



**For Student Only**

Start Time - -	End Time -
Mode of Examination	Online <input type="checkbox"/> Offline <input type="checkbox"/>

Receiving date -	Dispatch date -
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Parameters	Good	Average	Needs Improvement
Conceptual Understanding			
Understanding Demand of Question			
Structure	Introduction		
	Body		
	Conclusion		
Presentation-Illustrations, flowcharts, diagrams, etc.			
Language and Handwriting			
No. of Questions Attempted			
Adherence to Word Limit: Yes/No			

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Mentor's Feedback

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## Evaluator/Reviewer Suggestions



**Evaluator/Reviewer Suggestions**

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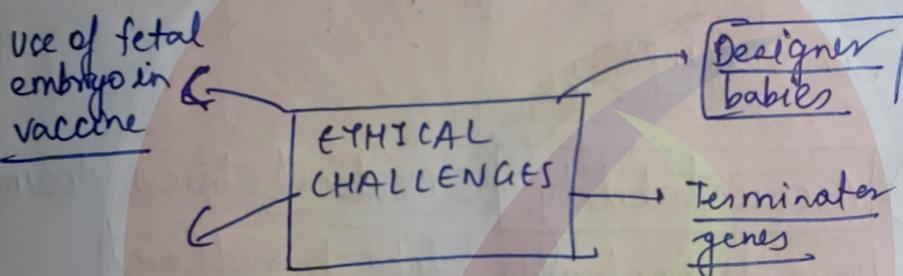
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(Answer questions in NOT MORE than the word limit specified for each in the parenthesis. Content of the answer is more important than its length.)

## Section A

1. "As biotechnology blurs the lines between healing and enhancement, nature and design, the ethical foundations of science face unprecedented scrutiny." Critically examine the role of Bio Ethics in dealing with the ethical challenges posed by advancements in biotechnology. (10 marks, 150 words)

The recent advancements in biotech including CRISPR (as), gene-editing are not neutral rather pose ethical challenges.



In this context, Bio-Ethics becomes important to address these challenges -

## ROLE OF BIO-ETHICS

- ① Informed consent: Patients should be explained the ramifications of biotech before usage to avoid cases like Jhupali Marimala's death.
- ② Autonomy: Chinese researcher the Zinkov's designer baby violates it hence awarded sentence.

- ③ Beneficience (en) Bt cotton approved after large scale field trials.
- ④ Non-maleficience (en) J&J withdrew transplants after reports of poisoning.
- ⑤ Transparency (en) Covishield had to report case of Thrombocytopenia in vaccines.
- ⑥ Accountability : medical ethics doesn't allow technologies like transplant.
- ⑦ Equity : (en) PPVFR Act allows benefit sharing to farmers.

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Technology is a useful servant but only when guided by ethics.

Bioethics helps prevent the cardinal sin of science without humanity.

2. "While economic and human capital are often emphasized in policymaking, it is social capital that sustains democratic institutions and inclusive development." Discuss the role of social capital in enhancing ethical governance, community resilience, and citizen participation.

(10 marks, 150 words)

Democracy sustains not due to prosperity & skills but due to trust, interconnections and shared ethics.

## ECONOMIC & HUMAN CAPITAL ALONE CAN'T SUSTAIN DEMOCRACY & DEVELOPMENT

① Economic Capital without social capital  
 ↳ Increasing atomism → en) gated community  
 ↳ Inequality → en) Gini Index of 0.82

② Human capital without social capital  
 ↳ skill divide & → only 5% are trained  
 ↳ Lack of societal empathy → en) people not help road accident victims

## ROLE OF SOCIAL CAPITAL

① Ethical Governance

(i) Promotes community based ethics  
 ↳ en) Manthan Sarstha teaches accountancy to Kalhejiya women.

(ii) Community based accountability  
(ex) SSSAT revealed corruption in MANREGA due to cohesion.

## ② COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

(i) Crisis Management - (ex) Sitha Gurudwara's during COVID-19 gave food + medicines.

(ii) Challenge the denial of rights  
(ex) Ambaalkar community successfully resisted tungsten mining.

## ③ Citizen Participation

(i) Voter participation - (ex) Parasi community was celebrated as role model in ECI's Churan ka Paw.

(\*) Jan Andolan participation (ex) Malinya Mukhtam Nana Kelam campaign in Kothikode led to 75% door to door collection.

As Robert Putnam says - social capital is the cum total moral fibre of any society.

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3. "Integrity without objectivity risks moral absolutism; objectivity without integrity risks ethical indifference." In the context of public service, critically analyze how the dynamic interplay between integrity and objectivity shapes ethical decision-making. (10 marks, 150 words)

All Indian Services Conduct Rules 1961 identifies Integrity and Objectivity as core ethical values without any hierarchy between the two.

INTEGRITY WITHOUT OBJECTIVITY	OBJECTIVITY WITHOUT INTEGRITY
<p>① <u>Slippery slope</u>:                      ex) Tourism Ministry; repeated underutilization of funds</p> <p>② <u>Emotional decision making</u>                      ex) Sanctioning funds due to pity rather than objective facts</p>	<p>① <u>Denial of rights</u>                      ex) Use of satellite in ARA led to exclusion in Chatisgash</p> <p>② <u>Moral blenders</u>                      ex) Death due to denial of way to ambulance in Kanpur while following VIP protocol</p>

Hence, we need a dynamic interplay of both - INTEGRITY & OBJECTIVITY

① Following loves and balancing duties ex) E-Sreedharan used prefabricated concretes while Chhatrapur metro case was pending in Court;

- ② Contextual decision making →  
P. Uday Kumar used 'tribal Sabhas'  
in nutrition drives balancing integrity  
with objectivity ;
- ③ Protecting honest civil servants →  
ex) H C Gupta acquitted by Supreme  
court in real case as he was a  
person of known integrity .
- ④ Forgiving bonafide mistakes →  
ex) Google removes bonafide  
mistakes ;
- ⑤ ~~Protecting honest civil servants~~  
Promoting committee based decision  
making : ex) Judicial Investigation system  
on Yashwant Verma case balances  
integrity with fact finding / objectivity  
with integrity & objectivity as their  
guideposts, civil servants in India  
can become true Karmayogi .

4. "While Public-Private Partnerships promise efficiency and innovation, they often blur the lines between public interest and private profit." Critically examine the ethical issues involved in PPP models of governance. How can transparency, accountability, and equity be ensured in such collaborations, especially in essential sectors like health, education, and infrastructure? (10 marks, 150 words)

Post LPG reforms, India has innovated infrastructure development through PPP model of governance. However it raises ethical issues

## ETHICAL ISSUES

- ① Derelection of responsibility: AS infrastructure is duty of government;
- ② Violation of rights: eg Taxa committee noted practice of acquiring land and transferring to private undermines tribal rights.
- ③ Double taxation ⇒ TOT model raises taxes from citizens;
- ④ Lack of accountability ⇒ eg Recent 90° bridge in Bhopal was a PPP project;
- ⑤ Lack of transparency ⇒ eg opaque PPP agreement led to failure of TATA power project in Gujarat;

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## WAY FORWARD - RESTORING TRANSPARENCY, ACCOUNTABILITY AND EQUITY

### ① Transparency

- Transparent auctioning of PPP project agreements (ex) Indira airport
- Updation of officers involved on websites → (ex) know your officer QR on PMGSY road

### ② Accountability

- Govt. should manage political risks while private sector should handle demand & supply risk.
- Auditing of projects : (ex) SC in Telecom case allowed it

### ③ EQUITY

- Lower charges for vulnerable  
↳ (ex) Lower toll charges for light vehicle
- Providing insurance for weaker section (ex) PMJAY

As PPP projects continue to develop India, it is essential that they uphold public trust for Jan bhagidari

(Don't write anything in this part)

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(Don't write anything in this part)

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

a. Live as if you were to die tomorrow. Learn as if you were to live forever. - Mahatma Gandhi (10 marks, 150 words)

In this quote, Mahatma Gandhi has stressed upon the values of freedom, courage and curiosity.

## LIVING AS IF DYING TOMORROW

- ① Living in the moment not in the future ex) Yoga & Meditation in current times ensure mental health;
- ② Choose ethical path of not easy path : ex) Nazakat Ahmed Shah <sup>in PAHALGAM</sup> saved lives as if there was no fear in him ;
- ③ focus on the larger things and not transient things like money ex) Ratan Tata donated huge portion of his wealth during COVID-19
- ④ Doing things which makes the world remember us - As Kabir says - 'when you come to this world,

you cry, when you go, do something which makes others remember you

## LEARN AS IF TO LIVE FOREVER

① Learning not just in schools but whole life → ex) skill upgradation for AI in Budget 25;

② Learning through playing in Jadui Pitara of NIP 2020 which makes children learn in daily activities blurring the traditional boundaries

③ Learning via other creatures; in) Buddha used the idea of Sangha from animals;

④ Learning & transmitting to others; ex) Youtube content creation by orange economy

The maxim held by Gandhiji can help one live a fulfilled life attain all the Purushartha of Indian philosophy

b. The great secret of true success, of true happiness, is this: the man or woman who asks for no return, the perfectly unselfish person, is the most successful." — Swami Vivekananda (10 marks, 150 words)

In this quote, Swami Vivekananda has highlighted the value of (selflessness) as the true measure of success & happiness. As the Chinese proverb - 'selflessness is the real selfishness'

## WHY SELFLESSNESS IS TRUE SUCCESS/HAPPINESS

- ① Involves winning one's own desires  
(~~ex~~) Buddha defeated Mara (won his desires)
- ② Selfless person has nothing to lose or fear in) Captain Sumeet Sabharwal diverted Air India plane before crashing
- ③ Selflessness is the hardest thing to achieve. As Aristotle says - 'I count him braver who conquers his desires than he who conquers enemies'
- ④ Other success have temporary value but selflessness is remembered through history (As Thiruvalluvar says

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Great wealth like great crowd gathers and melts in no time).

## RELEVANCE IN PRESENT TIMES

① Personal relationships can be strengthened if we are selfless reducing terrorism, rising divorce rate;

② Fearlessness & personal growth  
→ ex) Cardinal giving food aid to Gaza

③ Redefining success

→ From wealth & career to altruism  
↳ ex) Air India established 500 crore fund for victims

→ From personal to societal need  
being: ex) ML Nehru gave his career for national movement.

As Swami Vivekananda's philosophy recommends we must aim for annihilation of our ego.

c. Morality is not the doctrine of how we may make ourselves happy, but how we may make ourselves worthy of happiness. - Immanuel Kant

(10 marks, 150 words)

In this quote, Immanuel Kant explores the true meaning of morality as becoming worthy of attaining true happiness rather than as instrument of happiness. He hints at a critique of utilitarian theory prevalent in his times.

## MORALITY NOT ABOUT BECOMING HAPPY

① Morality involves sacrifices rather than chasing happiness.

ex) Ratan Tata during COVID-19

② Morality involves privileging common good over personal good.

ex) Vijay Bahadur Dargu gave up his life during Kargil war for nation;

③ Morality involves long-term benefit over short term benefit.

ex) Patagonia adopted sustainable supply chain leading to initial challenges but long-term sustainability.

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## MORALITY INVOLVES MAKING OURSELVES WORTHY OF HAPPINESS

- ① Choosing the right intention →  
ex) Anil Suman interpreted construction & Building, Workers Act flexibly to benefit brick kiln workers who later thanked him;
- ② Choosing the right means ⇒ India has started Mission Life for citizens to use minimally to find happiness not in goods but inner contentment.
- ③ Purifying one's soul ⇒ (ex) Parashurama in Jainism teaches forgiveness
- ④ Choosing the right ends ⇒ India called for a representative UN to ensure its success

Morality is a spiritual path which casts our character and takes us beyond happiness to the bliss of aneness.

6. "In a country grappling with resource constraints, the vast surplus funds held by religious institutions raise pressing ethical questions about social responsibility." Critically examine the ethical, constitutional, and socio-cultural implications of utilizing surplus funds from religious institutions for public welfare purposes such as education and healthcare? (10 marks, 150 words)

Article 26 provides religious denominations the right to manage themselves. However, the question of surplus funds held by religious institutions raises debates of utilising them for developmental purposes.

## UTILISING SURPLUS FUNDS FOR PUBLIC WELFARE

### POSITIVES

- ① Ethical
  - (i) Promotes common good through healthcare & education
  - ex) RKM's hospitals help tillly region people
  - (ii) Upholds the idea of Gandhian Trusteeship
- ② Constitutional Implications
  - (i) Upholds the ideals of Right to Education &

### NEGATIVES

- ① Unethical
  - (i) Against the autonomy of religious communities
  - (ii) Against Kantian ethics of forcing ethics without intention
- ② Constitutional
  - (i) Against Article 25, 26 & 30

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## Right to health

(i) IMA vs UOI  
SC held the right to health.

(ii) Supports the ideal of Article 38 & 39(e)

(ii) May go against the idea of secularism

(iii) Unilateral interfer in one religion

## 3) SOCIO-CULTURAL

(i) Promotes social capital (ii) Sikh Ambedkar gain popularity due to organs

(ii) will promote harmony

## 3) SOCIO-CULTURAL

(i) may lead to cultural backlash

(ii) Protest against govt control of temples

## WAY FORWARD

→ Provide autonomy & choice to prevent challenge

→ Nudging → (i) Highlighting the case studies like Ram Krishna Mission

→ Promote ethical awareness among follower to donate to such institutions

when people choose religion with ethics, religious organisation would themselves promote charitable causes.

7. Persuasion involves deliberate efforts to shape attitudes through reasoned argument, whereas social influence often operates subtly through conformity, peer pressure, or cultural norms. Both play a critical role in decision-making and public behavior." How can civil servants ethically employ both to bring about positive behavioural change in society? (10 marks, 150 words)

Both persuasion and social influence are tools of attitudinal changes yet with crucial differences

	<u>Persuasion</u>	<u>Social influence</u>
<u>Technique</u>	Uses <u>ethos, pathos</u> and <u>logos</u> as techniques	Uses <u>psychological</u> techniques like <u>conformity</u> for <u>subtle</u> influence
<u>Nature</u>	People are aware that they are being influenced	People are <u>usually unaware</u> that they are being influenced
	ex) use of fly in water to create <u>disgust</u> in <u>public</u>	ex) # <u>selfie</u> with <u>daughter</u> subtly <u>builds a bond</u> with <u>daughters</u>

Both high useful tools — civil servants can use both in following ways (ethically)

① Informed choice — people should be given autonomy, with information;

en) Wear it up campaign to reduce subsidy bill;

② Using a mixture of both

en) → Amitabh Bachchan promoting Swachh Bharat is using authority

↳ Using slogans like 'Jhatghar' to evoke emotions;

③ Planning Activities with JEE plan

↳ Activities like nudging at school  
en) CBSE's sugar boards

↳ media Ads on harmful effects of sugar.

④ Mapping of most-effective technique based on population

↳ Swachh Bharat Ghar used a mix of persuasion & social influence based on individual district needs

Behavioural change requires persistent efforts of dedicated civil servants. They must take up this mantle with patience & perseverance.

Introduction
Body
Conclusion
Presentation
Marks:

8. "Despite significant investments and administrative reforms, public service delivery in India often remains poor in quality and accessibility. Critically analyze how socio-cultural factors interact with politico-administrative inefficiencies to perpetuate substandard delivery of public services. How can policy design and implementation be made more culturally responsive to address these challenges?"

(10 marks, 150 words)

The recent case of rats in Bihar hospital highlights the larger issues of low quality of public service delivery

## SOCIO-CULTURAL FACTORS & THEIR INTERACTION WITH POLITICO-ADMIN INEFFICIENCY

① Bureaucratic attitude → en) 'chalta hai' attitude leads to rose-like delay of actions ;

② Lack of public participation in state accountability process slows reform → middle class families don't reach their ward in public schools hence never ask for reforms ,

③ Culture of corruption → en) bakshish, cut system as seen in Abhishek Prakash OP IAs officer case ;

④ elitism in bureaucrats hinders genuine reforms & public service attitude ;

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## REFORMS POLICY DESIGN & IMPLEMENTATION

1) Ensure public participation through Social Audit, PIL, ~~con~~ Public expenditure survey, citizen score card;

2) Reframe civil services as public servants and not officers;  
en) Removal of red lights on vehicles;

3) Create Jan Andolan to ensure accountability  
en) Recent twitter trends led to reform in IECTC body.

4) Citizen's charter & sevottam  
Framework → capacity building  
→ citizen charter  
→ continuous update  
Autonomous Redressal  
en) CPCARMS

we need to shift away from the attitude of rules based bureaucracy to Roles based bureaucracy!

9. "The rise of hybrid work models has redefined workplace ethics, blurring the boundaries between personal autonomy and professional accountability." Critically analyze the ethical challenges emerging from remote and hybrid work arrangements. How can organizations balance flexibility with fairness, trust with transparency, and productivity with employee well-being in the evolving work culture?

(10 marks, 150 words)

As per BCG, more than 30% of leading firms in IT sector are employing hybrid work models such as work from home, flexi-timer and flexi-labour. However -

## ETHICAL CHALLENGES EXIST

- ① Less of personal leisure time: Work gets spread into tiny parts throughout the day;
- ② Surveillance → Apps continuously monitor workers and their daily activities violates Right to privacy (Article 21)
- ③ Informalisation → Hybrid work models enable informal contractual workers without social security (violating Article 42)
- ④ Mental health challenges due to excessive workload ex) Cricket & Young suicide case
- ⑤ Less of community at workplace leads to low social capital.

## BALANCING & WAY FORWARD

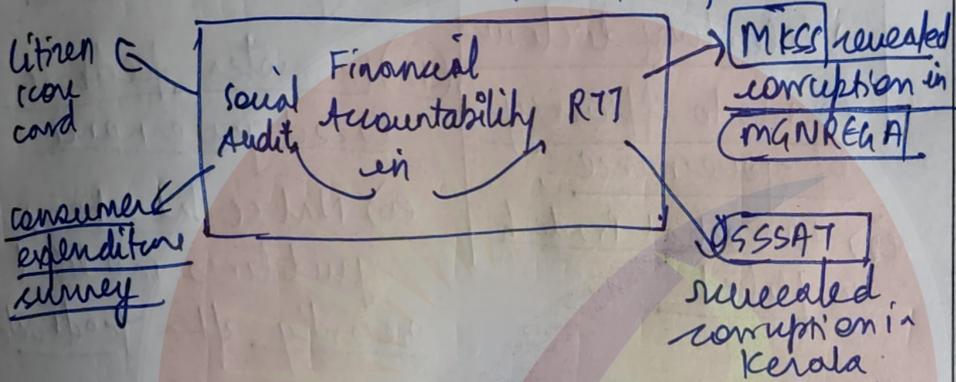
- ① Provide choice to workers to opt for on-site or WFH arrangement;
- ② Promote mental health counselling of employees;
- ③ EI training for managers and employees to prevent situations like LST CEO asking people to work for/week.
- ④ Regular meetup of employees to foster bonds and shared ethics.
- ⑤ Provide vacations to hybrid workers like Zoho;
- ⑥ Provide workstation equipments and allowances for hybrid workers.

when hybrid work models develop the trust with employees, they will treat the company as their own. As Richard Branson says - 'Take care of your employees, they will take care of your customers'.

10. "Social audits and The Right to Information (RTI) Act are not merely tools of financial accountability, but instruments of participatory ethics that empower citizens to hold power to account." Critically examine the effectiveness of both of them in ensuring transparency, accountability, and ethical governance.

(10 marks, 150 words)

With Meghalaya institutionalising social audit & 20 years of RTI, it is pertinent to recall their role in participatory governance.



## RTI & SOCIAL AUDITS AS INSTRUMENTS OF PARTICIPATORY ETHICS

RTI	social Audit.
<p>① <u>Transparency</u> : RTI Act, led to SC Judges becoming <u>public servants</u> and earlier this year voluntarily disclosed assets.</p> <p>② <u>Accountability</u> en) MKSS utilized <u>RTI</u> to create Jan Survei in Rajasthan</p>	<p>① <u>Transparency</u> : Meghalaya Social Audit Society revealed gaps in <u>pension</u> release.</p> <p>② <u>Accountability</u> en) Meghalaya Social Audit Society revealed absentee teachers in public school</p>

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## ③ ETHICAL GOVERNANCE

→ Promotes Rule of Law : Information can't be denied if it can be presented in Parliament

→ Voluntary disclosure leads to efficiency of governance ;

ex) Himachal Pradesh simplified

## ③ ETHICAL GOVERNANCE

i) Promotes grievance redressal  
→ ex) Pension restored in Meghalaya after social audit

ii) Promotes feedback based governance

ex) Nal se Jal scheme guidelines modified recently after feedback

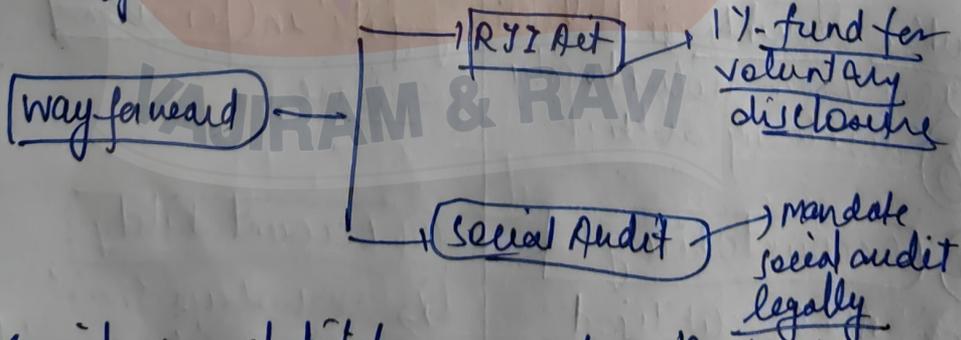
## However, these face challenges

① Pendency of cases : > 5000 cases pending in CIC ;

② Lack of awareness & participation - waning of RTI movement.

① Low institutionalisation  
↳ Social audit not part of legal mandate

② Lack of participation



Social accountability can solve the problem of apathy and create corruption mult Bharat

Introduction
Body
Conclusion
Presentation
Marks :

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11. "While international funding aims to promote development, humanitarian aid, and global cooperation, it often comes embedded with political agendas, conditionalities, and asymmetric power dynamics." Critically examine the ethical challenges posed by international funding. How can global financial assistance be restructured to align with ethical principles of equity, dignity, and mutual respect? (10 marks, 150 words)



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## Section B

12. You are the Divisional Railway Manager (DRM), Northern Railways, responsible for the operation, safety, and crisis management across one of India's most congested and politically sensitive railway divisions. Delhi Railway Station, under your jurisdiction, sees over 5 lakh passengers daily.

It's the peak summer season. Due to extreme heatwaves, late trains, and repair delays on eastern routes, the station becomes overcrowded beyond its safe capacity. Hundreds of passengers, including women, infants, and elderly, are stranded on platforms for hours, with minimal facilities, water shortage, and ineffective announcements. Suddenly, a fake viral message circulates, claiming that a footbridge has collapsed. Within moments, panic ensues, people rush toward exits, and in the chaos, a stampede breaks out on Platform 12. The casualty count rises quickly. 17 people are declared dead, including 6 children and 3 elderly women. Dozens are critically injured. The majority of the deceased are migrant workers and lower-income passengers from rural underdeveloped states.

The tragedy sparks national outrage. TV channels broadcast horrific visuals of stampede victims, crying relatives, and bloodied platforms. Emotional videos show children searching for their parents in trauma wards.

Your office had sent two prior warnings in the past month requesting crowd control support and improvements to public address systems. They were ignored or delayed by higher bureaucratic channels. Now, as the face of local administration, the entire blame is being pinned on you in media briefings.

All casualties are from general and unreserved compartments. The air-conditioned lounges and premium - class platforms remained unaffected. Accusations of class bias in infrastructure planning are going viral. Further, Several junior staff are emotionally broken. One 24-year-old RPF constable attempted suicide, blaming himself for not being able to stop the crowd. You're now being asked to send these same employees back on duty for handling crowd control the next day. Moreover, The father of a deceased girl demands to see her final moments via CCTV, sobbing at your feet. A local MP calls you, pressuring you to give preferential treatment to the victims from his constituency — ahead of others.

You're being unofficially told by a senior officer in the Railway Board to "tone down" the language in your official report to protect "the image of Indian Railways". You're warned that exposing systemic lapses may lead to your transfer or forced retirement.

There's growing anger outside the hospital and the station. Families are protesting, and crowd control is deteriorating. However, you must ensure trains keep running, and no secondary incident occurs — all with stretched manpower and emotionally broken teams.

News channels are broadcasting real-time hospital footage of victims and sharing unverified family stories. You're asked whether you want to restrict media access temporarily inside railway premises — a move that may attract criticism of "gagging the press." You have barely slept in 36 hours, and your junior team is collapsing from stress.

- Identify and explain the key ethical issues and dilemmas in this situation.
- Write in decreasing order of importance, your immediate actions.
- You are asked to submit your incident report to the Railway Board. What guiding values and principles should reflect in your written communication?
- Suggest long-term reforms that could prevent such tragedies in overcrowded railway stations in the future.

(20 marks, 250 words)

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The given case study mirrors the rising case of stampedes and the challenges associated with them - ethical & operational.

## (a) ETHICAL ISSUES

(i) Delays & bureaucratic attitude as reflected in delayed trains, repairs and languishing reform.

(ii) Misinformation & disinformation leading to leaths against socialistic idea of wisdom;

(iii) Lack of sensitivity among media channels - in reporting the case.

(iv) Pressure from seniors to protect the "image of railways" reflects vested interests and lack of conscience.

## (b) ETHICAL DILEMMAS

(i) Justice towards the victims vs Loyalty to Indian Railways.

(ii) Responsibility towards staff vs responsibility towards public

(iii) Punctuality of Railways vs safety & prevention of future incidents ;

(iv)

(b) IMMEDIATE ACTIONS IN DECREASING IMPORTANCE.

① Identification of victims and transparent disclosure to media

② Ensuring crowd control to prevent future incidents ;

③ Taking steps to ensure truthful enquiry and expose systemic lapses ;

④ Ensuring the punctuality of trains

⑤ Attending to specific needs of victims

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## (C) REPORT TO RAILWAY : UNDERLYING VALUES

- ① Transparency with respect to casualties ;
- ② Holism → holistic report highlight systemic failures  
(Justification - even though it may cost me my job ⇒ it will ensure my conscience is untainted)
- ③ Accountability of the lapses and role of bureaucratic inertia ;
- ④ Justice to victims as well as lower level bureaucracy ;
- ⑤ Long-term approach highlighting the reforms that can be taken ;

## (d) LONG TERM REFORMS

① Widening of platforms to enable greater usage ;

② Institutional - increasing the strength of RPM deployments ;

③ Operational → compartmentalising platforms with multiple entries & exits ;

④ Technology → using AI led cameras to predict overcrowding

→ Using public messaging via loudspeakers ;

⑤ Financial → Innovating funding models for capacity enhancement  
(e.g. PPP model)

↓  
Use of blockchain to prevent misappropriation of funds

Using above steps, we can tackle such incidents to create safe public spaces.

Introduction
Body
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Marks:

(Don't write anything in this part)

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13. You are the Chief Compliance Commissioner at the National Startup Governance Board (NSGB)—a regulatory authority under the Ministry of Corporate Affairs, tasked with ensuring ethical practices, board accountability, and investor transparency in India's startup ecosystem.

Five years ago, "EduNow", an ed-tech startup founded by an alumnus of a premier college of India, was celebrated as a beacon of India's digital future. With a bold mission to democratize learning for rural students, it grew rapidly—partnering with schools, onboarding millions of users, and securing funding from global investors.

But today, EduNow is imploding under the weight of governance failure. Auditors have resigned, citing withheld information, inflated revenues, and fabricated subscriber data. Several board members quit silently, without public explanation. Employees allege mass layoffs through WhatsApp, non-payment of dues, and coercion to sign NDAs in exchange for exit compensation. A leaked internal report reveals Personal expenses of the founder were booked as business expenses, Related-party transactions with shell companies owned by family members, Manipulation of user metrics to secure higher valuations in funding rounds.

Despite these, the founder retains full operational control and is preparing for a new fundraising round, even considering an IPO.

Meanwhile, a 27-year-old EduNow sales executive dies by suicide, allegedly due to unethical sales pressure and denial of salary for six months. His handwritten note, now viral, reads, "I believed in the dream. But I was punished for asking for my salary. What future does honesty have?"

Public anger is erupting. Parents, students, and employees feel betrayed. Investors are distancing themselves. The media is asking tough questions. You are called for an emergency press conference in 6 hours.

- As the Chief Compliance Commissioner, list your top five immediate ethical decisions.
- Suppose the founder be forced to resign, and you are given the charge. What systemic changes that you would introduce?
- Should companies that deliver public services (like EduRise in education) be subject to stricter governance norms than typical startups? OR Should startups be exempt from the same governance norms as large listed companies to encourage growth?

(20 marks, 250 words)

The given study presents a classic case of a startup pursuing growth without morality and in the end losing both.

## ① 5 ETHICAL DECISIONS IMMEDIATELY

- ① Verification of the leaked internal reports by ordering an enquiry;
  - ② Coordination with SEBI to suspend operational control of founders;
  - ③ Investigation into the death of the employee
  - ④ Moratorium on the benefits given to the startup
  - ⑤ Transparency in the press conference with the information generated so far;
- (b) Were I to run the same company, I would restore the trust and undo the wrongs & find golden mean of ethics & profit.

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## Ensuring justice for previous acts

- Compensation to the dead employee
- Releasing the salaries of employees
- Transparency & truthfulness with respect to subscriber base

## Upholding Accountability

- ① Reinforce board integrity by introducing independent directors
- ② Ensuring internal and external audits ;
- ③ Ensuring random shareholder and one parent as stakeholder in board governance ;

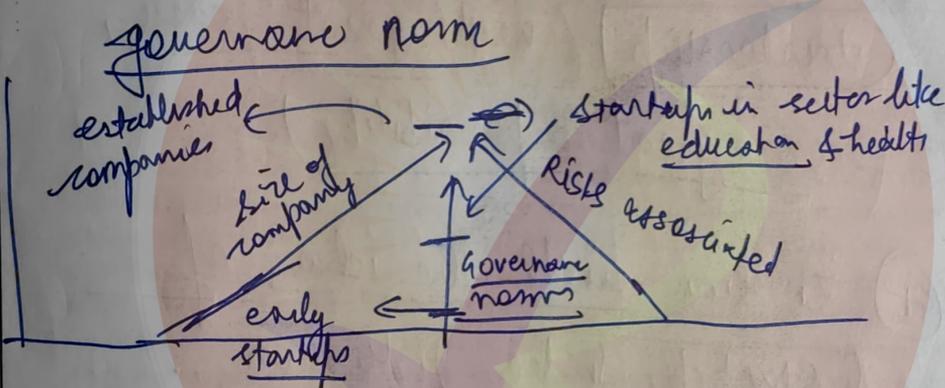
## Restructure the company

- Reduce the size of the company to maintain viability
- Bringing in new CEO renowned for crisis management & ethical

## Leadership

As it is rightly said - "ethics in business begins where compliance ends"

(C) There must be a rising threshold based and risk based



Justification for such norms where established companies are having higher governance norms - followed by risky startups - followed by new startups.

(1) ensures the golden mean of progress, growth & accountability.

# VAJIRAM & RAVI

② Risk based governance funds  
the golden mean between  
startup promotion and protection  
of citizens

③ goes with the idea of Gandhian  
trusteeship (with great power,  
comes great responsibility)

④ To live with the idea of  
Startup India Mission.

while companies - must grow  
& prosper, they should uphold  
the idea of 3P - pro planet,  
people & profit

Don't write anything in this part)

# VAJIRAM & RAVI

(Don't write anything in this part)

14. You have recently been appointed as the Chairperson & Managing Director (CMD) of Bharatam Alloy Limited (BAL), a large but severely underperforming Public Sector Undertaking (PSU) under the Ministry of Heavy Industries. Once a symbol of India's industrial self-reliance, BAL is now grappling with mounting operational losses, Outdated technology, Unmotivated workforce, Delays in salary payments, Poor customer satisfaction, Multiple failed modernization attempts.

BAL's biggest plant is in a Tier-II town that heavily depends on the company for employment and local economy. Last week, an accidental furnace blast at BAL's facility injured 18 contract workers, 2 critically. The incident brought the company back into the media spotlight, triggering: Public protests led by injured workers' families demanding justice and permanent jobs. Employees' unions threatening indefinite strike, blaming mismanagement and unsafe conditions, Local politicians accusing you and previous leadership of criminal negligence, National media labeling BAL a "black hole for taxpayers"

A PIL has been filed in High Court, demanding either privatization or shutdown of the PSU to stop further waste of public money.

The Ministry asks you to submit a revival plan within 10 days, but hints at disinvestment if no credible plan emerges. Workers want permanent employment for contract laborers, but BAL has no financial capacity to absorb them all. The Chief Safety Officer, in an internal report, reveals that preventive maintenance was ignored due to budget cuts. A private competitor has offered to acquire BAL, promising better technology and full job security for current employees—but with no guarantee for contract workers. Your spouse, a journalist, is being pressured by her editor to cover "how you are the new face of PSU corruption" in an exposé. Your own conscience is shaken after personally meeting the family of one injured worker who asked, "Would your child work in this furnace if it ran like this?"

- (a) Identify the ethical dilemmas.
  - (b) What options are available before you? Write its merits and demerits
  - (c) As CMD, what immediate and long-term steps will you take to address
    - I. The accident and its aftermath
    - II. Public Trust
    - III. Financial viability of the PSU
  - (d) Do you recommend absorbing all contract workers into permanent roles despite financial constraints? What would be your response if this were a private company?
- (20 marks, 250 words)

This case study exploring the underlying issues of lack of competitiveness, funds and safety in PSU's.

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## (a) ETHICAL DILEMMAS

- (i) Justice to deceased workers vs  
viability of company
- (ii) safety of the company vs Revival  
of the company
- (iii) Privatisation of the company vs  
Fate of contract workers
- (iv) Journalistic ethics vs Personal  
relationship with CMD

## (b) OPTIONS AVAILABLE TO ME

(1) Seek transfer

Merits

→ Prevents me from  
deciding

→

Demerits

→ Shows lack  
of courage &  
leadership

→ Does not solve  
the crisis

(2) Promote privatisation of the  
company

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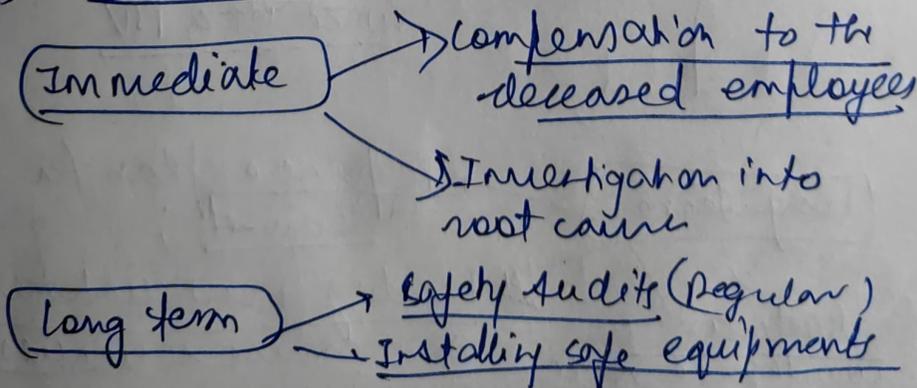
Merit	Demerit
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Ensures <u>financial viability</u></li> <li>→ In line with govt. agenda of <u>strategic disinvestment</u></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ <u>Fate of contract workers</u> in <u>changing suspense</u> (Against Rawlsian justice)</li> </ul>

③ seek funds, prepare a last plan for renewal

MERIT	DEMERIT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ <u>shows leadership</u> &amp; <u>crisis management</u></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ will require <u>additional funds</u> &amp; <u>layoffs</u></li> </ul>

## (C) ADDRESSING THE CONCERN

### (i) Accident & Aftermath



# VAJIRAM & RAVI

## ② Public Trust

### (i) Immediate

Press conference  
with respect to  
underlying causes

Citizen participation  
in investigation with  
media coverage.

### (ii) Long-term

- Transparent declaration of the assets of all managers & myself;
- Regular audits, allowing media to visit the campus of company

## ③ Financial viability

### Immediate

Seeking funds from  
the government  
since it's a PSU

### Long-term

Prepare a plan for  
revival;

Reducing  
workforce size

Finding new customers  
to increase revenues;

As a last resort, privatisation with agreement of non-retrenchment for fixed period.

(d) No, I would not recommend because doing so

- will hamper financial viability
- will prevent future privatisation
- will lead to future safety incidents due to lack of funds

~~○~~  
Instead, I would include only few workers on the basis of performance while letting the other go.

As a private company, I would not have any permanent worker to ensure viability of company.

As they say - At times of crisis, morality is in survival (Apad dharma.)

Introduction
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15. In recent years, India has witnessed an explosion of self-styled financial influencers or "finfluencers" on social media platforms like YouTube, Instagram, and X (formerly Twitter). These individuals, often without formal financial qualifications, offer stock market tips, mutual fund suggestions, crypto investment advice, and more to millions of followers.

However, this unregulated space has now become a serious concern. A recent example involved a well-known finfluencer promoting a newly listed stock as a "hidden gem." Thousands of people invested in it, causing its price to spike artificially. A few weeks later, the stock crashed, revealing that the finfluencer had received undisclosed compensation from the company's promoters to create promotional content — effectively making it a "pump and dump" scheme.

This led to public uproar, loss of hard-earned money by common people, and an erosion of trust in online financial content. The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) initiated an investigation but faced challenges due to loopholes in current digital regulation frameworks. Meanwhile, several other finfluencers continue similar activities unchecked.

You are an officer in the Ministry of Finance, asked to look into this growing menace and propose policy and ethical safeguards

- Identify and evaluate the key ethical issues involved in this case.
  - What steps would you suggest to ensure that financial influencers act with accountability and integrity? How would you balance the need for regulation with the right to freedom of expression?
  - What role can digital platforms and social media companies play in promoting ethical content?
- (20 marks, 250 words)

Economic Survey 14-15 revealed India has 13-2 more investors due to rising digital investment space. However, this has also raised cases as pointed out by this case study.

(a) ETHICAL ISSUES INVOLVED

(1) unregulated space of financial digital advisers raises issues

of state negligence and 'paling problem of regulations

② Misguiding of public by influencers against the Kantian ethics as it treats people as means to an end;

③ Rampant financial frauds and the public trust in the system;

④ Corruption in the system as visible in collusion of companies & startups.

⑤ Lack of financial literacy among the investors and craving for easy money shows value for short term gain.

(b) STEPS TO RESTORE ACCOUNTABILITY & INTEGRITY

① Frame rules for registration & regulation of influencers

→ only those registered with SEBI can give financial advice

→ social media platforms to monitor their spaces and block unregistered influencers.

② Monitoring of social media

→ community based monitoring to report unregistered

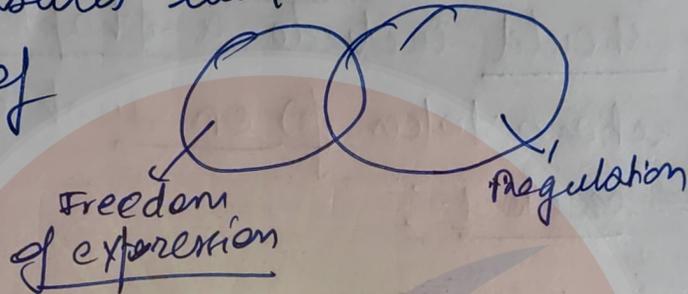
→ social media to grant

③ Influencers should only provide analysis and not recommend investment

④ Transparency: Financial Investors should be made aware of the potential consequence of investment by all registered

⑤ Awareness : conduct a campaign through influencers with each video providing detailed guidelines to invest.

These measures will ensure the balance of



## ③ Role of social media Platforms

① Institutional

→ Appointing chief compliance officers to follow govt. regulations

→ Installing grievance redressal mechanism for public :

## ② Monitoring & Prompt Action

→ Monitoring their platform for unethical financial advice  
→ Blocking (such channels) with

adequate safeguards & appellate mechanism;

③ Transparency: Annual report should include a chapter on actions taken ~~to~~ on such content creators;

④ Promoting awareness & choice by providing disclaimers on such channels  
e.g. Youtube recently brought thumbnail of 'financial advice' to create awareness

By taking these steps, our digital media spaces can become safe digital spaces.

# VAJIRAM & RAVI

16. It is the peak of summer, and your district in a northern state is facing an unprecedented heatwave, with temperatures consistently crossing 48°C. Hospitals are overburdened with heatstroke patients, and multiple deaths have already occurred due to dehydration and sunstroke.

You are the District Magistrate. Due to excessive demand on the state power grid, the Energy Department has ordered rotational power cuts across districts to prevent a total blackout. Your district has been given discretion to prioritize which regions or sectors receive continuous electricity during peak hours. You convene your team and are presented with this stark choice:

There are three Main Sectors Competing for Limited Electricity:

1. Urban & Industrial Zone which hosts the city's hospitals, including ICU units and maternity wards, has water filtration plants for the city, is home to a growing IT park and 3 major factories employing 8,000 workers & contributes significant state revenue and political visibility.
2. Rural Villages & Agriculture Belt where Power is needed for irrigation pumps, fans, and refrigerators, and Farmers fear crop failure if irrigation is stalled for even a few days. There are cattle deaths and villagers sleeping outdoors due to heat, Village children are preparing for board and competitive exams, some under candlelight.
3. Slums & Low-Income Areas in Urban Periphery where power is needed for cooling and Women are reporting rising cases of domestic violence and health issues due to heat stress. Infants and elderly are at highest risk. Migrant laborers from these areas serve the city and the industrial belt

Farmers' protests are growing, with slogans like "No power, no food". A few have threatened suicide, reminiscent of a tragic incident last year. A viral video shows an elderly woman in a rural hamlet fanning her unconscious grandson due to heatstroke, saying, "The government gave us electricity on election day. Now where is it?" On the other hand, factory owners have warned of shutdowns and mass layoffs if power is cut for more than two days. The District Civil Surgeon pleads with you to not cut power to the city hospital: "One failed ventilator could mean ten deaths."

Political representatives from both rural and urban areas are blaming each other, and you are accused of bias no matter what you decide. The State Power Minister subtly suggests, "We cannot afford negative media about failing industry. Make a practical choice."

Your subordinate suggests cutting power to slums, saying "They have no votes." Your own elderly parents live in one of the villages, and are facing the same crisis, but you're told not to show "personal bias."

- (a) What are the ethical issues and conflicting duties involved in this situation?
- (b) If you had to rank these three sectors in priority, how would you do it and why?
- (c) Suppose a local TV channel offers you a platform to explain your decision. How would you communicate your choice ethically and transparently to a divided and emotionally charged public?
- (d) Suggest 3 long-term reforms to avoid such dilemmas in the future and ensure just distribution of scarce resources.

(20 marks, 250 words)

(Don't write anything in this part)

# VAJIRAM & RAVI



(Don't write anything in this part)

## VAJIRAM & RAVI

17. In a Tier-1 city, Aparna, a 28-year-old management consultant, works 14-hour days and most weekends. Her firm praises her "ownership mindset" and "hustler spirit." On the surface, she is successful and driven. In reality, she struggles with insomnia, anxiety, and a growing sense of emptiness. Her emotional burnout is dismissed by peers as "just part of the grind." In a small rented room in Delhi, Arjun, a 26-year-old civil services aspirant, has been preparing relentlessly for the past four years. He studies 10-12 hours daily, battling financial pressure, rising self-doubt, and the emotional weight of repeated failure. His family back home has pinned all their hopes on him. He finds it hard to sleep, avoids social interactions, and suffers in silence—fearing that any acknowledgment of stress would be perceived as weakness, or worse, defeat.

Meanwhile, Meena, a 42-year-old government school teacher in a small town, has been silently battling depression for the past two years. After losing her husband during the pandemic, she returned to work to support her children, but overwhelming responsibilities, lack of support, and workplace indifference pushed her further into emotional isolation. Despite being a dedicated educator, her performance has declined, and colleagues whisper that she has "lost interest."

These individuals—spread across professions and geographies—are united by an invisible crisis: deteriorating mental health, fuelled by social stigma, institutional neglect, and the glorification of hustle.

- Identify the ethical issues surrounding mental health.
- What attitudinal and behavioral strategies can be adopted to effect attitudinal change around mental health, especially in high-stress environments?
- As a future civil servant, how would you act as a change agent in your sphere of influence to promote mental well-being while balancing administrative efficiency and empathy?

(20 marks, 250 words)

Rising individualism, work pressure, competition is giving birth to a silent epidemic of mental health challenges which also has ethical dimensions.

### ETHICAL DIMENSIONS

- Stigmatisation of mental health

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leads to isolation ;

② Lack of peer support & care leads to further isolation ;

③ Mental health challenges leads to declining productivity harming productivity (utilitarian ethics)

④ Against the right to life with dignity as it comes with self-doubt ;

⑤ Rising cases show misplaced priorities in career over health & dignity

⑥ As a social problem, it requires behavioural changes & attitudinal change.

(i) Planning → create a plan for addressing mental health in organisation  
↳ Hire psychiatrist & mental health consultants

## (ii) Digital campaign

→ Movies on mental health themes should be screened among employees/workers

→ social media campaigns involving top influencers

## (iii) Community centric approaches

→ framing regular peer discussions on mental health

→ community based counselling  
(ex) Delhi police promote counselling for police

## (iv) Sector-specific strategies

(i) Education : End of celebrity tepper culture, sharing failure & resilience stories

(ii) Healthcare : mental counselling

## sessions for overworked employees

(iii) Corporate sector : empathy & ET  
training of employees

(iv) women-centric measures like  
women only groups can be promoted;

(c) As a future civil servant - 9  
would

(i) Institute mental health  
counselling among my department  
members;

(ii) show empathy towards my  
co-workers and subordinates;

(iii) celebrate small victories to  
keep the morale of the team;

(iv) share stories of mental  
health counselling & its positive

Impact to tackle attitudinal change ;

(v) Regular communication with employees to manage their issues at work

en) CAPF reduced mental health stress by effective counselling & regular meeting of seniors ;

(vi) ET-based training, en) ET module of DOPT

A healthy mind can contribute to the nation in a more

dedicated manner . @ Mission

Charmayogi can be a starting point

for such reforms .

Introduction
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Space for Rough Work

