco campaigns.

»»» Factors affecting Persuasion

- Source:** Credibility, charisma, expertise, authority, etc., of the source.
 e.g., Dr. Randeep Guleria, former Director AIIMS (Delhi), communicating about COVID-19 measures.
- Message content:** Relevance of the message to the audience, clarity and unambiguity of the message, etc.
 e.g., Swachh Bharat Abhiyan using clear and relevant messages about sanitation and its impact on health and dignity.
- Audience characteristics:** Existing beliefs and information the audience, cultural background, etc.
 e.g., Tailoring financial literacy programs to different demographics – simplified messages for rural areas, more sophisticated content for urban professionals.
- Reciprocity:** Offering something of value before making a request.
 e.g., 'Give It Up' campaign for LPG Subsidy followed by PM Ujjwala Yojana.
- Social proof:** Demonstrating that others have already adopted the belief or behaviour.
 e.g., 'Aadarsh Gram Yojana' developing some villages as model village to inspire and motivate neighboring villages to adopt similar development practices.
- Timing and context:** Environment in which message is delivered, current issues, etc.
 e.g., Launch of "Vocal for Local" campaign during the pandemic when concerns about economic self-reliance were high.





2.4. EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Emotional Intelligence



»»» **Meaning:** Emotional Intelligence (EI) is the ability of an individual to identify, comprehend, and manage emotions of self and others.

- The term was first coined in 1990 by researchers **John Mayer and Peter Salovey** but was later popularized by **psychologist Daniel Goleman**.
- A high EI aids in **strengthening interpersonal skills**, especially related to **conflict management and communication** and a **holistic personality development** by developing non-cognitive skills.
- E.g. non-cognitive skills such as **grit, perseverance, academic interest, and the value attributed to learning** etc.

Features of Emotional Intelligence (Daniel Goleman's Model)

	 Recognition	 Regulation
 Personal Competence	Self-Awareness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-confidence • Understanding own strengths and weaknesses • Understanding impact of your behaviour on others • Understanding impact of other's behaviour on your emotional state 	Self-Management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emotional regulation: keep a check on disruptive emotions • Acting in congruence of your values. • Open to change: adaptability • Goal-orientation irrespective of hurdles.
 Social Competence	Social Awareness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding social situations. • Empathetic orientation • Active listening 	Social Management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team management • Conflict resolution • Sensitive and empathetic interpersonal relations and communication.

»»» Difference between EQ and IQ

 Emotional Quotient (EQ)	 Intelligence Quotient (IQ)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It consists of identifying, perceiving, and regulating emotions through five domains: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. • E.g. staying calm in stressful situations and making objective decisions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It consists of logical reasoning, cognitive functions, memory, word comprehension, maths skills, abstract and spatial thinking, mental agility. • E.g. Good scores in academics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is subject to environmental and social influences so can be actively trained and developed over time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considered a stable trait influenced by genetics.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No universally standardized test. Testing may involve ability tests and self-reported analyses of a person's own typical behaviour. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessed through standardized intelligence tests (IQ tests), by comparison with average performance in the age group.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A pivotal role in general well-being, promoting a person's mental health and quality of relationships. Can lead to interpersonal success even if IQ is average. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can contribute to greater academic achievement and job performance.

»»» Significance of EI in Governance

- ❶ **Leadership effectiveness:** Leaders with high EI can better motivate and inspire their teams.
 - ⊖ e.g., Former New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern demonstrated high EI in her response to the Christchurch mosque shootings (2019) to help unite the country during the crisis.
- ❷ **Decision-making:** EI helps administrators consider the emotional impact of policies and decisions and aids in balancing rational analysis with empathy for stakeholders.
 - ⊖ e.g., Implementation of GST required high EI on part of Union Government to navigate complex emotions and concerns from various states, businesses, etc.
- ❸ **Communication:** Enhances ability to convey messages clearly and persuasively and also improves active listening skills.
 - ⊖ e.g., Clear and empathetic communication about health guidelines during COVID-19 pandemic helped in effective management of fear and public anxiety.
- ❹ **Conflict resolution:** Helps in managing disputes between departments, employees, or with the public facilitating finding win-win solutions.
 - ⊖ e.g., Naga Peace Accord negotiations required high levels of EI to navigate complex historical and emotional issues between the government and Naga groups.
- ❺ **Public engagement and change management:** Enhances public trust through empathetic interactions and identify and manage underlying emotions driving resistance against change.
 - ⊖ e.g., T.N. Seshan (former Chief Election Commissioner) used EI to balance strict enforcement of rules with understanding of ground realities, to improve the integrity of elections.



Social Intelligence (SI)

» It refers to an individual's ability to understand and manage interpersonal relationships.

Facets of SI

» Social awareness

- ⊖ **Primal empathy:** Being able to sense others' feelings through nonverbal signals
- ⊖ **Attunement:** Listening with full receptivity; 'tuning in' with a person
- ⊖ **Empathic accuracy:** Understanding another person's thoughts, feelings, and intentions
- ⊖ **Social cognition:** Understanding how the social world works

» Social facility

- ⊖ **Synchrony:** Easily interacting with others at the nonverbal level
- ⊖ **Self-presentation:** Presenting ourselves well
- ⊖ **Influence:** Shaping the outcome of social interactions
- ⊖ **Concern:** Caring about others' needs and acting accordingly

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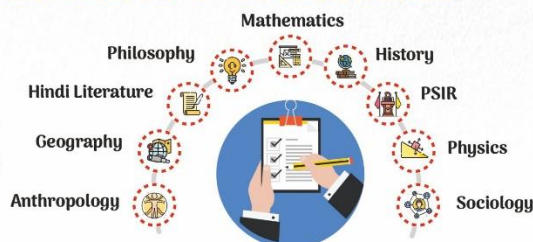
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3. ETHICS IN GOVERNANCE AND ADMINISTRATION






3.1. CONFLICT OF INTERESTS AND PUBLIC SERVANTS

Introduction

Recently, a US-based firm accused the Chairperson of SEBI of violating SEBI's Code of Conduct, leading to a potential conflict of interest. The situation presents a new potential for conflict of interests between civil servants or individuals in high-ranking positions, involving their private interests and public duties.

What is Conflict of Interest?

- **Definition:** Involves a conflict between the **public duty** and **private interests** of a public official, wherein, **public official's private interests** can improperly influence the performance of his/her official duties and responsibilities. (OECD)
- **Types of Conflict of Interest**
 - **Actual:** E.g., a public official awarding a lucrative contract to a company owned by their family member.
 - **Potential:** E.g., an academic researcher receiving funding from a corporation for a study related to that company's products.
 - **Perceived:** E.g., an elected official attending a private event hosted by a lobbyist, even if no direct favors are requested.

Key Stakeholders and their Interests	
Stakeholders	Interests
 Public Officials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain professional integrity, impartiality and neutrality, follow Code of Ethics and Code of Conduct, etc.
 Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enforcement of ethical standards, efficient and effective public service delivery, maintain public trust and confidence in governance, etc.
 Citizens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unbiased access to public services, effective utilization of public funds, transparent and accountable administration and governance, etc.
 Businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fair and unbiased opportunities in government contracts, favourable business environment, regulatory leniency, etc.
 Regulatory Bodies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain the integrity of regulatory processes, ensure fair competition and protect public interest, etc.

Ethical Issues Involved in Conflict of Interests

- **Undermining of Public trust:** Loss of public trust can also result in **loss of legitimacy of government decisions and institutions**.
- **Corruption and abuse of power:** May lead to corrupt practices, such as bribery, favoritism and nepotism. E.g., Adarsh Housing Society Scam.
- **Violates Neutrality and impartiality:** Biased and skewed decision-making by public functionaries.
- **Adverse impact on brand recognition:** May impact businesses' brand image and reputation negatively due to potential scandals, negative media coverage, etc.

Legal Framework to prevent Conflict of Interest in India

For Public Servants

- **Central Civil Services (Conduct) Rules, 1964:**
 - Civil Servants must declare any private interests relating to his public duties and take steps to resolve any conflicts in a way that protects the public interest.

- **Civil Servant should not misuse his/her position** as civil servant and not take decisions in order to derive financial or material benefits.
- **Central Vigilance Commission guidelines** for various procurements, bidding, and other processes outlining Conflict of Interests.
- **SEBI's Code on Conflict of Interests for Boards Members:** A member must ensure that any conflict of interest does not influence Board decisions.

For Businesses

- **Section 166 of the Companies Act, 2013:** A director of a company shall not involve in a situation in which he may have a direct or indirect interest that conflicts, or possibly may conflict, with the interest of the company.
- **SEBI Guidelines** for dealing with conflict of interests of various entities such as stock exchanges, intermediaries, etc.

Way Forward to ensure effective resolution of Conflict of Interests

- **Disclosure:** Establish procedures for identifying, managing, and resolving conflict of interest situations by establishment of effective disclosure process.
- **Ensure understanding of Conflict of Interest policy:** E.g. by publishing the Conflict of Interest Policy, giving regular reminders, etc.
- **Periodic review of 'at-risk' areas:** E.g., Inside information, gifts and other forms of benefit, outside appointments, activity after leaving public office, etc.
- **Cooling off period for public servants:** Mandatory gap restricting former public officials from joining the private sector immediately after leaving office.
- **Independent oversight bodies:** E.g., Several States in the US have Ethics Commission as guardians of the standards of conduct for public officials.

Conclusion

Addressing conflicts of interest is not merely a matter of legal compliance but a fundamental aspect of ethical governance. Public officials hold positions of trust, and safeguarding this trust requires robust mechanisms to prevent, identify, and manage conflicts of interest. By fostering a culture of transparency, accountability, and integrity, governments can ensure that decisions are made in the best interest of the citizens, thereby maintaining the legitimacy of public institutions and reinforcing the democratic principles.

“

The need for justice grows out of the conflict of human interests. That is to say, if there were no conflict of interests among mankind, we should never have invented the word justice, nor conceived the idea for which it stands.

–Thomas Nixon Carver



”

3.2. ETHICS OF WHISTLEBLOWING








Introduction

Recently, Julian Assange was freed by the US Court in WikiLeaks (a whistleblower platform) espionage case. From Edward Snowden to Satyendra Dubey, many whistleblowers have acted on their conscience, but have their acts always been ethical?

Whistleblowing is the **disclosure of information** to the public or some higher authority about any wrongdoing, which could be in the form of a fraud, corruption, etc. in a company or government.

- Whistleblower is the person who reports/discloses the wrongdoing or the unethical act. E.g., Late Shanmugam Manjunath among others.

Key Stakeholders and their Interests

Stakeholders	Interests
 Whistleblower	• Exposing wrongdoing or misconduct and protecting themselves from retaliation.
 Citizens/Society	• Access to information about government activities.
 Government	• Balancing national security concerns with transparency.
 Organization	• Protecting their reputation, addressing the reported issues internally, if possible, etc.
 Regulatory Bodies	• Enforcing compliance with laws and regulations.
 Media Interests	• Reporting on newsworthy allegations and protecting sources.
 Advocacy groups/NGOs Interests	• Promoting transparency and accountability and supporting whistleblowers.

Ethical dilemmas involved in Whistleblowing

- **Protection of whistleblowers vs. National security:** Balance between safeguarding individuals who expose wrongdoing and ensuring government responsibility while considering threats to national security.
- **Media responsibility vs. Ethical Information handling:** Media has a moral duty to tell the people about government action while handling dangerous or sensitive information.
- **Public right to information vs. Government need for confidentiality:** Balance between citizens' right to know about government's actions and the government's necessity to uphold confidentiality.
- **Duty of loyalty vs. Moral obligation:** Conflict between an employee's duty to their employer and their moral obligation to report wrongdoing.
- **Protection vs. Accountability:** Ethical considerations in protecting whistleblowers from retaliation and ensuring accountability for false or malicious reporting.

Laws to protect Whistleblowers in India

- **Whistleblowers Protection Act, 2014:** Safeguards against victimization of persons who make public interest disclosures.
- **The Companies Act, 2013 (Section 177):** Stipulates listed companies to establish a vigil mechanism for directors and employees to report genuine concerns.
- **SEBI (Securities and Exchange Board of India) Regulations, 2015:** SEBI has mandated listed companies to frame whistleblower policies.
- **Guidelines for Corporate Governance for Insurers: Guidelines issued by IRDAI** advise companies regulated by it to set up a 'Whistle Blower Policy'.
- **Protected Disclosures Scheme for Private Sector and Foreign Banks:** Scheme of RBI wherein the banks are required to formulate a whistleblower policy/vigil mechanism.

Indian laws/rules to protect government secret information

- **The Official Secrets Act, 1923:** It provides the framework for **dealing with espionage, sedition, and other potential threats** to the integrity of the nation.
- **Rule 11 of Central Civil Services (Conduct) Rules, 1964:** It deals with the Communication of Official Information by the government servants.
- **Section 8(1) in The Right to Information Act, 2005:** It gives exemption from disclosure of information which would prejudicially affect the sovereignty and integrity of India.

Way Forward

- **Strengthen and Implement Existing Laws:** Strengthen and Implement the Whistleblowers Protection Act, 2014 effectively and ensure robust enforcement mechanisms.
- **Extend Protection to Private Sector:** Develop comprehensive legislation covering both public and private sectors and encourage corporate policies to protect whistleblowers.
- **Media Protection:** Strengthen laws protecting journalists who work with whistleblowers and ensure freedom of press in reporting on whistleblower cases.
- **Balance Access to Information and Secrecy:** Need to ensure freedom, liberty, and access to information to public at the same time maintain secrecy about national security.

Conclusion

Whistleblowing is essential for promoting transparency and accountability but involves ethical dilemmas around confidentiality and national security. Strengthening legal protections and striking a balance between public interest and state secrecy is crucial. A robust framework will empower whistleblowers and uphold democratic values.

“

The humanities teach us the value, even for business, of criticism and dissent. When there's a culture of going along to get along, where whistleblowers are discouraged, bad things happen and businesses implode.

–Martha C. Nussbaum



”

3.3. PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE AND PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY

Introduction

Recently, more than **15 bridges have collapsed in Bihar** and around 15 engineers were suspended for negligence and ineffective monitoring. Previous incidences of **failure of public infrastructure** like the **Morbi bridge collapse in Gujrat (2022)**, **airport roof collapses** at Delhi, etc. have resulted in loss of lives and property. These incidences highlight the **compromised quality of public infrastructure** and **failure of government** in ensuring **quality public service delivery**.

In line with the **social contract theory**, the **government** is charged with the **responsibility of provision of various public services to the citizens**.

Ethical Issues in the governance of Infrastructure Development

- **Inefficient administrative machinery:** It acts as an obstacle to effective implementation of development plans. E.g. **negligence of responsibility**
- **Policy issues:** **Quality** of service delivery is neglected. E.g., **L1 contract method** (lowest bidder wins) prioritizes **cost over quality and safety**.
- **Lack of probity:** Public servants **recuse from the responsibility** of ensuring quality service delivery.



- E.g., **Delhi floods** caused by jammed gates of Yamuna barrage- **lack of maintenance** due to **multiple authorities** involved and lack of fixed **accountability**.
- **Other: Attitudinal issues**, lack of motivation for striving for excellence, etc.

Ethical issues involved in Public Service Delivery

- **Lack of Professional ethics**: Public servants often lack the managerial skills to ensure effective service delivery.
- **Lack of a 'public service' attitude**: Public servants prioritizing **personal gains** over their public **duty** and responsibility.
- **Corruption**: E.g. **Leakages** in PDS distribution, **inclusion and exclusion errors** in schemes.
- **Accountability and transparency**: **Lack of just and fair treatment** of malafide errors weakens **deterrence** towards corrupt practices.

Why are issues persistent in Public Service Delivery?

- **Lack of effective implementation** of service improvement systems, including rules and regulations for civil servants.
- **Rigidity in the administration**: **Resistance** of administration to reforms and **change**.
- **Political constraints**: Political interests prioritized above public interest hinder equitable public service delivery.
- **Neglect of reforms for ethical grassroot bureaucracy**: Most reforms and changes cater to administrative reforms at higher levels of bureaucracy.

Way Forward

- **Administrative reforms**: Measures like **Citizen's Charter**, a **responsive grievance redressal** mechanism and **fixing accountability** of every public servant.
 - **Commission for Right to Services**: constituted by states like **Maharashtra, West Bengal, Punjab** etc.
 - **Right to Public Services Legislations** passed by more than 20 states. E.g. **The Haryana Right to Service Act, 2014**.
- **New Public Management (NPM)**: Involves the adoption of **efficient practices** from the **private** sector to apply in the public sector.
- **Human capital development**: Recruitment and training of capable public servants and inculcating **ethical values of public service**. E.g. **Mission Karmayogi**
- **E-governance**: E.g. Unified Mobile Application for New-age Governance (UMANG)
- **Monitoring project implementation**: Ensuring **regular audits** at multiple levels. E.g. ICT-based, multi-modal platform for Pro-Active Governance and Timely Implementation (**PRAGATI**).



"The **quality of public administration** of a country largely depends on the **honesty and integrity of its administrators**." - The Standards and Techniques of Public Administration, published by the United Nations (UN), 1951

Characteristics of New Public Management (NPM)



Separation of strategic policy from operational management.



Result-orientation along with focus on processes and procedures.



Citizen-centric orientation rather than focus on interests of organisations or bureaucrats



Increased involvement of the **private and voluntary sectors** in service delivery and strategic decision-making. E.g. **Contracting-out** and PPP.



Entrepreneurial management culture. E.g. Total Quality Management (TQM), IS 15700:2005.

Conclusion

In the fast-changing world, the **role of the government has increased**, particularly in the provision of **service delivery**. The **governance structure needs to evolve** from a **monolithic bureaucratic hierarchy** towards **multi-level institutions** that interpenetrate **civil society** and **minimize the gap between government and the citizens**.

3.4. FRAUDS IN CIVIL SERVICES EXAMINATION

Introduction

Recently, some civil servants have been alleged of faking certificates to enter into prestigious civil services. Also, cases have surfaced where aspiring Civil Servants have used ChatGPT to cheat in the examination. Such issues point to the increasing instances of fraud and dishonesty in Civil Services Examination.

Key Stakeholders and their Interests

Stakeholders	Interests
Recruiting agencies (such as UPSC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fair and open competition, loss of trust reposed by public, Constitutional obligations.
Public at large	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Credibility and transparency of selection process, faith in Meritocracy etc.
Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trust reposed by Public, increasing instances of dishonesty in public services, detrimental to growth of nation & society at large.
Aspiring Civil Servants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aspiring Civil Servants are expected to uphold the standards of Civil Services when engaging in the examination process.

Ethical Issues Involved

- Detrimental to Social Justice:** Use of fake certificates can lead to questioning the validity and fairness of affirmative actions.
- Administrative implications:** Entry of unethical candidates in civil services may result in inefficient Bureaucracy, non-adherence to the conduct rules, etc.
- Violates Utilitarianism:** Cheating/abuse of power is detrimental to society at large.
- Knowledge without Character:** Cheating & abuse of power is amongst the **seven social sins**.
- Other:** Against Kant's Categorical Imperative & Deontology, etc.

Steps taken to nudge aspiring Civil Servants towards ethical conduct

- **Introduction of ethics paper:** Ethics was introduced in 2013 as a recruitment filter in civil services.
- **Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act, 2024:** Aims to **prevent the use of** unfair means in public examinations and bring greater transparency, fairness and credibility to **public examinations like UPSC, SSC, etc.**
- **Use of digital technologies by UPSC to deter cheating:**
 - UPSC plans to use Aadhaar-based fingerprint authentication and facial recognition.
 - CCTV surveillance using AI to check impersonation

Way forward

- **Values like honesty, integrity, truthfulness & self-dignity** should be inculcated among students from the very beginning of education.
- **Exam Reforms:**
 - **Stringent verification processes** after **selection of candidates**
 - **Stringent measures rooted in ethics** to curb examination malpractices, promoting merit and fairness.
 - **Aptitude and leadership tests** may be introduced for selection to curb abuse of power during civil servant deputation (**Hota Committee**).
 - **Technologically based solutions:** New strategies need to be considered and employed to better manage the advancement of technology use for illegitimate purposes.
- **Following International Best Practices:** The Australian Public Service Act prescribes a set of Public Service Values, the Public Service Commissioner overseeing their implementation and adherence.

Conclusion

Maintaining the integrity of the Civil Services Examination is crucial for a fair and efficient bureaucracy. Strengthening ethical education, adopting robust technological safeguards, and continually updating rules are essential to uphold meritocracy and public trust.

“

I would prefer even to fail with honor than win by cheating.

–Sophocles








”

3.5. CORRUPTION

Introduction

Recently, Central Vigilance Commission released its 60th annual report. According to the report, as many as **74,203 corruption complaints** were received against all categories of officers/employees in 2023, of which 66,373 were disposed of and 7,830 were pending.

Key Stakeholders and their Interests

Stakeholders	Interests
 Public Officials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public officials make efforts to make system corruption free, however, some officer misuse power for personal gain.
 Citizens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unrestricted access to public services.
 Civil Society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anti-corruption advocacy. • Demand for good governance and transparency.
 Judiciary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upholding the law and ensuring justice. • Maintaining judicial integrity.
 Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exposing corruption and holding power to account.

Corruption

- **Definition:** It is commonly defined as **the abuse of public office for personal gain**.
 - Its expanded definition includes **abuse of power and influence** vested in a person as a result of holding a political office, of holding an influential role in a corporation, of having personal wealth or access to significant resources, or of having elevated social standing.
- **Gains from Corruption:** Gains include both financial (bribery) and non-financial (patronage, nepotism, embezzlement, increase in position of power etc.).

Ethical Systems and Corruption	
Ethical System	View on Corruption
Deontology	▶ Going by the Kantian moral philosophy on which this ethical system is built, corruption is seen as an immoral or morally bad action.
Utilitarianism	▶ Corruption has bad effects on society, jeopardizes the common good and inflicts pain on very large number of people.
Contractarianism	▶ Corruption does not, in any way, promote social cohesion or the social contract.

Ethical Implications of Corruption

- **Inequality:** Preferential treatment of those who can afford to pay bribes or offer favors, thus violating the ethical principle of justice.
- **Breach of Trust:** Public office holders have a fiduciary **duty to act in the interest of the citizens**. Corruption **erodes that public trust** in institutions.
- **Conflict of Interest:** Individuals in positions of power prioritize their own benefits over their duty to the public.
- **Hamper Social Justice:** Funds meant for development projects, healthcare, or education are siphoned off, depriving citizens of essential services.
- **Undermining Integrity:** It can foster a culture where dishonesty, bribery, and manipulation are accepted as part of the system.
- **Moral Decay:** Attitude of **moral relativism** weakens the **ethical fabric** of society, as individuals rationalize corrupt actions based on circumstances rather than adhering to absolute ethical standards.
- **Undermining Rule of Law:** Enforcement of laws becomes selective or arbitrary.

Way Forward (Second Administrative Reforms Commission on Combating Corruption)

- **Collusive Bribery:** Prevention of Corruption Act should be amended to provide for a special offence of collusive bribery.
- **Sanctions for Prosecution:** Prior sanction should not be necessary for prosecuting a public servant who has been trapped red-handed or in cases of possessing assets disproportionate to the known sources of income.
- **Liability of Corrupt Public Servants to Pay Damages:** Public servants causing loss through corruption should be liable to compensate for the loss and face additional penalties.
- **Speeding up Trials:** A legal provision needs to be introduced fixing a time limit for various stages of trial.
- **Other:** Protection to Whistleblowers, etc.

Conclusion

Corruption remains a significant challenge, undermining governance, social justice, and public trust. Fostering a culture of transparency, integrity, and public participation is critical for reducing corruption and promoting good governance.

“

Corruption is a cancer, a cancer that eats away at a citizen's faith in democracy, diminishes the instinct for innovation and creativity

– Joe Biden



”

3.6. SOCIAL MEDIA AND CIVIL SERVANTS







Introduction

“Don't fall into the 'Singham' trap. The Police uniform is not associated with authority and awe but inspires pride.” – Prime Minister. This was spoken in the context of Civil Servants turning into Instagram celebrities. At the same time, IAS officer and collector Prasanth Nair used his social media influence to gather volunteers for cleaning up a lake in Kerala.

Civil Servants have been using Social Media these days for various purposes such as:

- **Connecting with citizens** to increase public participation, build trust, and increase popularity.
- **Sharing information and improving awareness regarding government schemes, latest policy updates, regulations** etc. E.g., Delhi Traffic Police increasing traffic law awareness through memes.
- **Understanding public viewpoint** on policies and programmes and underlying issues like casteism, communalism, and sexism among others.
- **For expressing personal opinion** and sharing other content.

Key Stakeholders and their Interests

Stakeholders	Interests
 Civil Servants	• De facto representatives of the government and at the same time right to freedom of speech and expression as a citizen.
 Government	• Set policies, guidelines, and standards for civil servants' social media usage.
 Citizens/Public	• Audiences and recipients of the information shared by civil servants and may actively participate by commenting, asking questions, or seeking assistance through social media channels.
 Media	• Monitor and report on civil servants' social media activities, amplifying their reach and impact.
 Colleagues/Peers	• Follow and engage with their peers' social media activities to exchange ideas, share best practices, or coordinate efforts.
 Regulatory Bodies	• Monitoring and ensuring compliance with social media usage guidelines or policies.

Ethical issues arising out of social media use by Civil servants

- **Principle of Neutrality and Anonymity:** Civil service values require political neutrality and discourage public recognition or personal glorification of officers.
- **Inconsistent with the parliamentary form of government:** Bureaucrats are not directly accountable to the public but only accountable to their line of authority.
- **Violation of confidentiality and threat to national security:** Risk of information leakage, personal data shared online can be used for intelligence gathering, etc.
- **It can blur the distinction between an individual's professional and private identity:** Actions online are easily visible to colleagues, employers, and the general public.
- **Undue self-promotion:** Many Civil Servants post about their work. These posts are then promoted by their fans and followers, creating a public narrative of their performance.

All India Services (Conduct) Rules, 1968

It highlights that **no member of the services should make a statement on any public media-**

- which has the effect of an **adverse criticism of any current or recent policy or action** of Central Government or a State Government.
- which is **capable of embarrassing the relations between the Central Government and any State Government; and between Central Government and Government of any Foreign State.**

Way Forward (Suggestion by the Department of Electronics and Information Technology for social media)

- **Identity:** Civil Servants must clearly mention their identity, their role in the department and publish information in the first person.
- **Authority:** Do not comment and respond unless authorized to do so, especially in matters that are sub-judice, draft legislations or relating to other individuals.
- **Relevance:** Comment on issues **associated with their area and make relevant and pertinent comments.**
- **Professionalism:** Be Polite, Be Discrete and Be Respectful to all and do not make personal comments for or against any individuals or agencies.
- **Compliance:** Be compliant with relevant rules and regulations. Do not infringe upon IPR, Copyright of others.
- **Privacy:** Not to reveal personal information about other individuals as well as self.

Conclusion

Social media can enhance public engagement by civil servants, but must be used with caution to uphold neutrality, confidentiality, and professionalism. A balanced, responsible approach is key to maintaining trust and integrity in public service.

“

If you just set out to be liked, you would be prepared to compromise on anything at any time.

—Margaret Thatcher



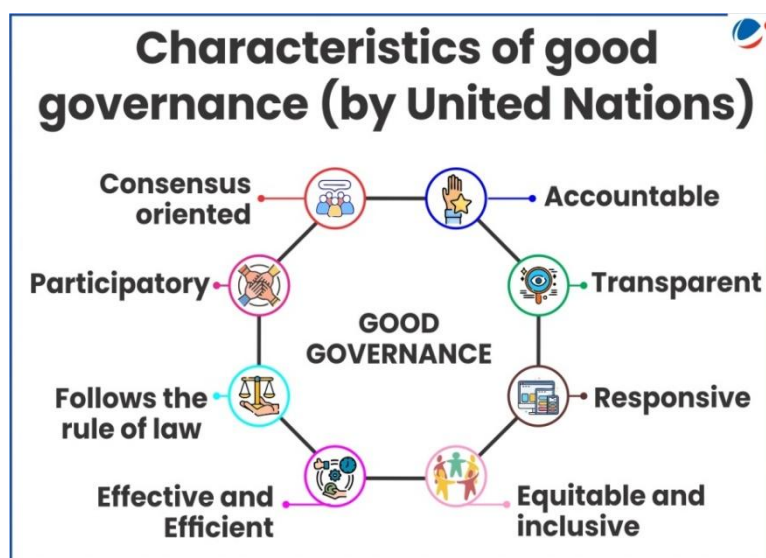
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3.7. INDIC IDEA OF GOOD GOVERNANCE

Introduction

Recent emphasis on the idea of **P2G2 or Pro-People Good Governance** in India and the creation of a new Department of **Government Efficiency** in USA indicates the growing realization towards better and people-oriented governance. In this light, it is essential to revisit the India's age old traditions that had the idea of **Rajadharma** imbibed in them dealing with justice, fairness, and welfare of the people.

Good Governance provides a **comprehensive framework** that ensures that the **voices of the most vulnerable** are heard and that decisions are made to **address both current and future needs.**



Indic Idea of Good Governance

- **Brihadaranya Upanishad:** Stresses on the duty of the king to protect **Dharma**, the public good, so that the weak are not exploited.
- **Mundaka Upanishad:** It includes the phrase “**Satyamev Jayate**” that translates to **Truth alone triumphs**.
- **Epic Ramayana (Ram-Rajya or ideal governance):** According to **Ram Rajya**, a leader is expected to look after everyone who need help and support instead of accumulating wealth for himself.
- **Bhagwat Gita:** Talks about the concept of **Adhishtan**, an important element for the foundation of everything, including governance.
 - Adhishtan (or the seat of action) **ensures that decisions are made with responsibility and stability.**
- **Thirukural:** Deals with the **orderly development** of the society, including regulation to ensure reasonableness of prospecting and exploitation of resources.
- **Kautilya’s Arthashastra:** Deals with **Yogakashema**, or the welfare of the citizens, and **Raj Dharma**.
- **Antyodaya:** Implies welfare of all through the **weakest** of the society to achieve **Sarvodaya** or ‘development of all’.

Do you know?

Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj adopted the approach of Upbhogshoonya Swami to wards kingship that deals with the complete ownership of subjects without any personal aggrandisement.

Relevance of the Indic Ideas of Good Governance

- **Adapting to Globalisation:** Globalisation has limited the authority of government with the rise of various transnational organizations and supranational organizations.
 - Philosophies like **Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam** (the world is one family) promotes global unity and inclusivity.
- **Preserving Democracy:** By ensuring cooperation between the government and civil society/citizens.
- **Welfare for All:** Concept of Antodaya aligns with the **modern concept of inclusive development**.
 - It is seen in programs like MGNREGA, Public Distribution System (PDS), etc.
- **Conflict Resolution:** The Nyaya system of jurisprudence, which focuses on justice, fairness, and mediation, offers an alternative to adversarial legal systems.

Conclusion

Basic features of the **modern day concept of good governance** resonates well with the thought process and the administrative structure postulated by the ancient scriptures. The primary objective of the authority in both the cases essentially is the **happiness of the people**. Therefore, there is a strong need to dive into the seas and oceans of Ancient Scriptures and gain pearls of wisdom necessary to build **SMART (simple, moral, accountable, responsive and transparent)** administration.

“

Strong government doesn't mean simply military power or an efficient intelligence apparatus. Instead, it should mean effective, fair administration – in other words, 'good governance'

–Raghuram Rajan



”

3.8. KEY WORDS

Key Words			
Conflict of Interests	Nepotism	Whistleblowing	Probity
Accountability	Utilitarianism	Categorical Imperative	Deontology
Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam	Neutrality	Anonymity	

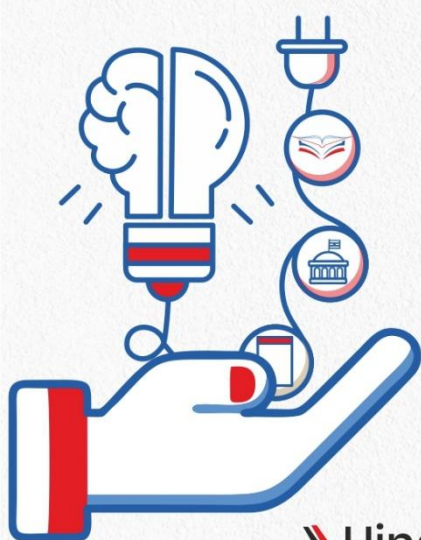
3.9. PRACTICE QUESTION

Answer Canvas

Whistleblowing is a moral act of courage but also raises ethical dilemmas in governance. Discuss.

Intro	Body Part	Conclusion
Define whistleblowing – exposing wrongdoing within an organisation in public interest.	Briefly mention that Whistleblowing is a moral act of courage along with example. Then, cover Ethical Dilemmas associated with it such as Public Good vs Confidentiality, etc.	Provide suggestions such as strengthening Legal protection, institutional support etc.

OPTIONAL SUBJECT CLASSES 2026



» Geography » Sociology
» Political Science and
International Relations

20 JUNE, 2 PM

» Physics

15 JULY

» Anthropology **10 JULY**

» Hindi Literature » Public Administration

STARTING SOON

4. ETHICS AND SOCIETY

4.1. RIGHT TO DIE WITH DIGNITY

Introduction

The principle of the **Right to Die with Dignity** has come under focus in two recent but contrasting events. In India, a 3-year-old girl from the Jain community, battling terminal brain tumour, died through the practice of Santhara (fasting unto death). This incident sparked ethical concern that whether the child was able enough to make informed decision.

Meanwhile in **France**, lawmakers approved a Bill that allows adults suffering from unbearable and incurable illnesses to choose **assisted dying** (medical personnel assists a person to die).

About the Right to Die with Dignity

- **Meaning:** Refers to the idea that **terminally ill individuals** should have the **right** to make their **own end-of-life decisions**, like determining the pain and suffering they should endure.
 - **Euthanasia** (means “good death”) is an **essential means to realise this right** for a **terminally ill person**. It is of two types
 - > **Active:** Killing a patient by active means like administering lethal drug. It is **illegal in India**.
 - > **Passive:** Intentionally letting a patient die by **withholding artificial life support** such as a ventilator or feeding tube.
- **Status in India:**
 - In 2011, the Supreme Court in **Aruna Shanbaug Case vs. Union of India** allowed passive euthanasia for the first time.
 - In **Common Cause vs. Union of India & Anr. (2018)** case, the Supreme Court ruled that the right to life under **Article 21** of the Constitution encompasses the ‘**Right to die with dignity**’ and **upheld legality of passive euthanasia** and laid down **procedure for living wills** in India.

Key Stakeholders and associated Ethical Issues	
Terminally Ill Patients and Their Families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patients often experience unbearable physical pain, and suffering by seeing their families suffer emotionally and financially. • Families may struggle with emotional conflict the desire to relieve their loved one’s suffering while coping with grief of loss of life.
Healthcare Providers (Doctors, Nurses, Palliative Care Professionals)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medical professionals are committed to alleviating suffering but are also bound by the Hippocratic Oath (“do no harm”). • They face moral dilemmas about respecting patient autonomy versus preserving life.
Legislators and Policymakers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protecting rights and autonomy of the patients and their families including patients right to die with dignity while also preventing potential for misuse.
Society at large	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Society values the sanctity of life and the collective responsibility to protect its most vulnerable members. • However, evolving views on personal autonomy and dignity challenge traditional norms.

Ethical Dilemma involved in Right to Die with Dignity

- **Quality of Life vs Sanctity of Life:** Is survival meaningful when pain or loss of dignity overwhelms life?
- **Constitutional Morality vs Respect for Autonomy:** Should personal choice override legal and moral constraints?
- **Palliative Care vs Justice:** Should we rely only on care, or allow dignified death where care fails?
- **Non-maleficence vs Principle of Double Effect:** Should doctors provide relief from pain even if it shortens life?

Arguments in Favor of Right to Die with Dignity

- **Quality of Life:** Quality of life **transcends simple survival**, encompassing psychological well-being, cognitive function, etc.
- **Respect for Autonomy:** Autonomy represents the cornerstone of human moral agency.
 - **Bhishma Pitamah (Bhagwat Gita)** opted for Iksha Mrityu and **Socrates** chose death over exile.
- **Principle of Double Effect:** It is **acceptable** for a doctor to prescribe drugs with the **intention** to **relieve pain**, despite knowing that the drugs will shorten the patient's life.
- **Justice:** When curative medicine fails and palliative care cannot adequately control suffering, continuing treatment may cause more harm than good.

Arguments Against Right to Die with Dignity

- **Sanctity of Life:** E.g., **Buddhism** preaches the sacredness of life through the **concept of Ahimsa (Non-violence) and no harm**.
- **Constitutional Morality:** E.g., Freedom of religion under **Article 25(1)** is made subject to **public order, morality and health**.
- **Palliative Care:** Good care can manage suffering without euthanasia.
 - Also, **medical science is evolving everyday**. What is incurable today may be curable tomorrow.
- **Non-maleficence (do no harm):** It is in consonance with the **Hippocratic Oath**.
- **Contradicts Kantian Philosophy:** As per Kant, **preserving life** is the **universal duty**.
- **Potential for Misuse:** In case of **minor** (young and sensitive individual) and **terminally ill patients** (lacking rational mind), autonomy principle could be abused.

Way Forward on Ensuring the Right to Die with Dignity

- **Establishing Interpretative Dialogues:** **Regular communication** facilitates understanding the patient's opinion towards their life, health, and sickness.
- **Effective Regulation:** Practice of Euthanasia should be **effectively regulated** to ensure it is performed only **under hospital settings** with the **certification of at least 2 physicians**.
- **Prevent Misuse:** Before executing euthanasia, there should be a **thorough psychological evaluation, counselling, wait period**, to ensure that the patient is not improperly influenced.
- **Care Ethics Approach:** Apply a care-based approach, especially for **minors and mentally vulnerable patients**.

Conclusion

Medical advances may extend life, but they cannot always relieve suffering. When pain becomes unbearable, the **right to die with dignity** deserves thoughtful consideration—supported by strong ethical guidelines and strict regulations to prevent misuse.

As physicist **Stephen Hawking** rightly said: “I believe those who suffer from a terminal illness and experience great pain should have the right to choose to end their own life, and those who assist them should be free from prosecution.” This reflects a compassionate, humane approach to one of the most profound moral questions of our time.



A long illness between life and death makes **death a comfort** both to those who die and to those who remain.

– Jean de La Bruyere
(French Philosopher)



4.2. INSTANT JUSTICE

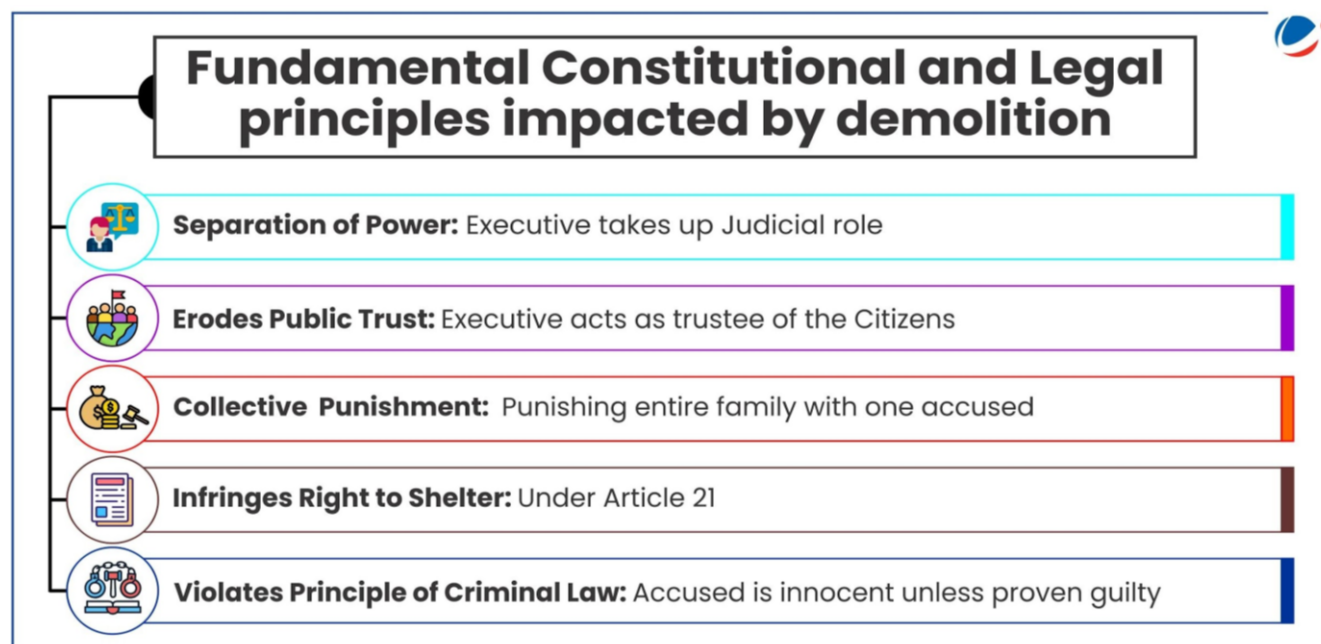
Introduction

Recently, Supreme Court (SC) issued pan-India guidelines on the **demolition of private properties**. The Court held that demolition of buildings without adhering to the **principles of Natural Justice**, and **due process of law**

corresponds to a state of lawlessness **where ‘might is right’**. The Court also pointed out that instances of instant justice are misadventures **depicting the arbitrary executive action** and stand against the **constitutional ethos and values**.

Key Guidelines issued by the Court

- **Prior Notice:** No demolition is to be carried out without a prior show cause notice served to the owner of the property.
- **The opportunity of being heard:** The concerned person should be given an opportunity of a personal hearing by the designated authority.
- **Process of Demolition:** The proceedings should be **video-graphed, and recording** should be duly preserved.
- **Safeguard against violation:** The court held that violation of its directions would attract **contempt proceedings** along with **prosecution of the concerned authorities**.



Key Stakeholders and their Interests	
Stakeholders	Interests
Victims and Their Families	• Access to Justice, Right to Fair Trial, Human Right Protection, Dignity, etc.
Law Enforcement and Judiciary	• Rule of law, Criminal Justice System, Proportionality in crime and Punishment, Delivering fair and impartial punishment
Society at Large	• Speedy justice, Faith in Judicial System, Law and Order, Public Safety
Perpetrators (Alleged or Convicted)	• Quick Justice Delivery, Protecting the vulnerable, etc.
Government	• Fair Criminal Justice System, Balancing individual rights with collective security, etc.

Concept of Justice

- Justice is the ethical, philosophical idea that **everyone should be treated fairly and equally by the law**. **Justice is not a static concept**, but rather one that is constantly evolving.

- **John Rawls** in his **Theory of Justice** proposed **two principles of justice**: the principle of **equal basic liberties** and the **difference principle**.
 - The former ensures **equal rights and freedoms for all**, while the latter allows for **inequalities as long as they benefit the least advantaged** members of society.

Types of Justice

Justice	Concept
Distributive justice	▶ Also referred to as Economic Justice , it is concerned with giving all members of the society " a fair share " of the benefits and resources available.
Procedural justice	▶ Rules must be impartially followed and consistently applied in order to generate an unbiased decision.
Retributive justice	▶ Idea that people deserve to be treated in the same way they treat others . ▶ It is a retroactive approach that justifies punishment as a response to past injustice or wrongdoing.
Restorative Justice	▶ Seeks to repair and prevent similar harms from happening in the future by bringing both the accuser and accused together to address and communicate their needs.
Rehabilitative Justice	▶ Punishment can prevent future crime by reforming individual offender's behavior . ▶ Involves education and vocational programmes, counseling, or skills training .

Reasons behind growing cases of Instant Justice

- **Diminishing Faith in Justice Delivery System**: An inordinate delay in justice has eroded fear and faith in law, reinforcing the belief that "**justice delayed is justice denied**". (**Law Commission** (239th report))
- **Lack of Emotional Intelligence**: In cases involving rape, murder, etc., emotions run high, often triggering impulsive acts of revenge from the community.
- **Misinformation**: Misinformation or viral content on social media can mobilize crowds quickly, leading to **vigilante justice**.
- **Compromised ethical journalism**: The media's role in sensationalizing crime stories often stokes public outrage.
- **Public Perception**: Instances of encounters by Police are often welcomed by public and regarded as **strong deterrent** for the future.

Ethical Issues involved in Instant Justice

	Rule of Law vs. Rule by Law: Instant justice erodes idea of rule of law, replacing it with arbitrary or biased judgment.
	Due Process of Law vs. Swift Justice: Instant justice skips legal safeguards, denying the accused their right to a fair trial (Article 21) . ◦ It compromises with the principle of ' deemed to be innocent until proven guilty '.
	Retributive vs. Reformatory Justice: Instant justice often embodies worst aspects of retributive justice .
	Means vs. Ends debate: Whether achieving a desirable or just result (like Perceived deterrence in cases of criminality) can justify using methods that might violate fundamental ethical principles or legal procedures.

Way Forward

- **Balancing retributive justice with restorative justice:** It can ensure that **Justice should not only be done it must be seen to be done.**
- **Judicial reforms:** Focusing on judicial reforms that enhance **transparency, efficiency, and accountability** within the legal system, thereby restoring public confidence.
 - Additionally, SC guidelines given in **D.K. Basu vs. State of West Bengal (1996)**, PUCL vs. State of Maharashtra (2014) etc. can be implemented.
- **Fostering Accountability of Institutions:** The mandate of the Police should ensure that constitutionally protected right of the accused to prove their innocence in a court is protected.

Conclusion

The desire for quick, fair and affordable justice is universal. Protection of life and liberty have been given a pre-eminent position in our Constitution by enacting **Article 21** as a fundamental right and imposing a duty on the State to **protect life and personal liberty** of every citizen. **Any deprivation or breach of this valuable right is not permissible** unless the procedure prescribed by law for that purpose is just, fair and reasonable.



Let a hundred guilty be acquitted, but one innocent should not be convicted

–English Jurist Sir William Blackstone








4.3. ETHICAL DIMENSIONS OF BODY SHAMING

Introduction

Body shaming is the act of criticising someone based on the shape, size, or appearance of their body. Anyone can be the target of body shaming.

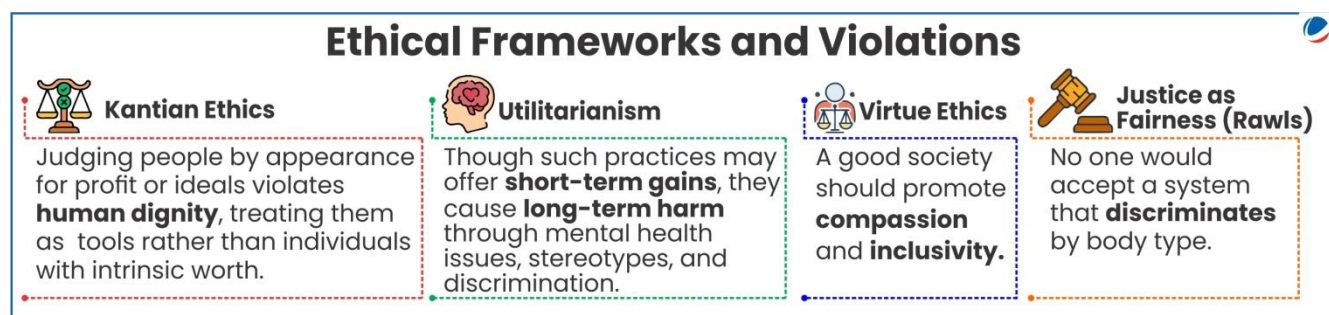
As wellness and beauty are increasingly commercialized, body image is often misused in marketing. For example, a Thai café gave discounts to thin customers, exposing the ethical issues in rewarding body size. Such tactics may seem harmless but raise serious concerns about dignity, fairness, and mental health—especially in a diverse society like India.

Key Stakeholders and their Interests	
Stakeholders	Interests
 Society at Large	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foster empathy, inclusivity, and respect for diversity in appearance
 Media & Influencers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethical responsibility, avoid promoting toxic beauty standards, embrace inclusive messaging
 Businesses/Marketers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethical advertising, customer trust, long-term brand reputation over harmful short-term gains
 Health Professionals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide support for body image issues, eating disorders, and psychological impacts
 Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regulate harmful content, promote mental health, ensure ethical advertising standards

Socio-Cultural Factors Driving Body Image Shaming

- **Unrealistic Beauty Standards:** Popular culture, including Bollywood films and fairness cream ads, promotes narrow beauty ideals like fair skin and slim bodies.

- **Media & Social Media Pressure:** Movies and Platforms like Instagram and YouTube often promote unrealistic beauty through filters and edited images.
 - E.g., an 18-year-old girl from Kerala, tragically died after extreme water fasting influenced by online weight loss advice.
- **Cultural and Family Bias:** Women are often valued for their appearance, while men face pressure to be muscular or tall.
 - In many Indian households, girls are pressured to lose weight or become fairer.
- **Peer and Social Conditioning:** From school bullying to college jokes, appearance-based teasing starts early and normalizes judgment based on looks.



Way Forward

- **Stronger Regulations:** Enforce laws to ban ads that promote body-based discrimination.
- **Media Awareness:** E.g., Dove's "Campaign for Real Beauty" broke stereotypes by featuring women of all ages, shapes, and sizes, redefining what beauty means.
- **Ethical Marketing:** Businesses should focus on inclusivity and avoid content that shames bodies.
- **Mental Health & Dialogue:** Offer psychological support for those affected by body shaming.
- **Role of Parents/ Schools:** They should promote body positivity, avoid judging appearances, praise inner qualities, etc.

Conclusion

Ending body shaming requires collective effort—from media, institutions, and individuals—to shift focus from **appearance** to **acceptance**. True progress lies in valuing people for their character, not their looks, and creating a culture where everybody is treated with respect and dignity.

4.4. EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE IN EDUCATION

Introduction

Traditionally, education was focussed mainly on development of **cognitive skills and intelligence** is seen as the **primary driver of educational achievement**. However, a **recent study** suggests that **non-cognitive skills and Emotional Intelligence (EI)** is as crucial in shaping a student's academic journey as brain intelligence.

Importance of EI in education

- **Enhanced Academic Performance:** Emotionally intelligent students exhibit **improved focus and problem-solving abilities**, enabling them to engage more effectively in the **learning process**.
- **Positive mental health:** Emotionally intelligent students are more likely to exhibit **higher self-esteem**, **lower levels of anxiety and depression**.
- **Developing Empathy and Compassion:** Helps in creation of a **supportive and inclusive learning environment**, where students feel valued and understood and develop respect for diverse perspectives.
 - E.g. students taught **gender-sensitivity**, sharing through **experiential learning**.
- **Nurturing Relationships:** EI equips students with the skills necessary to communicate their thoughts.
 - They learn to **listen actively**, **respond empathetically**, and **resolve conflicts constructively**.

- **Ensure Professional Success in the long-term:** EI is highly **valued by employers and organizations** as it helps to manage emotions, collaborate effectively, and exhibit strong interpersonal skills.
 - E.g. coordination with colleagues, handling work pressures.
- **Other:** Effective Leadership and Decision-making, etc.

Ways to inculcate Emotional Intelligence

- **Social-emotional learning (SEL) programs:** Designed to teach students emotional management, goal-setting, empathy, relationship-building, and responsible decision-making skills.
- **Collaborative Learning:** Group projects, peer tutoring, and team activities foster teamwork, communication, idea-sharing, and conflict resolution skills.
 - E.g. Happiness Curriculum, Delhi.
- **Reflection and self-awareness practices:** **Meditation, journaling** helps students develop **self-awareness and self-regulation**.
- **Empowering Teachers and Staff:** Enables teachers to meet emotional needs, foster safe and inclusive classrooms, and adopt restorative practices instead of punitive measures.
- **Feedback system:** Measuring the impact of steps taken through **Student Surveys, behavioural indicators like peer relationships, discipline referrals etc.**
- **National Education Policy, 2020** emphasises on developing **creative potential** of each individual by focussing on **social, ethical and emotional** dispositions.
 - E.g. **multi-disciplinary education** with freedom to choose subjects, professional academic and career counselling etc.

Conclusion

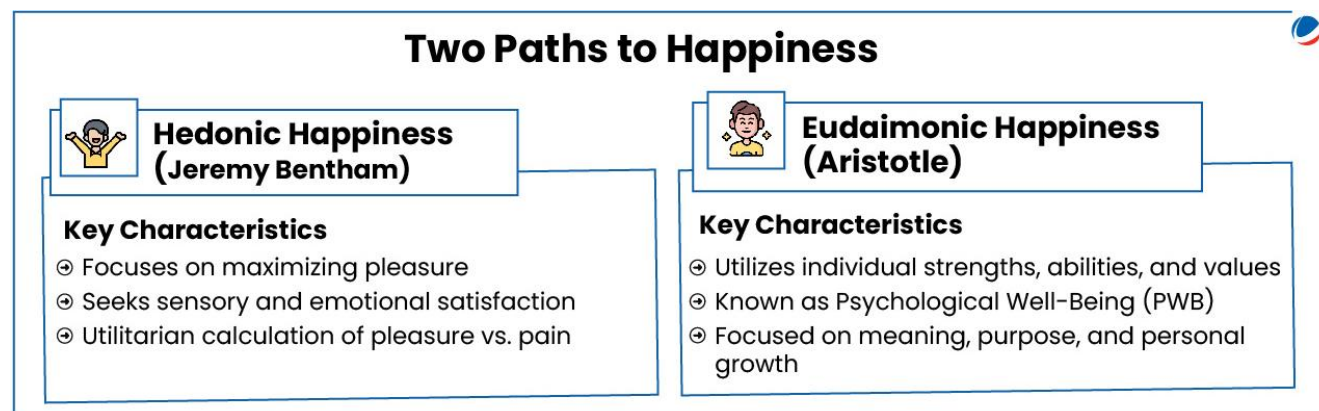
Emotional Intelligence is essential for students' overall development, enabling better learning, mental well-being, and social skills. Integrating EI into education helps nurture empathetic, resilient, and responsible individuals, aligning with the holistic goals of NEP 2020.

4.5. HAPPINESS

Introduction

“Happiness is a choice that requires effort at times”- Aeschylus. The quote becomes significant in the backdrop of India being ranked **118th among 147** countries in **World Happiness Report 2025** where it ranks lower than its neighbours such as Nepal and Pakistan.

Happiness is generally understood as **“subjective enjoyment of life as a whole”** reflecting degree to which an individual perceives his/her life favourably. Scholars generally recognize two fundamental types:-





The Pursuit of Happiness: A Philosophical Quest through Eastern and Western Wisdom

Indian Perspectives	Western Perspective
Carvaka ethics: <i>kāma</i> is the supreme end and <i>artha</i> is the means to fulfil this end.	Epicureanism (Moderate Hedonism): Freedom from physical pain and mental anxiety. E.g. Strikes balance between necessary and unnecessary pleasures
Bhagavad Gita (Nishkama Karma): You have a right to perform your prescribed duty, but you are not entitled to the fruits of action. Quote: “<i>karmany evadhikaras te ma phalesu kadacana</i>”	Kant (Deontological perspective): Following “Duty for Duty sake”, i.e., moral duty leads to true happiness.
Buddhism: (Middle Path): There is no path to happiness, happiness is the path (Buddha)	Locke (Pursuit of happiness): If we had no desire for happiness , Locke suggests, we would have remained content with simple pleasures like eating and sleeping . But the desire for happiness pushes us onward, to greater and higher pleasures .
Bhakti Tradition: Happiness through devotion and offerings	Utilitarianism: J.S. Mill calls for a qualitative distinction between higher (intellectual, moral, and aesthetic) pleasures and lower (sensory, bodily) pleasures , unlike Bentham
Guru Nanak: (Santokh: Contentment): Contentment is eternal Happiness.	Stoicism (Controlling the controllable): There is only one way to happiness and that is to cease worrying about things which are beyond the power of our will.
Transcendental Perspective: According to Upanishadic tradition, ‘ Sat-Chit-Ananda ’ refers to the three attributes of the ultimate reality, Brahman: Sat (existence/being), Chit (consciousness/awareness), and Ananda (bliss/joy)	Christian Theology: (St Augustine): Real happiness lies in ultimate union with God which can be achieved through faith and divine grace

Obstacles to Happiness in Contemporary Life

External Factors

- **Negative Social Comparisons:** E.g. Unrealistic standards (e.g. body, beauty).
- **Lack of Social Support Systems:** 19% of young adults across world reported having no one that they could count for social support (2023).
- **Financial Stress and Insecurity:** E.g. Poverty acts as a cognitive tax.
- **Exposure to Harmful Substances:** E.g. Addiction to Drug Abuse affects mental health.

Internal Factors

- **Self-Doubt and low self-esteem:** E.g. Negative self-perception of oneself leads to anxiety, depression, etc.
- **Not living in the Present Moment: Persistent pessimism, overthinking,** living in the Past or Future due to unresolved trauma.
- **Excessive Screen Time:** Increased screen time and reduced free play is making young people ‘**The Anxious Generation**’. (Economic Survey 2023-24)

How Civil Servants Can Promote Happiness among Citizens?

- **Adoption of People-Centric Governance and efficient service delivery:** E.g. Gram Panchayat Development Plan.
- **Transparent & Accountability: Reducing corruption through e-governance,** right to Information, Social Audit etc.

- **Promoting Mental & Emotional Well-Being:** E.g. Tele-Manas (Toll Free Mental Health Helpline).
 - **Work-Life Balance** by provisions of flexible work hours, etc.
- **Social Harmony & Community Building:** E.g. interfaith dialogues to curb communal tensions.
- **Making Happiness a policy component:** E.g. Gross National Happiness (Bhutan), Happiness Curriculum.

Conclusion

Happiness, while often considered elusive, can be fostered through intentional practices and strategies that enhance overall well-being. To cultivate happiness in one's life, individuals are encouraged to engage in activities and adopt habits that align with both hedonic and eudaimonic aspects of happiness.

“

The happiness of society is the end of government.

– John Adams



”

4.6. GOOD LIFE: THE ART OF BALANCING WORK AND LEISURE

Introduction

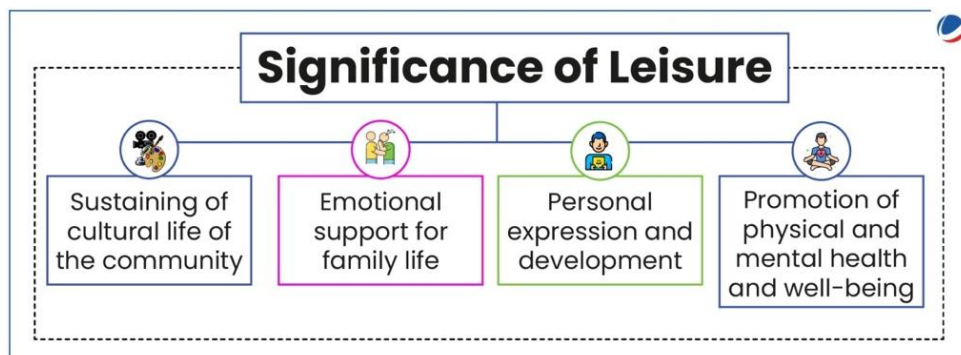
Recognising the importance of play for children's development, the **UN Convention on the Rights of the Child**, which has set out “the right of the child to rest and leisure,” **declared June 11 an International Day of Play**. Also, recent research by Anglia Ruskin University suggests **that leisure activities** like painting, knitting, or pottery can **enhance well-being more than work**.

Relationship between Work and Leisure

Work and leisure often complement each other, but can also be contrasting at times.

Complimentary Relationship

- **Freedom of choice and intrinsic motivation:** Robert Robinson once stated, “Leisure is work you volunteer for”. Thus, when a job is based on freedom of choice, it can feel like leisure.
 - E.g., writing novels or columns for newspapers might feel like leisure to persons who enjoy reading and writing.
- **Ensuring well-being:** Voltaire emphasised the beneficial aspects of work, stating, “**Work banishes boredom, vice, and poverty.**” So, just like leisure, work can also contribute to the well being of people.
 - E.g., **employment allows people to form relationships** and improve emotional control, which helps overcome trauma and improves problem-solving skills.



Contrasting Relationship

- **Freedom vs. Responsibilities:** Leisure characterised by **freedom and enjoyment**, improves **creativity, performance**, and job satisfaction.
- **Self-Expression vs Personal growth:** Performance below a certain standard **may not be acceptable in workplace**. However, excessive effort to satisfy these standards could jeopardise one's capacity for self-expression.

Factors that make it difficult to maintain a balance between work and leisure

Workplace culture: A capitalist workplace culture pushes employees toward job creeps (Taking on tasks beyond their defined job role), expectation of perfectionism , etc.	Technological advances: Technology like email and cell phones has blurred the line between work and home , making it hard to disconnect .	Desire for overearning: Some people work beyond their needs due to uncertainty about the future or the desire to bequeath wealth .	Hustle culture: Society often glorifies being busy as a sign of success .
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Way Forward

- **Positive work culture:** Promote positive work culture by adopting **participative democratic leadership styles**, fostering open communication, etc.
 - Giving workers an extra day off a week actually increases productivity (feeling of being happier) (WEF).
- **Bounded rationality:** Instead of pursuing perfectionism, bounded rationality should be accepted and people should be allowed to fail sometimes in some works.
 - The term '**bounded rationality**' refers to rational decision-making that considers the **cognitive limitations of the decision-maker**.
- **Embrace flexibility:** While technology has blurred boundaries, it also offers flexibility.
 - Flexible hours and hybrid working enhance job satisfaction and productivity.
- **Set boundaries:** Clearly define work hours and stick to them. Avoid checking work emails or taking calls outside these hours.

Conclusion

Both Aristotle and Rabindranath Tagore emphasize the **importance of leisure in cultivating a fulfilling life**. Aristotle argues that true leisure allows individuals to engage in **noble pursuit** that nurture virtue, such as music, poetry, and philosophy. Similarly, Tagore warns **that without leisure, we risk becoming mere workers**, performing tasks mindlessly without any deeper purpose.

“

Be moderate in order to taste the joys of life in abundance

-Epicurus



”

4.7. KEY WORDS

Key Words			
Euthanasia	Non-maleficence (do no harm)	Misinformation	Separation of Power
Social Conditioning	Compassion	Epicureanism (Moderate Hedonism)	Stoicism
Virtue as ethics	Constitutional Morality	Freedom of choice	Nishkama Karma

4.8. PRACTICE QUESTION

Answer Canvas

The rise of instant justice reflects a breakdown of ethical governance and public trust in legal institutions. Analyse.

Intro	Body Part	Conclusion
Provided context of rising cases of instant justice in present scenario and SC's verdict	Discuss issues which reflects a breakdown of ethical governance and public trust in legal institutions such as Violation of Rule of Law, etc.	Conclude by providing suggestion that SC guidelines related with Instant Justice need to be implemented in letter and spirit.

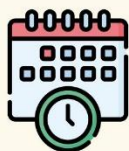
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5. ETHICS AND BUSINESS

5.1. PHILANTHROPY: A MORAL IMPERATIVE FOR SOCIAL GOOD

Introduction

"Service to others is the rent you pay for your room here on earth." – Muhammad Ali. This sentiment is reflected in India's growing philanthropic landscape. According to the **India Philanthropy Report 2025**, philanthropic funding in India is rising and is primarily driven by Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) spending. Unlike **charity**, which provides immediate relief to individuals, **philanthropy** aims for large-scale, long-term and social impact changes which can uplift entire communities.

Philosophical Basis of Philanthropy



Indian Perspective

- ▶ **Chanakya's Arthashastra:** Donate 1/6th revenue for public welfare
- ▶ **Vivekananda's Daridra Narayana:** Serving poor is worshipping God
- ▶ **Gandhiji's Trusteeship Theory**
- ▶ **Religious: E.g.** Daana (giving) and dakshina (alms) in Hinduism, zakaat (prescribed offerings) in Islam, etc.



Western Perspective

- ▶ **Consequentialist View (Virtue ethics):** Generosity and compassion are important virtues
- ▶ **Rawl's Theory (Justice as fairness):** Prioritization of the most disadvantaged sections.
- ▶ **Libertarianism:** Emphasize on moral superiority of philanthropy as compared to government-provided assistance.
- ▶ **Other:** Utilitarianism, Kantian Ethics (Moral Obligation), etc.

Significance of philanthropy as a development tool

- **Bridging Funding Gaps:** Supplement critical budgetary support given by governments.
- **Addressing Development Gaps:** E.g., **Azim Premji Foundation** enhances rural public education.
- **Catalyzing Innovation:** E.g., **Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation** focus on sanitation innovations aligning with **Swachh Bharat Mission**.

Ethical challenges in Philanthropy

- **Elite capture of social agenda:** Large donors may influence policy decisions. Moreover, it is often used for tax evasion & money laundering activities.
- **Corporate Dilemma:** Responsibility of businesses is to increase profits and philanthropy goes against shareholder's assets.
- **Regional and Geographical Inequality:** Urban-centric donations (**Maharashtra & Karnataka get maximum CSR funds, whereas Bihar & Odisha lag far behind**)
- **Accountability and Transparency Deficits:** Miniscule amount of NGOs which receives foreign funding's file returns.

Conclusion

Philanthropy should have foundations laid on ethical considerations of promoting an egalitarian society characterised by equity and justice. Philanthropy's potential to reach to the bottom rung of the society, where hundreds of millions of our citizens live, where neither the state nor the markets can reach, should be rightly utilized to reach that very last citizen.

“

Philanthropy is not about giving money but about solving problems.

–Bill Gates



”

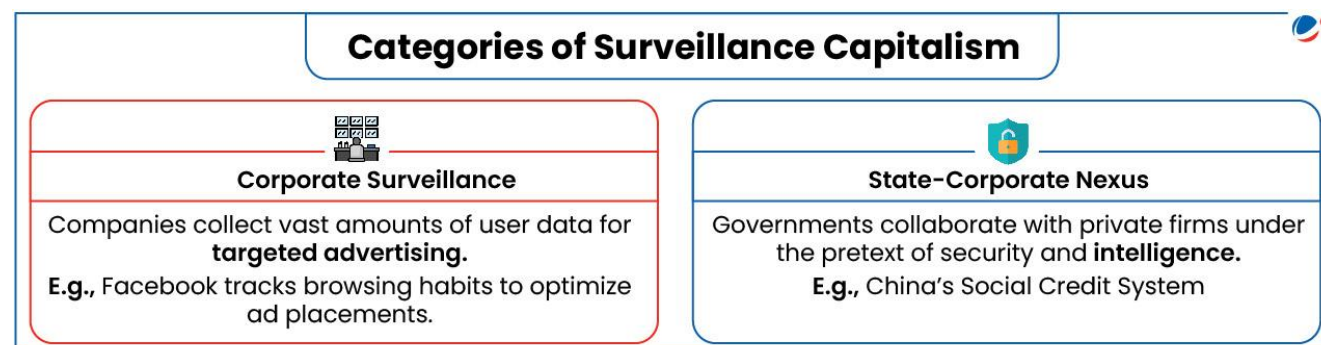
5.2. SURVEILLANCE CAPITALISM

Introduction

With digital information growing exponentially—from just 1% in 1986 to 98% by 2013—personal data has emerged as the new gold of the 21st century. This transformation has fuelled the rise of **Surveillance Capitalism**, led by tech giants like **Google, Meta, and Amazon**, raises profound **ethical, social, and regulatory concerns** about privacy, autonomy, and democratic accountability.

What is Surveillance Capitalism?

- **Definition:** An economic system where **private corporations** (e.g., Amazon, Alphabet, etc.) **systematically collect, analyze, and monetize personal data** to **predict and influence human behavior for profit** (e.g., targeted ads, pricing, insurance decisions).
- **Mechanism:** Operates by extracting **user data**, analyzing **behavior** through AI, and using insights to influence **choices** via **targeted ads** and **digital nudging**.



Comparison between Traditional Capitalism and Surveillance Capitalism		
Feature	Traditional Capitalism	Surveillance Capitalism
Resource base	Labor and natural resources (coal, steel, etc.)	Personal data extracted from users
Value creation	Mass production of goods (e.g. Ford's assembly line)	Behavioral modification through digital nudging
Profit model	Selling physical products or services	Monetizing data via targeted advertising, AI-driven pricing

Ethical Implications of Surveillance Capitalism

- **Manipulation:** Algorithms exploit **cognitive biases** to shape user decisions unconsciously.
 - E.g., YouTube's recommendation system maximizes engagement by promoting emotionally charged content.
- **Privacy Erosion:** Data is often collected without proper consent, leading to mass surveillance.
 - E.g.: In 2021, Clearview AI was stopped in France from collecting Individual's data without legal basis.
- **Commodification of Personal Data:** E.g., In 2018, Sleep apnea machines in the U.S. secretly sent usage data to insurance firms.
- **Democratic Violations:** State and corporate surveillance weaken **citizen autonomy**.
 - E.g., India's IT Rules (2021) blur the line between national security and government control.
- **Mental Health Risks:** E.g., Social media algorithms prioritize content that triggers anger and fear, amplifying political polarization

Challenges in controlling the Surveillance Capitalism

- **Regulation:** Existing laws have failed to dismantle the core practice of commodifying data.
- **Technology:** The rapid evolution of AI and IoT (Internet of Things) **outpaces regulatory frameworks**.
- **Corporate-State Collusion:** E.g., **data sharing with intelligence agencies** reduces public scrutiny, complicating accountability.

Efforts to regulate Surveillance Capitalism



Global

- ▶ **EU's General Data Protection Regulation (2018):** Enforces **strict data consent and imposes fines** for breaches.
- ▶ **California Consumer Privacy Act (2020):** Grants residents **the right to know** what personal data companies collect, opt out of its sale, etc.



India

- ▶ **K.S. Puttaswamy Case (2017):** Supreme Court declared **privacy a fundamental right under Article 21**.
- ▶ **Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) Act (2023):** Requires **individual's consent** for data processing, allows individuals to access and erase their data.

Way Forward

- **Stronger Regulatory Frameworks:** E.g., India should **strengthen the DPDP Act** by limiting exemptions and ensuring judicial oversight.
- **Antitrust Measures:** **Break up tech monopolies** to reduce their unchecked power.
- **Global Cooperation:** **Harmonize international standards** to prevent data exploitation in less-regulated regions.
- **Ethical Technology Design:** Encourage tech firms to prioritize **privacy-by-design**, reducing surveillance incentives at the development stage.

Conclusion

Surveillance Capitalism undermines privacy and autonomy by monetizing personal data without consent. Tackling it needs strong regulations, ethical tech design, and global cooperation to protect user rights and democratic values.



He who molds public sentiment goes deeper than he who enacts statutes or pronounces decisions.

-Abraham Lincoln



5.3. ETHICS OF BUSINESS DOWNSIZING




Introduction

Microsoft announced the layoff of **3% of its global workforce**, impacting thousands of employees across all levels, teams and geographies. **Automation, Mergers and Acquisitions, Job Outsourcing, etc. are key driving factors** for such downsizing. The downsizing which is aimed at **productivity, profits, competitiveness, etc. is being seen as contradictory to Business Ethics**

About Business Ethics

- **Meaning:** It is a crucial dimension of the **modern corporate culture** guiding **individuals, firms, and business enterprises**.
- **Features:** **Set of principles and values** like trust-building, equitable competition, integrity, legality, corporate governance, and personal moral development, etc.
 - Guided by the **elements of Virtue Ethics**.

- E.g., Companies like **Infosys** have come up with a **Code of Conduct and Ethics** to guide good judgement in business.

Responsibility of a Business towards various stakeholders	
 Employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultivates strong morals within the workers and employees, that not only benefits organizations but also assists individuals in developing a robust moral compass. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Hilton, global hospitality company, topped the Great Place to Work (2024) ranking due to its ethical management practices.
 Consumers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serves as a preventive mechanism, thwarting businesses from engaging in unjust or deceptive practices. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Apple provides Advanced Data Protection (ADP) feature to its iCloud services bringing end-to-end encryption.
 Society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business serve as a basis for promoting equitable and honest competition. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ As Ratan Tata had once remarked 'Business need to go beyond the interest of their companies to the communities they serve'.

Ethical Dilemmas involved in Business Downsizing

- **Utilitarianism Vs Kantian Capitalism:** Utilitarian approach considers downsizing as the **least harmful option** to **avoid bankruptcy**.
 - However, Kant's idea of **moral firm** does not favour treating employee as a means (through layoff) to achieve an end (stakeholder interests, profit, etc.).
- **Individualism Vs Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR):** **Individualism** emphasizes the rights and freedom of business owners or top management to make decisions based on profitability and self-interest, justifying downsizing for maximizing profitability.
 - **CSR** underscores a company's ethical obligation toward welfare of its employees, communities, and other stakeholders and it contradicts downsizing.
- **Deontological Vs Teleological Perspective:** **Deontological approach** does not justify downsizing as it leads to violation of principles of fairness or treating employees merely as means to an end even if it results in better profits for the company.
 - **Consequential or Teleological approach** focuses on outcome and justifies downsizing if it protects remaining jobs, improve efficiency and saves the company from collapse.
- **Ethical Relativism Vs Universalisation of Justice:** While **ethical relativism** rules out the existence of any right set of principles applicable to all, **justice** demands fairness for all without any discrimination.

Way Forward

- **Measure of Last Resort:** Business Management should first explore alternative options like reducing **marketing spend**, **cutting travel costs**, **freeze on hiring**, etc.
- **Voluntary Layoffs:** A strategy to let employees **accept voluntary layoffs** in **exchange of attractive severance packages**.
- **Agile Talent Strategy:** Companies can bolster the **long-term career prospects** of employees by investing in ongoing career development and a **culture of continuous learning**.
 - E.g., Companies like Amazon offer '**Education as a Benefit Programme**' to its employees.
- **Aiding Displaced workers:** Proactively help terminated workers find new meaningful employment.
 - **Nokia's Bridge Programme** helped 60% of its employees laid off in 2014.

Conclusion

Before going for a large scale downsizing, there is a need for the management to hard look at all other **possible options**. Further, there is a need to **upskill** the employees on the future technologies that would also help in the future growth of the company.

“

There is **one and only one social responsibility of business**—to use its resources and engage in activities designed to **increase its profits**.

—Milton Friedman



”

5.4. RESPONSIBLE CAPITALISM

Introduction

At the Tech Leaders Roundtable in Mexico, Finance Minister while **emphasizing on need for responsible capitalism** said that for large economies, the **challenge is not just to grow but also to reduce inequality** and create opportunities for everyone.

What is meant by Responsible Capitalism?

- An **economic approach that integrates ethical values into business practices**.
- Emphasizes **balancing profit with social responsibility**, ensuring businesses contribute to societal well-being, fairness, and environmental sustainability, rather than focusing solely on shareholder returns.

What's the need for Responsible Capitalism?

- **Addressing global challenges:** Help companies and governments respond to challenges like sustainability, inequality, and exclusion.
- **Business sustainability:** Purely profit-driven models may not be viable in long-term; responsible capitalism can also help in better adaptation to tech-disruptions like AI, etc.
- **Ethical Governance and Stakeholder Capitalism:** Promotes fairness in decision-making, ensuring stakeholders are treated justly and business operations comply with legal and moral standards.



Measures taken to promote Responsible Capitalism in India

- **Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR):** Mandated under **section 135 of Companies Act, 2013**.
- **Environmental regulations:** Plastic Waste Management Rules, stricter emission norms for vehicles under BS-VI, etc.
- **Labor reforms:** Code on Wages, Occupational Safety; Health and Working Conditions Code, 2020, etc.
- **Financial sector initiative:** RBI's Priority Sector Lending norms, SEBI's Green Bond guidelines, etc.

Conclusion

Responsible capitalism offers a path where economic growth is harmonized with social equity and environmental stewardship. By embedding ethical values into business practices, India can ensure inclusive and sustainable development that benefits all sections of society while safeguarding the interests of future generations.

5.5. KEY WORDS

Key Words			
Surveillance Capitalism	Nudging	Business Ethics	Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)
Ethical Relativism	Privacy Erosion	Trusteeship Theory	Responsible Capitalism

5.6. PRACTICE QUESTION

Answer Canvas

Surveillance capitalism undermines individual autonomy and ethical governance in the digital age.

Intro	Body Part	Conclusion
Define surveillance capitalism – monetisation of personal data by tech firms to predict and influence behaviour. Mention rising concerns around privacy, manipulation, and consent.	Discuss ethical concerns such as Violation of Autonomy, Privacy Erosion (Algorithms track behaviour) etc. along with the examples.	Conclude by suggesting ethical tech design rooted in privacy-by-default and responsible innovation.

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6. ETHICS AND MEDIA

6.1. MEDIA ETHICS AND SELF-REGULATION

Introduction

Recently, during Operation Sindoor, Government has asked all media channels, digital platforms and individuals to refrain from live coverage or real-time reporting of defence operations and movement of security forces. This has been done to prevent disclosure of sensitive information which may jeopardize operational effectiveness and endanger lives. This highlights the aspect of media ethics.

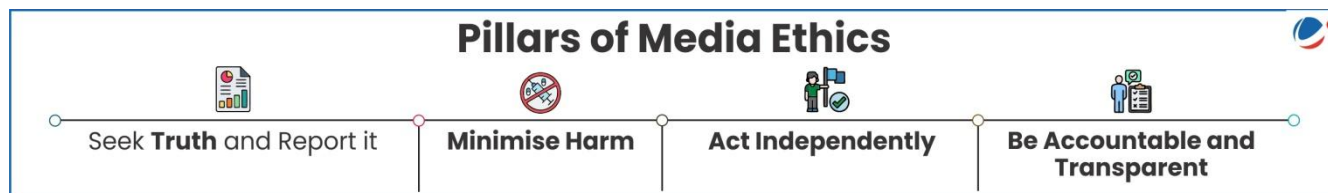
Key Stakeholders and their Interests

Stakeholders	Interests
Media actors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Media ethics must ensure that journalists observe principles of integrity, professionalism, privacy and impartiality. Ensuring autonomy of media through the mechanism of Self-regulation.
Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Media ethics promotes and defends values such as a universal respect for life and the rule of law and legality.
General Public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Serve the public by providing information which is impartial and which promotes knowledge and reason.
Police	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Media must facilitate assistance to the police and it must applaud when criminals are brought to justice as a result. The media must also hold the police to account, acting as the eyes and ears of the public.

Why the need for effective Media Ethics is becoming paramount in India?

- Confidentiality and Integrity:** E.g., Reporters covered special stories based on information concerning an individual's personal conduct in private life.
- Bias and subjectivity:** News reports often reflect bias and style that raise doubts about the media's intentions and objectives.
- Cross-media ownership by big corporate companies** has assumed alarming proportions.
- Current self-regulatory mechanism has not been effective** due to reasons like-
 - Media and market pressure: Business imperatives** of increasing revenue have taken (and continue to take) their toll on **journalistic excellence**.
 - Inadequate penalty:** Currently, ₹ 1 Lakh fine is ineffective as this fine is not in proportion to profits earned.

Pillars of Media Ethics



Way Forward

- Strengthening of **Self-regulation system** of media.
 - Hutchins Commission report** advocated for **freedom of the press, and self-regulation** was considered as the key feature, and **government intervention as the last resort**.
 - Penalties should be in proportion** to the profits earned by an errant channel.
- There should be a **universal code of ethics** which specifies the following guidelines for journalists:
 - Never deliberately distort facts or context**, including visual information.

- Recognise a special obligation to serve as **watchdogs over public affairs and government**.
- **Objectivity** is an essential technique for removing bias in seeking truth.

Conclusion

In an era of widespread misinformation and media polarization, a robust and accountable ethical framework is essential to preserve public trust. Strengthening self-regulation, ensuring proportionate penalties, and upholding core journalistic values like objectivity, accuracy, and integrity are vital to safeguard the credibility and democratic role of the media.

“

The media could not be policed from without and had to be policed from within.

–Tom Clancy



”

6.2. SOCIAL INFLUENCE AND PERSUASION IN TIMES OF SOCIAL MEDIA AND INFLUENCERS

Introduction

The digital world has witnessed exponential rise of social media influencers who become famous through their digital content on social media. These influencers are increasingly playing a significant role in shaping our opinions, consumer's interests and purchasing decisions and influence our notion of fashion, health, and music.

Key Stakeholders and their Interests	
Stakeholders	Interests
Citizens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality digital services, entertainment, self-expression, data protection and privacy, job opportunities (e.g. content creation)
Society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social cohesion, addressing of misinformation and disinformation, etc.
Market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fair competition, economic growth by digital economy, data-driven business insights
Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect consumer interests without hindering creativity and business, level playing field, maintaining national security, addressing misinformation and disinformation
Social Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality service delivery, Increased customer base, user engagement and retention
Influencers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creative freedom, monetization of personal brand, manage public image and reputation, leveraging partnerships with advertisers and brands

How Social Media and influencers are ushering progressive Social Influence and Persuasion?

- **Progressive social norms:** Influencers share uplifting and empowering content and also amplifies voice of marginalized communities.
 - E.g. Black Lives Matter, Me-too Campaign, etc.
- **Influencers as a new marketing channel:** Enhance brand credibility, help in purchase intention through collaborations and cross-promotion.
- **Promoting Inclusivity and Diversity:** Champion inclusivity by representing diverse communities and challenging stereotypes.
- **Democratisation of information:** E.g. news in regional languages, updates on twitter by government officials and leaders.

- **Karnataka Digital Advertising Guidelines – 2024 and Uttar Pradesh Digital Media Policy 2024** allows for advertisement to social media influencers to disseminate information of government policies and schemes.

Psychological Constructs Used by Digital Influencers



Reciprocal Relationship and Reciprocity Bias:

People respond to influencers by giving them likes, follows, share, in response to their services.



Familiarity Effect and Repetition Bias:

Consistent social media posts make us value familiar information more over novelty.



Social proof:

People often mimic others behaviour thinking that if everyone is using a product, it must have merit.



Halo Effect:

A person with one favourable trait is considered valuable as a whole.

Positive Role Played by Social Media Influencer to influence Consumer Behavior

- **Promoting Social Change:** Influencers raise awareness on mental health, body positivity, and women's rights.
- **Conscious Consumerism:** Some consumers are now resisting influencer marketing through a trend called "de-influencing," where influencers promote mindful spending and discourage unnecessary purchases.
- **Inclusivity and Diversity:** Several influencers challenge the gender stereotypes and represent marginalized voices, fostering acceptance and awareness.
- **Access to Information:** Officers use social media influencers to share updates, career tips, and public schemes, bridging the gap between governance and citizens.

Ethical Issues in Influencer Culture

- **Mindless Consumption:** Promote products as status symbols, not for need. This fuels materialism—contradicting **Gandhian ethics** of self-restraint.
- **Psychological Manipulation:** This is done by triggering Fear of Missing out (FOMO) and social comparison.
- **Lack of Accountability:** Many influencers act as informal opinion leaders but face no checks.
- **Dishonesty:** Plagiarizing content or failing to credit creators disrespects intellectual property and deceives followers, breaching ethical and legal norms.
- **Privacy Violations:** Large influencers collect and handle user data, often without proper safeguards.
- **Harm to Mental Health:** Idealized lifestyles online promote anxiety, low self-esteem, and dissatisfaction. From a **utilitarian view**, this diminishes collective well-being.
- **Radicalisation:** Extremists often use social media platforms as **weapons of mass persuasions** to propagate radical ideologies among vulnerable individuals.
 - E.g., online radicalisation by Islamic State.

India's Regulatory Framework for Influencer Accountability

- **Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA):** Regulates matters relating to violation of rights of consumers, unfair trade practices and false or misleading advertisements.
- **Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI):** Banned partnerships between regulated financial entities and unregistered finfluencers to protect investors.
- **Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI):** Released guidelines requiring influencers to clearly label paid promotions on digital platforms.
- **Department of Consumer Affairs:** Published 'Endorsement Know-hows' for influencers and celebrities.
- **India Influencer Governing Council (IIGC):** A self-regulatory body for Influencer marketing.
 - It recently introduced a **Code of Standards and weekly influencer ratings** (see infographic).

Code of Standards for Influencers



Paid Partnerships: Influencers must disclose any material partnership with brands.



AI Influencers: Must follow the same rules as human influencers, with a disclaimer about their non-human nature.



Brand Relations: Influencers can't endorse products they don't genuinely support or work with competing brands simultaneously.



Defluence: Honest criticism of brands is allowed but must be truthful and responsible



Child-Safe Content: Content must be safe, positive, and appropriate for children.



Complaint Forum: A consumer complaint forum is established under the IIGC.

Way Forward

- **Implementation of Guidelines:** "Endorsements Know-hows!" must be followed by celebrities, influencers, and virtual influencers on social media platforms.
- **Increased Awareness and Education:** The question of “whether influencers are truly experts?” should be raised through a critical thinking process.
- **Anti-Radicalisation Narratives:** Strategies to challenge extremist narratives include producing counter-contents, blocking or censoring extremist content, etc.
- **Limited Screen time for Children and Teenagers:** E.g. Swedish health authorities have issued new recommendations to restrict screen time for children and adolescents.

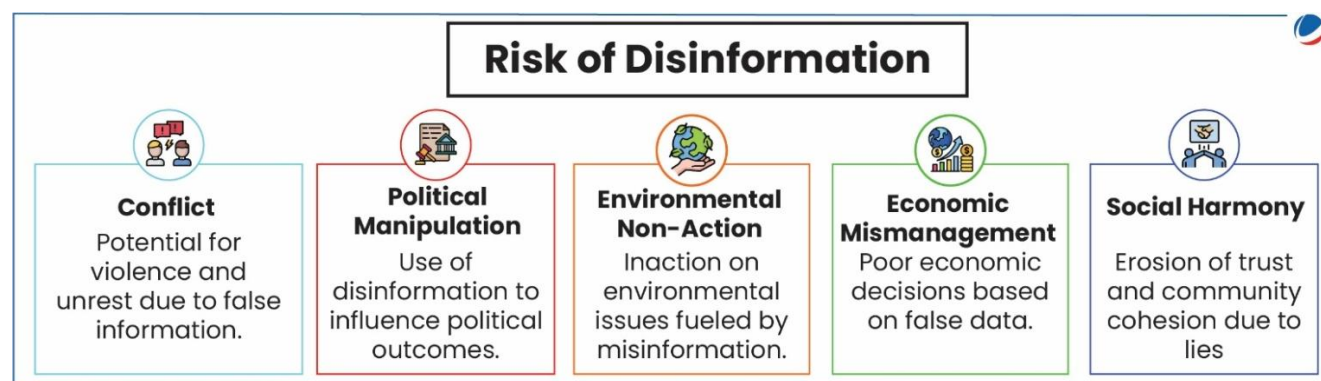
Conclusion

Influencers drive both positive change and ethical concerns. Balancing creativity with accountability through regulation, awareness, and ethical conduct is key to ensuring responsible digital influence.

6.3. PERSUASION AND DISINFORMATION

Introduction

With the advent of the social media and new-age technologies like AI, along with the exponential rise in the reach of the smartphones, a large section of the societies are facing a looming threat of disinformation pandemic (see infographic). Persuasion as a social tool offers a proactive approach to countering disinformation by influencing beliefs, attitudes, and behaviours.



How Persuasion Can Work Against Disinformation?

- **Building trust and reduce resistance:** E.g., In vaccine hesitancy, using local doctors or religious leaders to communicate the importance of vaccines can be more persuasive.
- **Use of narratives:** Beyond statistics, persuasion relies on stories, visuals, and emotional appeal to connect with the audience. E.g. Nudging people towards washing hands during Covid.
- **Promotes Critical Thinking without Confrontation:** E.g., Deradicalization programs use **dialogue-based interventions**, leading the individual to rethink their beliefs themselves.
- **Sustained engagement:** Repeated exposure to persuasive, respectful messaging can erode false beliefs gradually by building relationships and trust.
 - This is particularly important because one-off fact-checks are rarely enough; **disinformation is often sticky and emotionally charged.**

Conclusion

In an age where disinformation spreads rapidly, persuasion offers a humane and strategic countermeasure by fostering trust, empathy, and critical thinking. Through consistent, narrative-driven, and respectful engagement, it helps individuals question falsehoods and arrive at truth through their own reasoning.



People are generally better persuaded by the reasons which they have themselves discovered than by those which have come into the mind of others.

–Blaise Pascal



6.4. OBSCENITY ON DIGITAL PLATFORMS

Introduction

The Supreme Court, while hearing a case on obscene remarks in the India's Got Latent show on YouTube, urged the Solicitor General to propose **regulatory measures to curb vulgar content online** while balancing free speech.

Key Stakeholders and their Interests

Stakeholders	Interests
Content Creators & Artists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain creative freedom and artistic expression, generate income and build audience.
Digital Platform	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure their revenue model follows laws of the land and protect users from harmful content without excessive censorship. • Maintain advertiser trust to avoid revenue loss as brands may withdraw if platform is associated with questionable content.
Government & Regulatory Bodies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define and enforce laws on online content, balancing free speech with public morality.
Society at large	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access desired content with minimal restriction, avoid exposure to unwanted obscene material particularly children for children.

Ethical Issues in Regulating Obscene Digital Content

- **Censorship vs. Reasonable Restrictions:** Over-regulation could stifle creativity. Since obscenity is **subjective and evolving**, excessive restrictions could limit diverse perspectives in media.
 - E.g., The **2024 ban of 18 OTT platforms** by the Ministry of I&B for “obscene and vulgar” content was criticized as arbitrary.

- **Evolving Social Norms and Cultural Sensitivity: Obscenity is a cultural construct** that changes over time.
 - Ancient **Khajuraho** feature erotic sculptures, yet today, such expressions might face censorship.
- **Power Dynamics:** Questions arise about **who decides what content is acceptable**.
- **Agency and Paternalism:** There's an ongoing tension between **protecting users from harmful content** and **respecting their autonomy to make choices**.
 - Excessive regulation can treat users like children, assuming they can't make their own informed choices.
- **Regulating Obscene vs. Artistic Freedom:** Tension between censorship to **protect public morality** and **freedom of artists to express themselves** creatively.
 - E.g., In **Maqbool Fida Hussain v. Raj Kumar Pandey case**, court ruled that nudity alone does not constitute obscenity.

Conclusion

Obscenity is highly subjective, **varying across cultures and time**. Therefore, creating a responsible digital media space requires **legal clarity, self-regulation, public awareness, and global cooperation**. By upholding ethical values such as **justice, dignity, transparency, and accountability**, digital platforms can strike a balance between **creative freedom and social responsibility**.

“

Censorship reflects a society's lack of confidence in itself. It is a hallmark of an authoritarian regime.

–Potter Stewart, U.S. Supreme Court Judge



”

6.5. KEY WORDS

Key Words			
Confidentiality	Self-regulation	Censorship	Disinformation
Media Ethics	Transparent	Social Proof	Artistic Freedom

6.6. PRACTICE QUESTION

Answer Canvas

Obscenity on digital platforms raises ethical challenges in balancing free expression with societal morality. Discuss with suitable examples.

Intro	Body Part	Conclusion
Introduce by providing context of recent controversy of India's Got Latent show	Cover Ethical challenges such as Freedom vs Responsibility, impact on Youth & Society (Unfiltered access affects minors, normalises objectification), etc.	Provide suggestions such as Ethics of digital responsibility must evolve with technology, etc.






7. ETHICS AND TECHNOLOGY

7.1. ETHICS OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI)

Introduction

The rapid integration of AI into everyday life—from healthcare and policing to education and governance—has brought forth not only technological advancements but also complex ethical dilemmas.

Key Stakeholders and their Interests

Stakeholders	Interests
 Users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concerned about the privacy of their data, the accuracy of the system's output and the potential for the system's biasedness.
 Companies/Developers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concerned about the cost of developing and deploying AI systems and the security of the systems.
 Investors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide financial support for the development of the AI system.
 State and Regulators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set laws and regulations governing the development and use of AI systems.
 Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocate for the responsible development and use of AI systems.

Ethical issues associated with AI

- Privacy intrusion & Surveillance:** Data Surveillance, theft, privacy breaches and misuse of personal data if proper safeguards are not in place.
 - E.g., face recognition in photos and videos using AI-based image processing will aid in the profiling of individuals.
- Manipulation and Deepfakes:** Deepfake videos or audio impersonations can be used for malicious purposes like spreading misinformation.
 - E.g., in 2019, a **UK-based energy firm was tricked into transferring \$2,43,000** after receiving a fraudster call who was using AI generated deepfake audio mimicking the voice of the firm's CEO.
- Opacity:** Decisions taken by the AI system **are not transparent (Black Box Problem)**. This opacity raises concerns about **accountability, probity** and most importantly fuels distrust among people.
 - E.g. U.K. government used an AI algorithm to determine A-level exam results of students who could not sit exams due to coronavirus pandemic. But the model ended up favouring students from private schools and affluent areas.
- Biasedness:** If the training data contains biases related to race, gender, etc., the AI system may **perpetuate and amplify these biases**.
 - E.g., the trial applications developed by predictive policing tend to profile people from certain communities as potential threats (i.e., racist or casteist robots).
- AI hallucinations:** AI model perceives patterns or objects that are nonexistent or imperceptible to human observers, creating outputs that are inaccurate.

Way Forward (UNESCO principles for the ethical use of AI)

- Proportionality and Do No Harm** (use of AI should not infringe upon human rights)
- AI actors should promote social justice and safeguard fairness and non-discrimination of any kind in compliance with international law.
- Continuous assessment of the human, social, cultural, economic and environmental impact** of AI technologies.

- **Right to Privacy, and Data Protection** including societal and ethical considerations of their use.
- **Human oversight and determination** for attributing the ethical and legal responsibility.
- **Multi-stakeholder, adaptive governance and collaboration** for enabling the benefits to be shared by all.

Conclusion

As AI becomes deeply embedded in our lives, addressing its ethical challenges is crucial to safeguard human rights, fairness, and accountability. A multi-stakeholder, rights-based approach—anchored in transparency, privacy, and inclusive governance—is essential for the responsible and equitable use of AI technologies.

“

The ethical integration of artificial intelligence with human values and emotions will form the foundation of future artificial intelligence.

–Amit Ray



”

7.1.1. AI AND CREATIVITY

Introduction

Recently, social media platforms were flooded with images inspired by Ghibli-style art, which were generated using AI tools. While these artworks gained widespread attention and appreciation for their aesthetic appeal, they have also sparked debate within the artistic community.

Positives of AI in Creative Endeavours



Enhanced Productivity

Streamline **creative workflows**, automate repetitive tasks, etc.



Innovative Exploration

Enables artists to explore **new creative avenues**.



Collaborative Potential

Facilitates collaboration between **human creators and intelligent systems**.



Quality Improvement

Improves the **quality and consistency of artistic output**.

Ethical Issues related with use of AI in Art related Work

- **Artistic Integrity:** AI-generated content raises concerns about maintaining the authenticity and integrity of art.
- **Consent and Ownership:** Questions arise regarding the rights of artists, creators, and participants involved in AI-driven projects, including issues related to intellectual property, ownership, etc.
- **Preservation vs. Exploitation:** While AI can recreate historical voices or styles, it raises ethical concerns about preserving heritage versus exploiting identities for profit.
- **Technological determinism:** Widespread AI use in creative fields may lead to homogenization, reduced diversity, and overreliance on formulaic outputs.
- **Regulatory Oversight:** Lack of regulation challenges privacy protection, anti-discrimination, compliance, and adaptation to new technologies.

Way Forward

- **Ensure transparency and disclosure in AI-driven creative processes**, including clear attribution of AI-generated content.
- **Uphold the authenticity of artistic expression**, acknowledging the contributions of human creators and respecting their rights to control and be properly credited for their work.
- **Develop ethical guidelines and best practices** for the ethical use of AI in creative endeavours, addressing issues such as consent, ownership, fairness, and accountability.
- **Advocate for regulatory oversight and governance mechanisms** to ensure compliance with ethical standards.

Conclusion

As AI enters creative spaces, balancing innovation with ethics is crucial. Clear guidelines and transparency can ensure AI complements, rather than compromises, human creativity and artistic integrity.

“

One machine can do the work of fifty ordinary men. No machine can do the work of one extraordinary man.

–Elbert Hubbard



”

7.2. ETHICS OF ONLINE GAMING

Introduction

Voluntary Code of Ethics for Online Gaming Intermediaries (OGI) has been issued as a Joint Declaration of the members of Digital Gaming Committee of the Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI) in collaboration with the All India Gaming Federation (AIGF), E-Gaming Federation (EGF) and Federation of Indian Fantasy Sports (FIFS).

Key Stakeholders and their Interests

Stakeholders	Interests
Gamers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expects fair and ethical gaming practices, etc.
Game Developers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance gaming experience, promote fair gaming practices, responsible for content and mechanics and potential targets of ethical concerns.
Platform providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responsible for content moderation, user safety, comply with regulations and establishing their dominance in market.
Regulatory Bodies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protection of consumers, revenue generation, prevention of illegal activities, enforcing regulations including content restrictions, age gating and promoting responsible gaming practices.
Civil Society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protection of children from harmful content and excessive gaming, prevent social disharmony, and promote ethical gaming.

Ethical concerns with Online Gaming

- Gaming vs. Gambling:** Gaming involves skill-based activities while gambling entails wagering money on uncertain outcomes with chance playing a critical role.
- Privacy concerns:** Collection of extensive user data, including sensitive personal and financial details.
- Fair play:** Real money game outcomes can be **manipulated by malicious actors** undermining the integrity of competitions and financial loss to users.
- Accountability:** Some online games have been found to use unfair practices and promote addiction, betting, etc.
 - Gaming companies indulge in misleading advertisements, which can be detrimental to user well-being.

Regulatory Framework for Gaming in India

- Distinction in Games:** Games of skill are generally considered legal, while games of chance are considered illegal.
 - Rummy, Horse Racing, Poker and Fantasy Sports are often considered Games of Skill while Casino Games, Lotteries and Betting are often considered Games of Chance.
- Constitutional Provision:** Courts recognized skill gaming under Article 19(1)(g) of the Constitution.

- **Seventh Schedule** of Constitution empowers each state in India to enact laws related to "betting and gambling", resulting in varying regulations across states.
- **Online Gaming Rules:** Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology has established a legal framework for online gaming via amendments to the **Information Technology, Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code Rules, 2021**.
 - These rules aim to prevent gambling, user harm, and money laundering, especially in case of access to "online real-money games".
- **Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) Act, 2023:** Safeguards individual privacy and regulate data processing.
- **Consumer Protection Act, 2019:** Also applies to online gaming and protect consumers' rights to safety, etc.

Way Forward

- **Privacy ethics and data protection:** Provide **data anonymization** and **encryption** techniques to safeguard player identities and personal information.
- **Responsible gaming:** Proactive measures and educational initiatives are essential, emphasising collaborative efforts among industry stakeholders, regulators, and advocacy groups.
- **Self-regulation:** The aspects of self-regulation can include:
 - **Identity and age verification**, coupled with robust Know Your Customer (KYC) protocols.
 - **Regular audits** and identifying at-risk players by positive monitoring of player behaviour.

Conclusion

As online gaming rapidly expands, addressing ethical, legal, and regulatory challenges becomes essential to ensure user protection, data privacy, and responsible gaming. A balanced approach involving robust regulation, self-regulation, and multi-stakeholder collaboration is key to fostering a safe and accountable digital gaming ecosystem in India.

“

Games have been called the lab for the development of moral attributes, but they will not, of themselves, accomplish this purpose. They must be properly conducted by competent individuals.

–James Naismith



”

7.3. KEY WORDS

Key Words			
Deepfakes	Data Surveillance	AI hallucinations	Opacity
Consent	Black Box Problem	Accountability	Privacy Ethics

7.4. PRACTICE QUESTION

Answer Canvas

Artificial Intelligence is revolutionising creativity, but also raises ethical dilemmas around originality, authorship, and fairness. Discuss.

Intro	Body Part	Conclusion
Introduce by providing context of Ghibli-style art issue. Mention ethical tension between innovation and imitation.	Cover Ethical Concerns such as Authorship & Accountability, Originality vs Imitation, etc. Also add examples with them.	In conclusion, suggest that there is Need of ethical AI design with safeguards on transparency, attribution, and consent, etc.

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8. KEY PERSONALITIES IN NEWS

8.1. MAHATMA GANDHI AND COMPASSION

Introduction

Recently, former United Nations Secretary-General, Ban-Ki-Moon, highlighted the significance of **Mahatma Gandhi's compassion**. He held that Mahatma Gandhi embodied and lived the principles of UN Charter much before it was founded and has inspired global leaders like Nelson Mandela, Martin Luther King Jr., etc. Undoubtedly all core values of Mahatma Gandhi like **nonviolence, truth, peace, justice** and **inclusion** are rooted and are the concrete external manifestations of **compassion**.



What are the key values of Mahatma Gandhi that foster Compassion?

- **Satyagraha:** Method to secure one's rights without inflicting injury on others.
 - E.g. Gandhi's Champaran Satyagraha (1917)
- **Equality:** He treated **untouchability** as a curse.
 - He also championed the cause of **women's empowerment** and called Woman as the embodiment of sacrifice and ahimsa.
- **Kindness:** He was a **committed vegetarian** and discouraged the slaughter of animals on moral grounds.
 - He held that "If anybody said that I should die if I don't take beef tea or mutton, even on medical advice, I would prefer death."
- **Sarvodaya (Welfare for all):** He saw God in every individual and held that one could reach god through the service of humanity.
- **Non-Violence:** A tool to attain the ultimate end i.e., **Truth**.
 - His concept of non-violence was a **positive** one that propagated love for selfless action as opposed to the idea of non-injury or non-killing.
- **Concern for Nature:** He spoke against the evils of **large-scale urbanisation** and called for the conservation of nature and biodiversity.
 - According to him, "The Earth has enough resources for our needs but not for our greed."
- **Altruism or Self-Sacrifice:** **Gandhi's Talisman** is an example of his **altruism** and **compassion**.
 - "Whenever you are in doubt, or when the self becomes too much, recall the face of the poorest and the weakest man you may have seen, and ask yourself, if the step you contemplate is going to be of any use to him".
- **Means and End:** He rejected the **doctrine that the end justifies the means**, and asserted that a **moral means** is almost an **end** in itself because virtue is its own reward.
- **Concept of trusteeship:** According to this, the landowner, rich men have to act as trustees of what they own.



Contemporary relevance of Mahatma Gandhi's Compassion



Addressing climate crisis: Gandhi's philosophy promotes living in harmony with nature.



Resolving contemporary conflict: His approach of "hate the sin, not the sinner" provides a framework for engaging with those we disagree with while maintaining human dignity



Dealing with economic crisis: He emphasized on **self-sufficiency, decentralised mode of production; idea of trusteeship**, etc.



Inspiration for Social Change: His ideas guided initiatives like the Swachh Bharat Mission.



Dealing with Fragmentation in Society: His vision of inclusive spirituality respects all faiths.

Ways to Imbibe Compassion

- **Fostering Social Responsibility:** Involves understanding the challenges faced by the social sectors and taking up initiatives to reform them.
- **Practising Self-Compassion:** Understand the sufferings and emotions of others, one needs to first reflect over own sufferings and emotions.
- **Accepting mistakes and failures:** Focus on being patient and showing forgiveness (for others and yourself) for mistakes.
- **Other:** Imbibing compassion from the stage of Childhood, etc.

Conclusion

Mahatma Gandhi's values remain highly effective as catalysts for change, equipping a generation of informed and empowered citizens to forge a future marked by compassion, equality and progress. His beliefs continue to enlighten India as well as the entire world in dealing with the current challenges.



Only the development of compassion and understanding for others can bring us the tranquillity and happiness we all seek

-Dalai Lama



8.2. RATAN NAVAL TATA

Introduction

Recently, former chairman of Tata Group, Ratan Naval Tata passed away marking the end of an era. He was one of the most influential business magnates known for his **charismatic and transformative leadership styles**.

Key values associated with the life of Ratan Tata (1937-2024)

- **Profound Simplicity:** He maintained a **low profile, avoiding the limelight** and **focusing on his work**.
 - He exemplified **simple living and profound thinking**.
- **Resilience and Perseverance:** Despite several hurdles, launched the **Tata Nano project in 2008**.
- **Leadership:** Defined by **humility** and **hands-on involvement**.
- **Empathy:** Under his leadership, the Tata Trust expanded its philanthropic work, reflecting a deep sense of responsibility toward society.
- **Spirit of service:** He spearheaded the **restoration of the Taj Hotel** and **provided personal support** to affected employees.

Key lessons from the life of Ratan Tata

- **Compassionate Capitalism:** **60-65% of Tata Sons' dividends directed to charitable causes** like health and education.

- **Contribution to Social Well-Being:** He was deeply committed to philanthropy beyond his business endeavours.
 - He pioneered **India's first cancer hospital**.
- **Business Ethics:** He was a firm believer in ethical leadership and prioritised strong ethical principles, integrity, and social well-being over short-term profits.
 - He emphasized that business is **not only about making money but also doing right** for customers and stakeholders ethically.
- **Promoting Entrepreneurship:** He invested in many of the startups, such as Cashkaro, Snapdeal, Ola cabs, Dogspot, Teabox, etc. encouraging a **culture of innovation**.
- **Promoted Sustainability:** The Tata group's carbon neutrality target is to achieve net zero emissions by 2045.
 - **PETA India** awarded Tata Motors the **Cow-Friendly Future award** for using vegan interiors in AVINYA concept car.



Conclusion

Life of Ratan Tata was a **beacon of ethical leadership**, offering valuable lessons in **compassion, resilience, humility, and perseverance**. He created **many reforms** in the Tata companies, from giving **equal opportunities to LGBTQ**. Life of Ratan Tata therefore offers valuable lessons and insights to all sections including youngsters, businesses and civil servants, etc.

8.3. SHRI TULSI GOWDA

Introduction

Recently, Shri Tulsi Gowda, an Indian environmentalist, breathed her last. She was known as the "**Encyclopedia of the Forest**" and the "**tree goddess**" because of her knowledge of the forest. Her legacy would continue to act as a guiding light for environmental conservation inspiring generations to protect our planet.

Key contributions of Shri Tulsi Gowda (1944-2024)

- **Respecting Traditional Knowledge:** Her approach to tree planting was deeply rooted in ecological principles, emphasizing the importance of selecting native species that were well-suited to local conditions.
 - She was also an expert in **seed collection** and **germination techniques**.
- **Dedicated afforestation Efforts:** She **planted over 30,000 trees** throughout her life.
- **Reversing Environmental Destruction:** Her efforts revitalized barren landscapes and restored ecological balance in Karnataka.
- **Fostering Environmental Justice:** Her inclination to **educate local communities** about the importance of conserving the forest and its resources would ensure **welfare of all**.
- **Promoting Ecofeminism:** Her legacy highlights the **contribution of women** to environmental conservation not only as **agents of change** but also for their **economic empowerment**.
- **Collective Responsibility:** By involving the community in her efforts to protect environment, she created a collective sense of responsibility **empowering individuals** to take action.



Conclusion

The legacy of Shri Tulsi Gowda is that of **inspiration** and **empowerment**. She has showcased how community-led initiatives can lead to **significant ecological change**. She has also exhibited the importance of **developing a culture of care and connectedness** towards the environment.

8.4. KEY WORDS

Key Words			
Compassion	Satyagraha	Kindness	Means and End
Altruism	Talisman	Perseverance	Spirit of service
Compassionate Capitalism	Sarvodaya (Welfare for all)	Environmental Justice	Ecofeminism

8.5. PRACTICE QUESTION

Answer Canvas

Compassion, as practiced by Mahatma Gandhi, goes beyond empathy and becomes a tool for transformative leadership. Discuss its relevance in present Scenario.

Introduction	Body	Conclusion
Define compassion - active concern for others' suffering with a will to alleviate it.	Relevance to Public Servants: People-centric governance, Inclusive administration: Prioritising marginalised (e.g., divyangs, tribals), etc.	Conclude by suggesting value-based education and service-oriented mindset, etc. for inculcating compassion

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9. MISCELLANEOUS

9.1. ETHICS OF WAR

Introduction

Ongoing military conflicts between Russia-Ukraine and Israel-Hamas and the continuous circulation of images and stories in social media about the atrocities of war raise various ethical questions.

What are the Ethical concerns that arise in a war?

- **Reduction to Right side vs. wrong side:** The attempt to make sense of war and violence is often reduced to a judgement that one side is right and the other wrong.
 - However, providing a justification to oneself and others does **not make it ethically correct**.
- **Punishment and Revenge:** In war, rationale based on **punishment and revenge** is often seen as a moral path to correct a wrong.
- **Degradation of Human beings:** Humans are often treated as tools to achieve the objectives of war.
- **Individual vs. Collective identity:** Recent conflicts such as the Israel-Palestine war show a trend where people don't see individuals as they are and see them only in terms of a collective identity.

Just War Theory

- ▶ Establishes several conditions that determine whether a war can be regarded as just, ethical or legitimate.
- ▶ **Just War Criterion are as follow:**
 - **Jus ad bellum (Justice of the resort to war):** Includes principles like **right authority** to wage war, **just cause**, etc.
 - **Jus in Bello (Justice of Conduct of war):** Includes principles like Proportionality, etc.
 - **Jus post Bello (What is the responsibility of warring parties after the war?):** Includes constraining the wrongdoing of victors, facilitating post-war reconstruction, and securing lasting peace.

Is Just War Criterion being followed?

Some states and military organizations explicitly try to adhere to just war principles and incorporate them into their military doctrines.

However, in most of the cases, adherence to these principles is found wanting. The following can be cited as key reasons:

- **Involvement of Non-State Actors:** Insurgent groups or terrorist organizations, are often not bound by the same legal and ethical constraints as state actors.
- **Ignorance of Distinction principle:** This Principle promotes a clear distinction between combatants and non-combatants, but in practice, civilians often become unintended victims.
 - E.g., **use of weapons of mass destruction**
- **Technological Advancements and the principle of proportionality:** E.g. use of advanced military technologies, such as precision-guided munitions.
- **Limited Global Governance:** Effectiveness of international institutions, treaties, and agreements is often questionable.

Way Forward

- **Strengthening International Cooperation and Institutions** that govern the conduct of war, such as the **Geneva Conventions**.

- There is also a need to enhance the role of institutions such as the **International Criminal Court (ICC)** or the **UN Security Council**.
- **Advocacy for stricter Arms control and disarmament** to limit the use of weapons that can cause disproportionate harm to civilians.
- **Peace-building and Conflict Resolution** such as addressing the root causes of conflicts, promoting dialogue, etc.
- **Other: Code of Conduct** for state militaries based on consensus regarding war ethics, etc.

Conclusion

While war challenges ethical boundaries, frameworks like Just War Theory offer necessary guidance. Upholding human dignity, protecting civilians, and prioritizing peaceful resolution must guide global action. Embedding ethics in warfare is not optional—it is essential.

“

War is the greatest plague that can afflict humanity, it destroys religion, it destroys states, it destroys families. Any scourge is preferable to it.

—Martin Luther



”

9.2. ASPECTS OF PEACE

Introduction

Recently, World Leaders at 10th Global Forum of **UN Alliance for Civilizations** adopted the **Cascais Declaration**, pledging to **promote peace**. The declaration highlighted the importance of intergenerational dialogue for achieving **peace, sustainable development, and human rights**. Prior to this, the **UNESCO HK Association's 2012 Peace Project** introduced the **Aspects of Peace**—defining **peace as harmony within individuals and across all aspects of life**.

Five Aspects of Peace

Aspect	Concept	Challenges
Individual/ Inner Peace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enables individuals to handle life's challenges and contribute positively to society. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mental Health Issues (anxiety, etc.) due to work life imbalance, etc. Consumerism and Materialism.
Social Peace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focuses on creating peaceful & harmonious relationships within communities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discrimination & Exclusion causes resentment and violence. Misinformation, hate speech and prejudices based on gender, race etc.
Ecological Peace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emphasizes on sustainable development and a balanced relationship with environment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Climate change, extreme weather etc. contribute to resource conflicts and displacements. Insufficient cooperation on environmental issues.
Cultural Peace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourages understanding, respect, and appreciation for cultural diversity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ethnocentrism (Viewing one's own culture as superior), Cultural Intolerance, etc.
Political Peace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fosters just, non-violent relationships within groups, organizations, and communities across government, business, and society. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Global: Territorial disputes, and rivalries, Weak International Governance, Proliferation of nuclear weapons etc. National: Nepotism, corruption, etc.

Some Philosophical Aspects of Peace

- **Gandhian Conception:** Peace is rooted in **Ahimsa (nonviolence)** and **Satya (truth)**.
- **Utilitarian Concept:** A peaceful society is one that enhances collective well-being.
- **Kantian Notion:** Peace is not a passive state but an **active moral obligation of individuals and nations**.
 - Immanuel Kant believed in perpetual peace **through rationality, universal morality**, and international cooperation.

Key Stakeholders and their Interests	
Stakeholders	Interests
Global/Political Peace	
Governments	• Government set policies, enacts laws, and enforce regulations that can promote peace, human rights, and justice within their countries and globally.
International Organizations	• Mediate conflicts, promote diplomacy , and coordinate efforts for global peace and sustainable development.
Civil Society Organizations	• Instrumental in advocating for peace, human rights, and social change at the local, national, and global levels .
Social and Cultural Peace	
Community Leaders	• Promote peace by resolving conflicts , advocating for justice, and fostering social cohesion in their communities.
Religious & spiritual leaders	• Promote peace by advocating for love, compassion, forgiveness, and religious tolerance across cultural and religious divides.
Mainstream media & social media	• Ensures peace by promoting truthful information and countering misinformation and hate speech etc.
Individual/Inner Peace	
Individuals	• Each person contributes to peace by practicing tolerance, understanding, and empathy in their daily life.
Families	• Families are the first unit of society . They instil values of non-violence, respect, and conflict resolution in their children.
Educational Institutions	• Teachers and curricula shape future generations by teaching peaceful values, critical thinking, social justice , etc.

Initiatives Undertaken to Restore and Promote Peace

- **Global Peace:** Various global institutions like World Bank, UN, etc. foster the dialogue and cooperation, multipolarity to ensure global stability and peace.
- **Political Peace:** Global institutions like **International Court of Justice (ICJ)** and several peace negotiations and treaties ensure peaceful dispute settlement.
- **Ecological Peace:** Initiatives like **Paris Agreement** address environmental degradation to **prevent resource-based conflicts**.
 - Programs like **WWF's Earth Hour** raise awareness about **ecological sustainability**.
- **Inner Peace:** Global events such as **International Yoga Day** and **World Meditation Day** foster mental well-being.
- **Cultural Peace:** **UNESCO's World Culture Forums** promote understanding between diverse cultural groups.
 - UNESCO's **cultural heritage Programme** works to preserve cultural landmarks prevent destruction during conflicts, symbolizing unity and peace.

Conclusion

Peace is a holistic concept. It is not just the absence of conflict, but the **active presence of harmony, justice, equality, and understanding** both within individuals and between nations. **Building peace from the inside out encourages sustainable solutions to global problems**, such as human rights, environmental protection, and economic equity.

“

Peace can only last where human rights are respected, where the people are fed, and where individuals and nations are free. True peace with oneself and with the world around us can only be achieved through the development of mental peace

–Dalai Lama



”

9.3. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS IN CONTEMPORARY FOREIGN AID

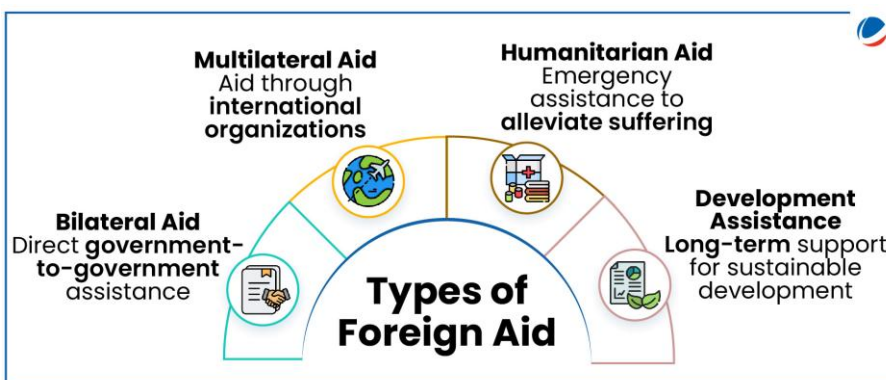
Introduction

In recent times, the concept of foreign aid has been subject to intense scrutiny, particularly with the United States' actions to suspend the operations of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) for 90 days. This move has sparked a broader discussion on the ethical implications of how aid is administered, the motivations behind it, and its real-world impact.

USAID was established to Promote democratic values abroad, advance a free, peaceful, and prosperous world, and also enhance U.S. security and prosperity through projection of soft power.

Foreign Aid can be in various forms, including **economic, military, and humanitarian aid**,

and is predominantly provided by developed nations to developing ones.



Philosophical and Moral Arguments for Foreign Aid

- **Utilitarianism:** To give direct aid where it does the **most good for the most people**.
- **Rights-Based** (Universal human rights): **To ensure rights** are met globally.
- **Communitarianism** (Importance of community and shared values): Should **respect and support local culture and community**.
- **Libertarianism** (Individual liberty and free markets): Skeptical of aid; prefers **voluntary or emergency aid**.
- **Cosmopolitanism** (Global citizenship): As part of a broader commitment to **global equality**.

Do you know ?

> The United Nations requires advanced countries to spend **at least 0.7% of their gross national income** on international aid in the form of **Official Development Assistance (ODA)**.

Ethical Considerations in Contemporary Foreign Aid



Dependency:

E.g., Many **African nations** have become aid-dependent, affecting their economic policies.



Corruption:

E.g., **Sri Lankan economic crisis** due to corruption and mismanagement of foreign aid.



Cultural Insensitivities:

E.g., In some African and Asian countries, **women's reproductive rights campaigns** face resistance due to cultural or religious beliefs that see them as promoting immorality.



Political Manipulation:

E.g., China has been weaponizing investment on foreign soil as a part of its '**debt-trap diplomacy**'.



Environmental Harm:

Some aid projects, like large-scale agricultural initiatives, have led to environmental degradation.

Way Forward

- **Increase transparency** in aid allocation, management, and impact evaluation through use of **public dashboards and independent audits** for accountability.
- **Prioritize environmental sustainability** in aid projects, focusing on **climate resilience, renewable energy, and sustainable agriculture**.
- **Engage local communities** to align aid with **cultural contexts**, involving **local NGOs and leaders in project planning**.
- **Other:**
 - **Shift to recipient-led aid**, aligning with national goals rather than donor agendas.
 - **Utilize technology** for efficient aid **distribution, monitoring, and assessment**.
 - **Emphasize building local capacities** for long-term independence over short-term relief.

Conclusion

Foreign aid must evolve beyond charity into a model rooted in ethics, partnership, and sustainability. To be truly effective, it should empower local communities, respect cultural contexts, and uphold transparency. Only then can aid achieve its intended goals—promoting global equity, dignity, and lasting development.

9.4. ETHICS AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Introduction

Glaciologists and local communities mourned the loss of Nepal's Yala glacier after it has shrunk by 66% since the 1970s, making it among Nepal's first likely to be declared dead. Melting of glaciers has accelerated due to climate change.

Climate change is always perceived as an environmental or physical problem, but the solution to this problem lies in unknottting an array of ethical issues.

Key Stakeholders and their Interests

Stakeholders	Interests
 Governments	• Protecting the environment, fostering sustainable economic growth , and fulfilling international commitments such as the Paris Agreement , etc.
 Intergovernmental Organizations	• Promoting international cooperation , facilitating negotiations and agreements , etc.
 Businesses and Corporations	• Managing climate risks, embracing sustainable practices , investing in clean technologies , etc.
 Indigenous People	• Protecting their rights, preserving traditional knowledge and practices, and ensuring their voices are heard in climate decision-making processes .
 Scientific Community	• Conducting research , sharing knowledge , improving climate models , and advocating for evidence-based climate policies.

Ethical issues with regard to Climate Change

- **Disproportionate effect across different regions and populations:** Developing countries and marginalized communities often bear a greater burden of climate.
 - E.g. Small Island Developing States (SIDS)
- **Unequal distribution of responsibilities:** Industrialized countries caused most emissions, but climate change harms everyone—especially the vulnerable.
- **Climate Justice for Indigenous Peoples:** Climate change threatens their lands and disrupts their traditional ways of life.
- **Technological Inequity:** Access to **climate-friendly technologies** and clean energy solutions is not uniform across countries and communities.

Way Forward (UNESCO's Declaration of Ethical Principles in relation to Climate Change)

- **Prevention of harm:** To better anticipate the consequences of climate change and implement responsible and effective policies.
- **Precautionary approach:** To not postpone the adoption of measures to prevent or mitigate the adverse effects of climate change on the grounds of a lack of definitive scientific evidence.
- **Equity and justice:** Respond to climate change in a way that benefits all, in the spirit of justice and equity.
- **Solidarity:** Support the people and groups most vulnerable to climate change and natural disasters, particularly in the Least Developed Countries (LDCs)
- **Other:** Strengthen the interface between science and policy to optimally aid decision-making, promote Sustainable development, etc.

Conclusion

Climate change is not just a scientific issue but an ethical one, demanding fairness, responsibility, and inclusion. True progress requires global cooperation rooted in equity and justice, ensuring a sustainable and resilient future for all—especially the most vulnerable. The principle of **Common But Differentiated Responsibilities (CBDR)** needs to be implemented in letter and spirit.

“

Ethics and Equity are at the core of debate of climate change. Debate has to move from Climate Change to Climate Justice.

–Narendra Modi



”

9.5. ETHICS OF CAPITAL PUNISHMENT

Introduction

Historically, different societies have used the death penalty/capital punishment to deter heinous crimes. **Amnesty International's 2024 report** notes a 32% global surge in executions from countries like China, Iran, Saudi Arabia, etc., making capital punishment a highly contentious issue in modern criminal justice and ethics. It is based on the **principle of retributive justice**.

Key Stakeholders and their Interests	
Stakeholders	Interests
Condemned Individuals	• Right to Life, Fair Trial and Due Process, Discrimination, Irreversible punishment , Psychological toll etc.
Victims' Families	• Justice and Closure, Retribution (Punishment) and Restorative (Reconciliation) justice, Prolonged Legal Process etc.
Society at Large	• Public safety, Justice, Collective conscience and Moral standards
Legal and Judicial Systems	• Ensuring fair trials , Upholding constitutional values, Balancing deterrence with human rights, etc.
Human Rights Organizations	• Reform over Retribution, Human Dignity, right to life and the potential for judicial errors.
Governments and Policymakers	• Navigating public opinion, International obligations, Effectiveness of capital punishment as a deterrent.

Arguments for the Death Penalty

- **Deterrence:** Death penalty may **deter serious crimes**.
- **Closure and vindication:** Often argued that the death penalty provides relief to the families of victims.
- **Drain on public finances:** Maintaining a secure prison system for high-risk violent offenders.
- **Other:** Prevention of re-offending, etc.

Arguments against the Death Penalty

- **Violation of Human Rights:** Actions (e.g., taking human life) are **morally wrong** regardless of their consequences (**Deontological Ethics**).
- **Risk of Irreversible Error and Discrimination:** Once a person is executed, the error cannot be reversed.
- **Lack of Deterrence and Alternatives:** Studies show little proof that the death penalty stops crime better than life in prison

Death Penalty in India

- **Legal Framework:** In the **Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS)**, it is primarily outlined for **terrorism, murder of public officials, certain cases of rape, etc. offenses**.
- **Judicial Doctrine:** The Supreme Court, in **Bachan Singh V. State of Punjab (1980)** gave "**rarest of rare**" doctrine.
 - In **Machhi Singh vs State of Punjab Case**, certain criteria for rarest of rare cases.
- **Pardoning Power of President and Governor:** On exhaustion of appeal process and confirmation of defendant's death sentence by the higher courts, the defendant can submit petitions for mercy to the state or national executive.
- **Recent Trends:** Despite more than 500 people being on death row, **executions have become rare** with courts increasingly commuting death sentences to life imprisonment.
 - The last execution being carried out was in **2020 (Nirbhaya case)**.

Way Forward

- **Need for Balance:** Death penalty debate must balance the **accused's rights, victims' interests, and society's need for justice and deterrence.**
- **Law Commission Recommendation:** **Abolish the death penalty** for all crimes **except terrorism and related offences**, citing its limited deterrent effect and the risk of judicial error. (262nd Law Commission Report (2015))
- **Implementing International Perspective:** Article 6 of the **International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)** permits the death penalty **only for the "most serious crimes"** and encourages its abolition.
- **Human Rights Organizations:** Recommend a shift toward **victim-centric justice and restorative practices** over retributive punishment.

Conclusion

Since the adoption of the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UNDHR)** in 1948, there has been a marked global shift towards abolition. Despite this progress, the death penalty persists in several countries, often amid allegations of unfair trials, political repression, or use for non-violent offenses. Thus, **humane and evidence-based alternatives** are needed to ensure justice and respect for life.

“

In any case, frequent punishments are a sign of weakness or slackness in the government. There is no man so bad that he cannot be made good for some-thing. No man should be put to death, even as an example, if he can be left to live without danger to society.

—Jean-Jacques Rousseau



”

9.6. KEY WORDS

Key Words			
Just War Theory	Global Governance	Proportionality	Ecological Peace
Communitarianism	Libertarianism	Deterrence	Retributive justice
Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UNDHR)	Precautionary Approach	Social Justice	Conflict Resolution

9.7. PRACTICE QUESTION

Answer Canvas

Capital punishment raises profound ethical concerns. Critically analyse the ethical arguments for and against the death penalty

Intro	Body Part	Conclusion
Introduce with present status of capital punishment, etc.	Mention Ethical Arguments For (Deterrence, etc.) and Against Death Penalty (Right to Life, etc.) in brief.	Conclude by suggesting alternatives like life imprisonment with restorative components, etc.



10. TEST YOUR LEARNING

1. Recently, a judge of a Supreme Court has resigned from his post to contest election to the Lok Sabha. The concerned judge was associated with major decisions which justified the actions of the government in power. This raised the concerns from opposition parties regarding judicial propriety.

Based on the above case study, answer the following questions:

- Explain the ethical issues arising out of a Supreme Court judge joining a political party in power.
- Evaluate the arguments for and against judges joining politics, weighing the benefits and risks.
- Discuss the approaches that can be adopted to ensure balance between public trust in judicial institution and actions of individual judges.

*For Reference- **Political Ethics and Conflict of Interest***

2. An honest and dedicated civil servant working in the public work department comes across the gross irregularities in the construction of road in border areas. On the further investigation, he found that there is a nexus between other officials with local contractors who use sub-standard material for the construction. On the completion of construction, road is supposed to serve the military. It would facilitate the smoother movement of troops in the time of emergency and contribute to the national security. However, complaining about the irregulars to higher authorities or exposing in the media would delay the project and he may face threat of retaliation from associated stakeholders.

Based on the above case study, answer the following questions:

- Identify various stakeholders and their interests involved.
- Discuss ethical issues involved in the case and discuss the options available to the civil servant with their merits and demerits.

*For Reference- **Ethics of Whistleblowing***

3. You are a senior official in a government regulatory body. Recently, one of your close friends, who run a successful private company, has approached you with a business proposal. He wants to start a new venture in a sector that your department regulates and seeks your guidance on navigating the regulatory landscape. He assures you that this is just friendly advice and offers you a small stake in the company as a token of appreciation for your expertise.

Meanwhile, your department is in the process of formulating new policies that could significantly impact businesses in this sector. You possess insider knowledge about these upcoming changes.

Based on the above case study, answer the following questions:

- Identify the ethical issues and potential conflicts of interest in this situation.
- What course of action would you take in this scenario? Justify your response based on ethical principles and guidelines for public servants.
- Suggest three systemic measures that can be implemented to prevent such conflicts of interest in public administration.

*For Reference- **Conflict of Interests of Public Officials***

4. You are a SDM of a district with high rate of poverty. You are in charge of overseeing the implementation of the food distribution program. On analysis of the program implementation through site visits, it was seen in X village that the Sarpanch of the village appropriated the free grains allotted for the program. Households from the lower caste community were provided only half of the allotted grains. The Sarpanch is in good books with the DM and the MP of the district.

Based on the above case, answer the following questions:

- What are the ethical issues involved in the above case?
- Critically examine the options available to you in the above situation.



- Which of the above options would you choose and why?

For Reference- **Public Infrastructure and Public Service Delivery**

5. The Education Secretary of a state comes across gross irregularities in the recent State Public Service Examination. Further investigation reveals a nexus between examination officials and some candidates who used unfair means to pass the examination. This examination is crucial as it recruits candidates for various civil services in the state. Ensuring the integrity of this examination is essential for maintaining the quality and credibility of the state's administration. However, exposing this scandal to the public or higher authorities could delay the recruitment process and tarnish the image of the public service commission.

Based on the above case study, answer the following questions:

- Identify various stakeholders and their interests involved.
- Discuss the ethical issues involved in the case and the course of action Education Secretary should take.

For Reference- **Frauds in Civil Services Examination**

6. You are the District Magistrate of a region where a major infrastructure project has been delayed for several years. The project is critical for the development of the area and has the potential to significantly improve the lives of local citizens by improving public transportation. However, you discover that the delays are due to widespread corruption involving both public officials and private contractors. These stakeholders have been engaging in collusive bribery, inflating project costs, and embezzling funds meant for the project.

As DM, you are confronted with following challenges:

- Some senior officials in your department are involved in the corruption, and you fear backlash if you take action.
- Citizens are growing increasingly frustrated with the delays, and you are under pressure to take immediate steps to complete the project.
- Whistleblowers have come forward with evidence of the corruption, but they are facing harassment and threats to their safety.

Based on the above case study, answer the following questions:

- What are the ethical dilemmas you face in this situation?
- Suggest measures that can be implemented to prevent such instances of corruption in the future and promote accountability in public projects.

For Reference- **Corruption**

7. A gaming company, which hosts a popular real money game, have been accused of populating its own gaming platform with bots. These bots manipulate the outcomes of a game and are alleged to have caused user harm both financially and socially. There are also concerns regarding the data collection practices of the company, with allegations of data being sold for targeted advertisements.

Based on the above case study, answer the following questions:

- Identify various stakeholders and associated ethical concerns.
- What are different ethical concerns that that arose with emergence of online gaming and how can such ethical concerns be addressed?

For Reference- **Ethics of Online Gaming**

8. You have been appointed Superintendent of Police in a city where crime against women have risen significantly in the past few years. You arrive at a scene where a crowd has gathered, demanding immediate action against a man accused of sexually assaulting a woman. Officers in your department are seen publicly beating the accused as a form of "instant justice." While this act receives cheers from the crowd, it starkly contradicts the principles of due process and the rule of law. As you assess the



situation, you notice a divide within your department: some officers justify these actions as a necessary response to public outcry, while others express concern about the ethical implications and potential legal consequences.

Based on the above case study, answer the following questions:

- Identify the key stakeholders involved in this situation and discuss the ethical dilemmas they face.
- What steps should you take to address the extrajudicial actions occurring within your department and promote adherence to ethical standards?

*For Reference- **Instant Justice***

9. A wealthy industrialist, Mr. X, donates ₹50 crore to build schools in rural areas, gaining public praise. Later, it's revealed he evaded taxes worth ₹30 crore and used the donation to improve his company's image while claiming tax benefits. Critics argue his philanthropy is a tool for personal gain, while supporters say the schools still benefit society.

Based on the above case study, answer the following questions:

- "Philanthropy driven by tax benefits is not charity but smart accounting." Critically examine this statement. How can Gandhi's "trusteeship" guide ethical corporate philanthropy in modern India, balancing profit and social good?
- "The increasing reliance of governments on private philanthropy for social welfare raises concerns about the erosion of state responsibility." Examine this statement in the context of India's development challenges.

*For Reference- **Philanthropy: A Moral Imperative for Social Good***

10. You are the CEO of a mid-sized Indian tech startup that has developed an innovative mobile app designed to improve financial inclusion. The app uses AI algorithms to analyze users' online behavior, spending habits, and social media activity to offer personalized micro-loans and financial advice to underserved populations, such as rural farmers and small vendors. Since its launch, the app has gained popularity, serving over 500,000 users and attracting significant investment from venture capitalists. However, a recent exposé by a news outlet revealed that your company has been sharing anonymized user data with third-party advertisers and insurance firms to generate additional revenue, a practice buried in the app's lengthy terms of service that most users did not fully understand or consent to.

You are at a crossroads. Continuing the data-sharing could secure the company's financial stability and fuel expansion, but it risks legal action, loss of user trust, and employee morale. Stopping it might jeopardize the company's growth and investor confidence, potentially undermining your mission to serve marginalized communities.

Based on the above case study, answer the following questions:

- Identifying the stakeholders analyze the ethical issues at play in this scenario.
- What are your possible courses of action as the CEO? Evaluate the merits and demerits of each.
- What decision would you take, and how would you justify it to your stakeholders?

*For Reference- **Surveillance Capitalism***

11. You are a District Magistrate in a rural district of India where a false WhatsApp rumor has recently surfaced, claiming that a particular community is poisoning the local water supply to harm others. This disinformation has led to rising tensions, with some villagers refusing to drink water and others threatening violence against the accused community. The situation is escalating rapidly, and there is a risk of communal violence.

Based on the above case study, answer the following questions:

- Identify the ethical and administrative challenges you face in this situation. How would you prioritize your actions to address the crisis?



- Using the principles of persuasion (ethos, pathos, and logos), design a strategy to counter the disinformation and restore trust among the villagers.
- What long-term measures would you propose to prevent such incidents in your district, keeping in mind the role of education and community engagement?

*For Reference- **Persuasion***

12. With the rise of obscenity and profanity on digital platforms, the Supreme Court has directed the Solicitor General to propose measures to curb "filthy language" and "vulgarity" in online content, emphasizing the need to balance freedom of speech with societal moral standards.

Based on the above case study, answer the following questions:

- What one society/country finds offensive and obscene may be part of daily discourse for another. What ethical issues arise from the increased use of obscenity on digital platforms?
- How can the government ensure that freedom of speech is protected while maintaining public decency? What guidelines should be proposed to limit obscene content without stifling creativity and artistic expression?
- What role should digital media platforms play in regulating content, and how can they balance their responsibility to society with the protection of free speech?

*For Reference- **Obscenity on Digital Platforms***

13. You have been recently selected to the post of Block Development Officer through a merit based competitive exam. For the purpose of your studies, you had moved to a metropolitan city away from your native village. Post the announcement of result, you decide to visit your village after almost 5 years. On reaching there, you met your paternal aunt, widowed a year back. You observed the discriminatory treatment subjected to her as not being involved in the family celebrations, prohibition on entering into kitchen and main areas of the house, etc. Disturbed by this, you decided to confront your parents who informed you that villagers there look at widowed women as bad luck and maintain their distance. Presence of such beliefs in the 21st century in your village and own household has disturbed you.

Based on the above case study, answer the following questions:

- Defining Compassion, suggest how imbibing the virtues of Compassion towards others would help in dealing with discriminatory social problems.
- Identify the key stakeholder involved and discuss their responsibilities towards society.
- What course of action would you follow to ensure that such beliefs are eliminated from your village?

*For Reference- **Mahatma Gandhi and Compassion***

14. XYZ District has witnessed rapid economic transformation over the last decade, marked by substantial investments in industries, technological advancements, and urbanization. The per capita income has increased significantly, and the region has become a hub for business and trade. Government initiatives have led to improved healthcare, education, and digital connectivity. However, despite these positive trends, studies indicate an alarming increase in stress, anxiety disorders, depression, social isolation, and other mental health issues among residents, particularly among youth. The pressure to meet societal expectations, fear of failure, and a lack of emotional resilience are contributing to a growing mental health crisis.

Based on the above case study, answer the following questions:

- As a District Magistrate, what policy interventions can be undertaken to address rising unhappiness despite economic growth? Discuss with reference to governance, public policy, and community development.
- Happiness is an essential component of human development. Critically analyse the role of government in fostering happiness as a policy goal. Should happiness be given equal importance as economic growth in policy frameworks?

*For Reference- **Happiness***



15. You have recently taken charge as the District Magistrate of a remote district X. On interacting with the public and the officials there, you find out that the district has a very poor governance track record with corruption among officials, poor service delivery, and complacent attitude among officials. On further inquiry you find that both the officials and the citizens are quite traditional in their beliefs and do not connect with modern governance ideas. Therefore, you feel the urgent need to revamp the administrative strategy by linking it with Indic ideas of Good Governance so that it not only resonates with the beliefs of the people but also the officials ensure their implementation with full spirit.

On the basis of the above case study, answer the following questions.

- What are the key foundational notions of Indic Idea of Good Governance?
- Citing few examples, suggest how Indic ideas help in the dealing with the problems being faced by governance of district X?

*For Reference- **Indic Idea of Good Governance***

16. You are a senior officer in India's Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), overseeing India's foreign aid initiatives under ITEC and Development Partnership Administration (DPA). A developing country that has been receiving Indian aid for infrastructure, healthcare, and food security is now facing political turmoil, corruption allegations, and human rights violations by the local government.

Reports suggest that previous funds were misappropriated, raising concerns over transparency. It is also certain that suspending aid could worsen conditions for vulnerable populations. Finally, withdrawing aid may open space for China's growing influence through BRI loans.

Based on the above case study, answer the following questions:

- What are the ethical principles involved in this case?
- Who are the key stakeholders, and what are their concerns?
- What mechanisms can ensure aid reaches beneficiaries without strengthening corrupt regimes?

*For Reference- **Ethical Considerations in Contemporary Foreign Aid***

17. You are currently employed in a well-paid MNC that requires you to travel to different cities based on the location of the client. The monthly bonus and long term promotion to the higher post is solely based on the number of clients served within a month. Recently, your mother has been diagnosed with stage 2 cancer that not only requires care but also a stable and good source of income. However, continuous travel, work targets, and frequent hospital visits leave little time to practice for an upcoming city play. You have been a great admirer of theatrics and have pursued it since your childhood. Practicing it regularly gives you great joy and makes you feel detached from the nuances of the fast moving world. Work burden and family responsibilities have not only reduced your chances of bagging a role there but have also overburdened you with anxiety and mental exhaustion reducing your performance at work.

Based on the above case study, answer the following questions:

- Discuss the causative factors responsible for the occupational stress among the people in the present times.
- Citing examples, suggest measures that MNCs must take to ensure effective work-life balance for their employees.
- What steps should you take to ensure an optimum performance towards your work, passion, and family?

*For Reference- **Good Life: The Art Of Balancing Work and Leisure***

18. Rivania, a fictional country in a geopolitically sensitive region, faces a long-standing territorial dispute with its neighbor, Cardovia, over a resource-rich border. The conflict has caused repeated clashes, displacement, and regional instability. Multilateral institutions like the Global Peace Council have failed to mediate effectively due to political biases and weak enforcement, deepening mistrust. Socially, the



dispute fuels nationalism and discrimination against ethnic minorities in Rivania, eroding social cohesion. Individually, border residents face fear, trauma, and conscription, tearing families apart. Peace activists remain disillusioned as global institutions struggle to address the conflict, exacerbating its impact on society and individuals.

Based on the above case study, answer the following questions:

- Identify the various stakeholders and ethical issues involved in the case.
- Discuss how different aspects of peace are connected to each other?
- As a leader in Rivania, how can you demonstrate ethical leadership by navigating the conflict with Cardovia?

For Reference- Aspects of Peace

19. In recent years, the rapid growth of social media platforms has led to the rise of a new category of public figures—social media influencers. With this massive following, influencers have the power to shape public opinions, influence consumer behavior, and impact purchasing decisions in areas such as fashion, health, and lifestyle.

Based on the above case study, answer the following questions:

- Analyze the positive and negative impacts of social media influencers on society.
- Discuss the ethical considerations that should guide the regulation of social media influencers.

For Reference- Social Media Influencer and Consumer Behavior

20. A café in Thailand gave discounts to thin customers who could fit through narrow bars, drawing criticism for promoting body shaming. In India, where beauty standards already favor fair, slim, or muscular bodies, such practices can harm vulnerable groups. With media and social platforms pushing idealized looks, body image is now a commercial tool—raising serious ethical concerns for youth, women, and marginalized communities.

You are a senior officer in a national regulatory body tasked with reviewing a proposal from an Indian café chain seeking to run a similar “fit-to-save” promotional campaign. You are concerned that such practices could normalize body-based discrimination and set a harmful precedent.

Based on the above case study, answer the following questions:

- Identify the ethical issues involved in the case.
- Suggest a course of action you would recommend as a regulatory authority.

For Reference- Ethical Dimensions of Body Shaming

21. Ravi, a 28-year-old man, has been convicted of the premeditated and brutal murder of a police officer in a high-profile case that received wide media coverage. The trial court has sentenced him to death under the relevant provisions of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita. The family of the slain officer is demanding justice and closure through execution, while multiple human rights organizations are petitioning for the sentence to be commuted to life imprisonment, citing the irreversible nature of the punishment and the global trend toward abolition. Ravi has already spent 3 years on death row during the trial and appeals process, and his mental health has visibly deteriorated. His lawyer argues that the punishment violates his fundamental right to life and dignity.

You are a senior officer in the Ministry of Law and Justice, tasked with advising the government on whether to uphold the sentence or recommend clemency.

Based on the above case study, answer the following questions:

- Identify the ethical dilemmas involved in this case.
- Discuss the competing values and moral philosophies (e.g., utilitarianism vs deontology) relevant to capital punishment in this scenario.
- Who are the stakeholders in this case? Briefly outline their perspectives and ethical concerns.



- If you were in the position to make the final decision, what would your recommendation be and why? Justify your answer using ethical principles, constitutional values, and relevant legal doctrines.
- Suggest alternative mechanisms for ensuring justice and public confidence without resorting to the death penalty.

For Reference- **Ethics of Capital Punishment**

22. You are currently working as a **CEO** of an e-commerce firm. With the advent of automation, your company has automated a number of operations to **AI-enabled technologies**. This has caused **huge expenditure** on one hand while on the other hand, there are employees whose work has been rendered redundant. The board of the company has therefore decided to go for downsizing causing lay off of around 250 employees. You have been tasked to communicate the news with the selected employees, some of them having a great personal and professional rapport with you.

Based on the above case study, answer the following questions:

- Identify the ethical dilemmas faced by you in the above case.
- What are the key responsibilities of a business towards various stakeholders?
- Suggest measures that you can recommend to the company's board to be taken before going for downsizing.

For Reference- **Ethics of Business Downsizing**

23. You have been recently appointed to the position of **Chief Medical Officer** in a remote district. You encounter the case of a woman who had recently been diagnosed with **cervical tumor** and had spent most of her life abused by her drunkard husband. Her tumor has reached **last stage** of its severity causing excruciating pain and helplessness. Even her family is **not very considerate** about her well-being. Under such circumstances, she expressed her desires for **medically assisted dying**. However, the people of the area are highly religious and if a word of such an act spread, then there could be an unrest. The situation has put you into a **difficult position** where on one hand is the suffering of a helpless woman while on the other hand is the issue of civil unrest.

Based on the above case study, answer the following questions:

- Mention some arguments in favor and in against on subjecting the woman to medically assisted death.
- What are the key ethical dilemmas involved under such situations?
- What is the legal status of the right to die with dignity in India? How does the Jain religious practice of Santhara aim to promote this right?

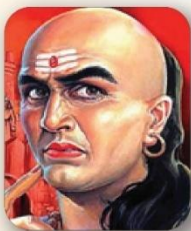
For Reference- **Right to Die with Dignity**

11. APPENDIX

Indian Moral Thinkers & Philosopher- Ideas/Values & Quotes

Personality

Kautilya (Chanakya)



Ideas/Values/Vision

- ⊕ **Duty and Righteousness:** A leader should show self-control by abandoning kama (lust), krodha (anger), lobha (greed), mana (vanity), mada (haughtiness), and harsha (overjoy).
- ⊕ **Happiness:** A leader's happiness lies in the welfare of his/her subjects.
- ⊕ **Individual Excellence:** A man is great by deeds, not by birth.

Quotes

- ⊕ There is no enemy like infatuation and fire like wrath.
- ⊕ There is no austerity equal to a balanced mind, and there is no happiness equal to contentment; there is no disease like covetousness and no virtue like mercy.

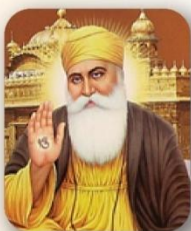
Thiruvalluvar



- ⊕ **Conduct:** Propriety of conduct is the seed of virtue; impropriety will ever cause sorrow.
- ⊕ Conduct is a virtue if it is free from these four things: **malice, desire, anger, and bitter speech.**
- ⊕ **Pure Soul:** Purity of the external body is caused by water and inner purity is caused by veracity.

- ⊕ To reprove a harm-doer, put him to shame by doing a good deed in return.
- ⊕ It is compassion, the most gracious of virtues, which moves the world.

Guru Nanak



- ⊕ **Vaand Chhako:** Sharing whatever God has given you with others and helping those who are in need.
- ⊕ He encouraged followers to donate at least one-tenth of their earnings for the welfare of others.
- ⊕ **Speak the truth without any fear:** Getting victory by suppressing falsehood is temporary and standing firmly by truth is permanent.



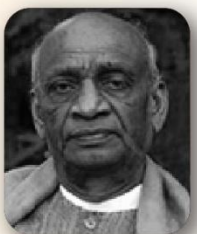
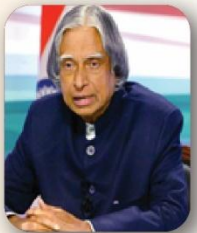
- ⊕ The greatest comforts and lasting peace are obtained when one eradicates selfishness from within.
- ⊕ If the people use the wealth bestowed on them by God for themselves alone or for treasuring it, it is like a corpse. But if they decide to share it with others, it becomes sacred food.

Swami Vivekananda



- ⊕ **Humanism:** The masses should be our Gods. Service to man is service to God.
- ⊕ **Selflessness:** He propagated that selflessness is immoral, and that which is unselfish is moral.
- ⊕ **Oneness:** Implies that you are a part of me, and I of you; the recognition, that in hurting you I hurt myself, and in helping you, I help myself.

- ⊕ Whatever you think that you will be. If you think yourself weak, weak you will be; if you think yourself strong, you will be.
- ⊕ In a day when you don't come across any problems, you can be sure that you are travelling in a wrong path.

Personality	Ideas/Values/Vision	Quotes
Savitribai Phule 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> She upheld the values like Perseverance and selflessness. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Despite opposition from several members of the upper class of society, she promoted girls education. She gave her life while protecting people during the bubonic plague. Along with her husband Jyotirao Phule, she opened India's first school for girls in 1848. She is recognized as the first female teacher in India's modern education system. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The pen is mightier than the sword. Education is the greatest weapon to eradicate social evils. Empathy is the foundation of social justice. Understand the pain of others, and work towards alleviating it.
Jawahar Lal Nehru 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welfare State: A welfare state ideally provides basic economic security for its citizens by protecting them from market risks associated with unemployment, etc. Administration: Administration should be that it should be oriented to people, should show courtesy to the common man, should give people a sense of participation, and should inspire co-operation in the people. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loyal and efficient work in a great cause, even though it may not be immediately recognised, ultimately bears fruit. Evil unchecked grows, evil tolerated poisons the whole system.
Sardar Patel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> He referred to civil services as the 'steel frame' of India, emphasizing their significance in the administration. Inclusivity in decision making process: E.g., In the integration of the princely states, he encouraged dialogue and negotiation rather than imposing India's will. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Faith is of no avail in the absence of strength. Faith and strength, both are essential to accomplish any great work. Two ways of building character – cultivating strength to challenge oppression, and tolerate the resultant hardships that give rise to courage and awareness.
APJ Abul Kalam 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Societal Grid: Comprises of a Knowledge Grid, Health Grid, and E-governance grid that feed into the Provision of Urban Amenities to Rural Areas (PURA) Grid. Be Humble: Modesty has, and will remain, a powerful trait because where egoism fails, humbleness conquers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wisdom is a weapon to ward off destruction; It is an inner fortress which enemies cannot destroy. Determination is the power that sees us through all our frustrations and obstacles. It helps us in building our willpower which is the very basis of success.

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to all Successful Candidates

10

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