UPSC Mains 2025 (GS 4 Solutions)

GS 4 (Ethics Integrity and Aptitude)

Question 1

(a) **In the present digital age , social media has revolutionised our way of communication and interaction. However it has raised several ethical issues and challenges . Describe the key ethical dilemmas in this regard.** *(Answer in 150 words)*

In 2024, more than **820 million Indians** were active on **social media**, spending on average 2.5 hours every day on these platforms. While this digital space has become a source of **empowerment, expression, and connectivity**, it has also brought new and complex **ethical dilemmas**.

The first dilemma is **privacy vs. connectivity**. Social media thrives on sharing, but this often comes at the cost of **excessive data collection**. Breaches of consent, like the infamous **Cambridge Analytica case** where data was misused for political gain, highlight how the virtue of **autonomy** can clash with **corporate profit motives**.

The second dilemma is **freedom of speech vs. responsible speech**. These platforms encourage **democratic participation**, yet they also spread **hate speech, misinformation, and trolling**. The rise of **AI-generated deepfakes** targeting public figures shows how **liberty** can conflict with the principle of **non-maleficence** (not causing harm).

The third issue is **equality vs. digital divide**. Social media claims to connect everyone, but its **algorithms** often amplify the voices of the privileged while pushing vulnerable groups to the margins. **Echo chambers** and **filter bubbles** deepen **cognitive biases**, weakening **justice** and **fairness** in public debate.

The fourth challenge is **well-being vs. addiction**. Constant scrolling and online validation have taken a toll on **mental health**, especially among young people. Problems like **anxiety, cyberbullying, and low self-esteem** reflect the clash between personal **happiness** and the **profit-seeking utilitarianism** of tech companies.

Finally, there is **accountability vs. anonymity**. On the one hand, anonymity protects **whistleblowers** and dissenters. On the other, it is misused by **cyber-criminals**, raising tough questions about **responsibility** and **transparency**.

In this sense, **social media** is not just a technological tool but an **ethical battlefield** where values like **truth, justice, dignity, and responsibility** are constantly being tested.

The way forward is through **value-based digital governance**: stronger **data protection laws**, strict **ethical AI regulation**, widespread **digital awareness campaigns**, and a push for platforms to design more **ethical algorithms**. Only then can social media grow beyond dilemmas and become a real tool of **ethical empowerment** in our democracy and governance.

b) "Constitutional Morality isn't a natural sentiment but a product of civil education and adherence to rule of law". Examine the significance of constitutional morality for public servant highlighting the role in promoting good governance and ensuring accountability in public administration. *(Answer in 150 words)*

In the **Navtej Singh Johar case (2018)**, when the **Supreme Court** struck down **Section 377**, it relied on the principle of **constitutional morality**. The Court reminded us that governance cannot simply follow the will of the majority; it must protect **justice, liberty, and dignity**. Importantly, **constitutional morality** does not come naturally. It grows through **civic education**, respect for the **rule of law**, and a strong **democratic culture**.

For a **public servant**, the role of constitutional morality is especially crucial.

Guiding Ethical Compass: Unlike personal morality shaped by **religion, caste, or region**, **constitutional morality** is rooted in universal values—**justice, equality, fraternity, and rule of law**. This helps officers stay impartial while making decisions.

Promoting Good Governance: By following **transparency, fairness, and accountability**, officers avoid arbitrariness. For example, while implementing **welfare schemes**, **constitutional morality** ensures that benefits reach people without **leakages** or **discrimination**.

Ensuring Accountability: Public officials are essentially **trustees of public power**. Respecting **constitutional morality** reinforces **probity, responsibility, and answerability**. The **RTI Act** and **citizen charter frameworks** are practical examples of this spirit in action.

Protecting Rights & Harmony: In a diverse country like India, **constitutional morality** prevents the dangers of **majoritarian impulses**. Whether it is about managing **religious processions**, addressing **caste grievances**, or ensuring **gender justice**, it reminds officers to prioritise **fraternity and social harmony** over short-term populist pressures.

Balancing Power and Duty: It also acts as a check on misuse of **discretionary authority**. For instance, while enforcing **law and order**, an officer guided by **constitutional morality** would still uphold **human dignity**, even in situations that require coercive measures.

In this way, **constitutional morality** is not just a legal idea; it is the **ethical foundation of good governance**. It transforms public service from a routine administrative role into a **trusteeship of constitutional values**.

Going ahead, strengthening **constitutional morality** requires continuous training in **constitutional ethics**, better **legal and institutional safeguards**, and nurturing a culture where **integrity, civic responsibility, and rule of law** become second nature. Only then can public servants truly uphold the promise of the **Constitution** and ensure **ethical, inclusive, and accountable governance**.

Question 2

> **(a) Carl Von Clausewitz once said "war is diplomacy by other means ", Critically Analyse the above statement in the present context of contemporary geopolitical conflicts.** *(Answer in 150 words)*

Clausewitz's famous claim that **"war is diplomacy by other means"** found fresh relevance during the **Russia-Ukraine conflict (2022)**, where failed **negotiations** soon gave way to open hostilities. His idea underlines that **war** and **diplomacy** are often interconnected tools in the pursuit of **political objectives**. Yet, the realities of the modern world reveal new layers of complexity.

On one side, the statement still holds true. When **diplomacy** collapses, states sometimes turn to **war** to secure their interests. This has been visible not only in Ukraine, but also in the **India-Pakistan standoffs** and several **Middle Eastern conflicts**. At times, war even serves as a way to strengthen a **diplomatic message** or reset **negotiating positions**. In today's world, forms like **hybrid warfare**—where **military force** is combined with **sanctions, cyber-attacks, and propaganda**—have blurred the traditional line between war and diplomacy, as evident in **Israel-Iran tensions**.

However, modern warfare also challenges Clausewitz's assertion. The existence of **nuclear weapons** makes full-scale war among major powers almost unthinkable, as seen in **South Asia's nuclear balance**. Conflicts involving **non-state actors**, **terrorism**, and **proxy wars** often lack clear **political goals** or viable **diplomatic solutions**. The devastating **human and economic costs**—civilian deaths, refugee crises, and global market disruptions—frequently outweigh any possible diplomatic gain. Added to this is the role of **media scrutiny** and **public opinion**, which now influence and even restrict a government's war strategies in real time, especially in democracies.

In cities like **Kyiv** and **Gaza**, war today is not only about **military strength**, but also about **political legitimacy** and **psychological impact**. These symbolic dimensions often undermine the very **political objectives** that states hope to achieve through conflict.

Looking ahead, Clausewitz's statement should be treated with caution. In an interconnected world, **war** is increasingly seen not as the continuation of diplomacy, but as its **catastrophic failure**. A forward-looking approach must focus on **preventive diplomacy, international mediation**, and **multilateral conflict resolution**, ensuring that war is truly a **last resort**. Only then can global crises be addressed in ways that align with both **humanitarian concerns** and **ethical imperatives**.

> **(b) Keeping the national security in mind, examine the ethical dilemmas related to controversies over environmental clearance of development projects in ecologically sensitive border areas in the country. (Answer in 150 words)**

In recent years, as India expands **infrastructure projects** in ecologically sensitive border regions like **Arunachal Pradesh, Ladakh, and the Himalayas**, a deep ethical dilemma has emerged at the intersection of **national security** and **environmental sustainability**. These regions are vital

for safeguarding sovereignty but are also home to **fragile ecosystems** and **indigenous communities**.

The first dilemma is **security vs. environmental conservation**. Building **roads, tunnels, and military bases** strengthens India's defence and allows quick troop movement, as seen during the **India-China standoff** in the Himalayas. Yet, such construction often leads to **deforestation, landslides, and biodiversity loss**, with examples in **Uttarakhand** and **Arunachal Pradesh**. Here, the ethical principle of **national duty** clashes with the need for **ecological sustainability**.

The second is **intergenerational justice**. Meeting urgent security needs today may create irreversible harm for **future generations**. Large **hydropower projects** on rivers like the **Brahmaputra** have already altered river flows, affecting communities downstream in **Assam** and **Bangladesh**. This reflects the tension between **short-term security gains** and **long-term environmental stewardship**.

A third dilemma is **consent and cultural rights of indigenous people**. Many projects move forward without properly consulting **tribal communities** in regions like **Nagaland** or **Sikkim**, whose identity is closely tied to their natural surroundings. This raises serious concerns of **autonomy, social justice, and cultural preservation**.

Another challenge is **transparency vs. security secrecy**. Often, **environmental clearances** in border zones are **fast-tracked** under the justification of national security, leaving little room for public participation. This reduces **democratic accountability** and fuels distrust among local populations, making it difficult to balance **state duty** with **citizen rights**.

Addressing these dilemmas requires:

- Strong **environmental impact assessments** that consider cross-border and community-level concerns.
- **Inclusive consultations** with local and indigenous stakeholders.
- Adoption of **green technologies** and sustainable construction practices.
- A careful balance of **national security** with **justice, sustainability, and accountability**.

In sum, sustainable border development must ethically integrate **security, ecology, and community values**. India's **sovereignty** should never come at the cost of its **natural heritage** or the **rights of its people**.

Question 3

Given below are three quotations of great thinkers. What do each of these quotations convey to you in the present context ? (Answer in 150 words)

(a) **Those who in trouble untroubled are, Will trouble trouble itself." - Thiruvalluvar (Answer in 150 words)**

When the **COVID-19** pandemic hit, millions were filled with fear and uncertainty. Yet, **frontline workers**—doctors, police officers, and administrators—remained steady under immense pressure. Their calmness didn't erase the crisis, but it helped prevent chaos from spreading. As **Thiruvalluvar** wisely put it, "Those who in trouble untroubled are, will trouble trouble itself." This quote emphasizes the importance of **inner resilience** and **equanimity** when facing challenges.

The core message here is the ethical value of **self-mastery**. A person who remains composed in times of difficulty doesn't let **fear**, **anger**, or **confusion** cloud their judgment. This inner stability allows for **clarity**, **prudence**, and **moral courage**—all essential qualities for effective decision-making. Take, for example, students preparing for competitive exams. While the pressure is high, those who stay calm are often able to channel their energy more effectively, giving them an edge over others who may succumb to stress.

In **public life**, this philosophy is especially crucial for leadership and governance. Consider a **civil servant** handling a situation of communal tension. If she panics or acts out of bias, the situation could escalate. However, by staying calm, relying on **justice**, **impartiality**, and **empathy**, she can navigate the crisis and help calm things down. History has shown us this principle in action—**Mahatma Gandhi** resisted colonial oppression with **calm non-violence**, turning the force of British power into a moral weakness.

However, **calmness** doesn't mean inaction or disengagement. **Passivity** in the face of injustice only allows it to persist. The key is finding a balance: **inner stability** paired with **proactive ethical action**. For instance, **climate change** is one of the most pressing global issues today. Leaders who panic might make **rash**, **populist decisions**, but a calm and rational approach can lead to **long-term solutions** that involve cooperation and thoughtful planning.

Thus, the essence of the quotation is a call for **emotional intelligence**, **fortitude**, and **balanced judgment**. In today's world of constant uncertainties—whether it's pandemics, **technological disruptions**, or **social unrest**—staying **untroubled** in the face of trouble isn't about detachment. It's about transforming adversity into an opportunity for growth and progress. The future lies in

training both ourselves and our institutions in **resilient leadership** and **collective calmness**, so that challenges "trouble themselves" while society moves forward with **confidence**.

(b) ""The greatest discovery of my generation is that a human being can alter his life by altering his attitudes." - William James (Answer in 150 words)

Nelson Mandela's 27 years of imprisonment marked one of the darkest chapters in South Africa's history. Yet, rather than giving in to **bitterness**, he turned his suffering into an opportunity for **forgiveness** and **hope**. William James' profound insight, "A human being can alter his life by altering his attitudes," perfectly encapsulates the ethical principle of **mental resilience** and **self-mastery** in the face of adversity.

This quote highlights an important truth: while we can't always control our external circumstances, we have the power to shape our **attitudes**, and in doing so, we shape our responses and ultimately, our **destiny**. Mandela's choice to embrace **reconciliation** instead of **revenge** didn't just transform his own life—it helped heal an entire nation. His actions fostered **justice**, **peace**, and democratic values, illustrating the ethical significance of cultivating a positive mindset grounded in **forgiveness**, **empathy**, and **courage**.

Similarly, **public servants** often encounter challenges such as **corruption**, **bureaucracy**, and **resource shortages**. In these situations, an officer's attitude of **integrity**, **perseverance**, and **service** is crucial. A **defeatist** or **cynical mindset** can lead to inefficiency and **injustice**, while a constructive and ethical attitude can inspire creative solutions and build **trust** among citizens.

The quote also serves as a reminder that **transformation** starts within. By changing our attitudes, we not only improve our own lives but also contribute to broader societal progress and holistic development. This is particularly important in today's world, where challenges like **climate change**, **social unrest**, and **technological disruption** require an ethical, optimistic approach to move forward.

In conclusion, William James' words highlight the ethical power of **attitude** as a force for change, urging individuals and institutions alike to cultivate **resilience** and **commitment** in order to create a better future for all.

(c) **The strength of a society is not in its laws, but in the morality of its people." - Swami Vivekananda (Answer in 150 words)**

In recent years, despite having robust **laws**, many societies have faced rising challenges like **corruption**, **social discord**, and **injustice**. Swami **Vivekananda's** insightful statement, "The strength of a society is not in its laws, but in the **morality** of its people," highlights the need for an ethical foundation to build a truly strong society.

While laws are essential frameworks that help maintain order, they cannot, on their own, create a just and harmonious society. The true effectiveness of laws depends on the **morality**, **integrity**, and **values** that individuals uphold. Take **India's Right to Information Act**, for example—it is a powerful legal tool, but its success relies on citizens using it responsibly. When people act ethically, principles like **transparency** and **accountability** can flourish, even without strict enforcement. In contrast, in many nations, **corruption** endures despite strict laws because of a lack of moral fortitude.

Historical examples further reinforce this idea. During India's **independence movement**, the **moral conviction** and **nonviolent resistance** led by **Mahatma Gandhi** were more powerful than any colonial laws. The collective morality of society ignited change, showing that when a society is ethically strong, it can challenge or transcend legal frameworks.

In today's world, the global **environmental crisis** serves as another example. No law can succeed without individual and collective **moral responsibility**. For instance, when citizens adopt **sustainable** lifestyles, businesses embrace **ethical practices**, and governments enforce **environmental laws**, real progress can be made.

This does not mean that **laws** are irrelevant. They play a critical role by providing structure, protection, and deterrence. The true strength lies in the balance—a **mutually reinforcing** relationship between strong laws and widespread social morality. When both are aligned, they help create a just, thriving society.

Swami Vivekananda's quote, at its core, is a call to nurture **ethical consciousness**, **moral education**, and **personal accountability** at all levels. It is this foundational **morality** that empowers laws to shape a better, fairer society in our increasingly complex world.

Question 4

(a) **"For any kind of social re-engineering by successfully implementing welfare schemes, a civil servant must use reason and critical thinking in an ethical framework." Justify this statement with suitable examples. (Answer in 150 words)**

India's 2024 expenditure on **welfare schemes** crossed ₹12 trillion, aiming to uplift millions. However, despite this significant financial push, challenges remain in achieving **social equity**, **inclusion**, and a tangible **impact**. This highlights why a civil servant must apply **reason** and **critical thinking** within an **ethical framework** for successful social re-engineering.

Reason and **critical thinking** empower a civil servant to:

1. **Assess Real Needs Objectively**: It's not just about implementing schemes; it's about understanding what truly works. For example, in the expansion of **Ayushman Bharat** health insurance, some districts conducted detailed **health profiles** and focused on sub-centres in tribal areas, ensuring that the scheme reached those who needed it most. This shows how **analytical reasoning** can ensure **fair outreach** to marginalized communities.
2. **Challenge Existing Prejudices**: Welfare programs like **Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya** address the deeply ingrained gender bias that limits girls' education. Through **critical thinking**, civil servants designed culturally sensitive awareness programs, breaking stereotypes and promoting girls' education with **ethical empathy**. This effort illustrates how questioning assumptions can pave the way for meaningful societal change.
3. **Address Social Exclusion**: Thoughtful **reasoning** helped identify gaps in schemes like the **Umbrella Programme for Development of Minorities**, where certain areas were ignored due to communal biases. By customizing interventions for these areas, civil servants demonstrated a commitment to **ethical justice**, ensuring no community was left behind.
4. **Optimize Use of Resources**: While executing the **Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana**, officers analysed local data to avoid duplication of efforts in areas already covered. By ensuring that the genuinely **homeless** benefited, they demonstrated **ethical responsibility** in the allocation of resources to those who truly needed help.
5. **Sustain Stakeholder Trust**: In the case of **Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana**, officers conducted open forums to understand the ground-level challenges faced by the poor. They adapted procedures based on **feedback**, highlighting a commitment to **transparency** and **equity**—the cornerstones of ethical governance.

These examples show that when **reason** is combined with core ethical principles like **equity**, **justice**, **impartiality**, and **compassion**, welfare schemes can lead to real social change—not just by the numbers, but by genuinely building **trust**, **dignity**, and **inclusion** across society.

A forward-thinking civil servant, therefore, must integrate **ethical critical thinking** in every decision. This involves fostering **participatory governance**, conducting **regular impact audits**, and embracing **adaptive learning**. Only through this approach can we ensure that welfare schemes are not just delivered but are genuinely transformative, uplifting every section of society.

(b) **What are the major teachings of Mahavir? Explain their relevance in the contemporary world. (Answer in 150 words)**

Mahavir's teachings offer valuable ethical guidelines for today's world, filled with conflict, environmental crises, and social challenges.

1. **Ahimsa (Non-violence)** encourages compassion, not just physically but mentally and emotionally, addressing issues like **cyberbullying**, **hate speech**, and **workplace harassment**. Globally, Mahavir's non-violence inspired movements like **Gandhi's struggle for independence** and still influences peace negotiations worldwide.
2. **Satya (Truthfulness)** urges honesty in every aspect of life. In governance, it resonates with **transparency** initiatives like the **RTI Act** and in business, it drives **ethical practices** and accountability. **Whistleblower protection** and responsible journalism are practical reflections of this principle.
3. **Asteya (Non-stealing)** promotes respect for others' rights, emphasizing fair trade and **ethical sourcing** in today's global economy. This extends to the digital realm, encouraging proper respect for intellectual property and enforcing **copyright laws**.
4. **Brahmacharya (Self-restraint)** encourages self-control, important in curbing unhealthy habits like **social media addiction** or **substance abuse**. It also helps foster emotional stability, guiding individuals, especially youth, towards healthier lifestyles.
5. **Aparigraha (Non-possession)** advocates detachment from materialism, promoting a sustainable lifestyle. Efforts like the **UN's SDG 12** and India's **Mission LiFE** echo Mahavir's vision of minimizing environmental impact through responsible consumption.
6. **Anekantavada (Multiplicity of truths)** teaches tolerance and respect for diverse perspectives, crucial in today's polarized societies. It promotes **dialogue**, supporting harmony among differing ideologies, religions, and cultures.

In today's world, Mahavir's teachings offer practical solutions for a compassionate, just, and sustainable society.

Question 5

(a) **"One who is devoted to one's duty attains highest perfection in life." Analyse this statement with reference to sense of responsibility and personal fulfilment as a civil servant. (Answer in 150 words)**

In the aftermath of disasters and emergencies, **civil servants** often go above and beyond their duties—saving lives during **Kerala's 2018 floods**, ensuring **welfare** during **Covid-19**, or upholding **justice** in difficult times. Their unwavering commitment highlights why such **dedication** leads to **perfection**, both for society and **personal fulfillment**.

A **civil servant's** responsibility reflects core **ethical values**:

1. **Dedication**: True devotion means prioritizing **public interest** over personal gain. Kerala's **Kudumbashree officers** exemplified this by transforming **women's welfare**, improving countless families' lives. Their satisfaction comes not from material rewards but from seeing tangible, positive change.
2. **Integrity** and **Ethical Conduct**: **Civil servants** committed to their duties consistently uphold **integrity**, resisting **corruption** and maintaining **justice**. For instance, officers ensuring free and fair elections despite **political pressure** show strength of character. This aligns with **Mahavir's teaching** of **Samyak Charitra** (right conduct), fostering both professional and personal growth.
3. **Empathy** and **Service**: Responsible officers actively address public concerns, whether through swift **disaster relief** or transparent **PDS reforms**. Their **empathy** builds **public trust**, offering them profound fulfillment and respect from the community.
4. **Continuous Improvement**: **Devotion** means striving for excellence—innovating and adopting new systems. Officers who implement **digital solutions** or best practices gain satisfaction beyond mere targets, experiencing growth.
5. **Spiritual** and **Emotional Growth**: Serving ethically brings inner peace and **self-respect**, embodying **Sthitaprajna** (equanimity in action), where balance and harmony are achieved.

Such **devotion**, rooted in a strong sense of **duty**, not only drives **efficiency** and **justice** but also elevates **civil servants** spiritually. By fostering a culture of **ethical commitment** and **self-reflection**, **civil servants** can achieve **fulfillment**, rising not just in rank but in their sense of **completeness** and **purpose**.

b) To achieve holistic development goal, a civil servant acts as an enabler and active facilitator of growth rather than a regulator. What specific measures will you suggest to achieve this goal? (Answer in 150 words)

In the quest for **holistic development**, a **civil servant's** role as an enabler and active facilitator is crucial. This approach goes beyond mere regulation, focusing on empowering communities to grow inclusively and sustainably through **participatory governance** and innovative solutions.

Keywords

1. **Community Participation and Empowerment**: Encouraging local involvement ensures that development meets the actual needs of the community. For example, in **Piplantri village**, Rajasthan, the community celebrates the birth of a girl by planting 111 trees, promoting **gender equality**, **environmental awareness**, and **community cohesion**. This initiative shows how civil servants can facilitate **community-led social change**, turning a social challenge into a development opportunity.

2. **Skill Development and Livelihood Promotion**: Programs like **Skill India Mission** and projects in **Palghar district** (Maharashtra) have uplifted local livelihoods through initiatives like floriculture, vegetable cultivation, and **women's SHGs**. These efforts have reduced **distress migration by 40%**, showing how civil servants enable sustainable economic growth through targeted **capacity building**.

3. **Integrated Planning and Technology**: Data-driven tools and multi-sector coordination are vital for better outcomes. The **Smart Cities Mission** led by **NIUA** features 75+ innovative urban projects that combine **infrastructure**, **sanitation**, and **digital governance**, illustrating how civil servants use **technology** to drive inclusive urban development.

4. **Inclusive Education and Health Access**: **Eklavya Model Residential Schools** in **Telangana** for tribal communities address educational gaps while integrated health initiatives have reduced diseases like malaria. These examples show how civil servants go beyond mere regulation to ensure **holistic development**, tackling both **social determinants** of health and education.

5. **Public-Private Partnerships and Innovation**: Facilitating **PPP models** allows resource mobilization and expertise sharing. For instance, the **Teach India Initiative** provides marginalized youth with English and soft skills through NGO collaborations, enhancing **employability** and **social mobility**. Civil servants play a pivotal role in fostering such partnerships, driving **inclusive growth**.

6. **Social Equity and Empowerment**: Targeted measures for vulnerable groups, like **women SHGs** in **Palghar** and scholarships for **tribal students** in **Telangana**, show an ethical

commitment to balanced development. These initiatives go beyond administrative orders, ensuring that no one is left behind.

Facilitating development requires a systems approach—combining **policy coherence**, **innovation**, and **active community engagement**. Civil servants act as **catalysts**, aligning diverse stakeholders towards common goals. This process requires **ethical leadership** rooted in **empathy** and **inclusiveness**, creating sustainable outcomes by building **trust**, **capacity**, and **resilience** within communities.

By enabling **community agency**, leveraging **technology** and **partnerships**, and focusing on **holistic upliftment**, civil servants can transform governance from just policing to truly empowering communities. This shift ensures that **holistic development** becomes a lived reality across India's diverse landscapes, making progress not just a vision but an accessible outcome for all.

Question 6

(a) **It is said that for an ethical work culture, there must be code of ethics in place in every organisation. To ensure value-based and compliance-based work culture, what suitable measures would you adopt in your work place?** **(Answer in 150 words)**

To foster an ethical work culture in any organization, having a **code of ethics** is crucial. It helps set clear standards for **integrity**, **accountability**, and **transparency**. To ensure a **value-based** and **compliance-based** work culture, here are some suitable measures I would adopt:

1. **Clear Code of Ethics**: Establish a well-defined **code of ethics** that outlines expected behavior, both from an ethical and legal standpoint. This code should emphasize **honesty**, **respect**, and **fairness**, guiding employees in decision-making and daily interactions.
2. **Training and Awareness**: Regular **ethics training** and workshops for all employees can help internalize the **values** outlined in the code. By addressing real-world ethical dilemmas and emphasizing the importance of **compliance** with laws and policies, employees will be better equipped to handle challenges responsibly.
3. **Open Communication Channels**: Creating a space where employees feel safe to voice concerns or report unethical behavior without fear of retaliation is vital. A robust **whistleblowing policy** and **confidential reporting mechanisms** help maintain accountability and ensure **transparency**.
4. **Leadership by Example**: Ethical leadership is fundamental. Leaders should model **integrity**, **fairness**, and **accountability** in their actions. This sets the tone for the organization and influences employees to follow suit. When leadership consistently upholds ethical standards, it fosters a culture of **trust**.

5. **Regular Audits and Monitoring**: Implement **regular audits** to ensure that ethical standards and **compliance** regulations are being met. Monitoring helps identify potential ethical lapses early, allowing corrective measures to be taken before issues escalate.

6. **Encouraging Ethical Decision Making**: Promote an environment where employees are encouraged to consider **ethical implications** in every decision they make. Encouraging **critical thinking** about the impact of their actions on colleagues, clients, and the community helps build a **value-based** culture.

7. **Rewards and Recognition**: Acknowledge and reward employees who consistently demonstrate **ethical behavior** and contribute to creating a positive and transparent work environment. This reinforces the importance of integrity and compliance.

By adopting these measures, the workplace can thrive on **ethical principles**, ensuring that **compliance** with regulations goes hand-in-hand with creating a culture that values **honesty**, **fairness**, and **accountability**.

(b) **India is an emerging economic power of the world as it has recently secured the status of fourth largest economy of the world as per IMF projection. However, it has been observed that in some sectors, allocated funds remain either under-utilised or misutilised. What specific measures would you recommend for ensuring accountability in this regard to stop leakages and gaining the status of third largest economy of the world in near future?** (Answer in 150 words)

India's ambition to become the third-largest economy faces a major hurdle, the widespread **under-utilisation** and **misutilisation** of allocated funds, which slow down growth and undermine development efforts.

Key Measures Needed

1. **Digital Financial Management & Real-Time Monitoring**: The **Compensatory Afforestation Fund (CAMPA)** misuse in Uttarakhand, where Rs 14 crore was diverted for **iPhones** and **laptops** instead of afforestation, highlights the need for more robust tracking systems. Using technologies like **blockchain** and platforms such as **PFMS** (Public Financial Management System) with **real-time dashboards** can immediately flag suspicious expenditures, preventing delays and misuse.

2. **Independent Audits and Social Accountability**: Reports from the **Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG)** have often highlighted instances of misappropriation, such as expired medicines in **government hospitals** in Uttarakhand. Strengthening **third-party**

audits and encouraging **community-led social audits** can expose such anomalies and pressurise officials into ensuring cleaner governance.

3. **Outcome-Linked Fund Release**: Under schemes like **MGNREGA**, linking fund release to the completion of verified work ensures that funds are not left unused. Expanding this **performance-based disbursal** model to other schemes can help combat the **idle funds** issue, which currently amounts to nearly **Rs 1 lakh crore** in welfare programmes.

4. **Capacity Building and Decentralisation**: Delays in fund utilisation are often caused by a lack of trained manpower and procedural bottlenecks. By **upskilling local officials** and delegating greater **financial powers**, funds can be utilised more efficiently, ensuring faster implementation of schemes.

5. **Strengthening Vigilance and Whistleblower Mechanisms**: Offering better protection and incentives for **whistleblowers**, along with stronger investigations by bodies like the **Central Vigilance Commission (CVC)**, will help deter corruption and prevent fund leakage.

6. **Legal Enforcement & Punitive Action**: The **Supreme Court's** intervention in CAMPA fund misuse cases has set an important precedent. By taking firm action against defaulters and continuing **anti-corruption reforms**, India can send a strong message that corruption will not be tolerated.

India's goal of becoming the world's third-largest economy relies not just on **effective fund allocation**, but on **rigorous accountability systems** that prevent **misutilisation** and **under-utilisation**. A technology-driven approach combined with systemic reforms will not only optimise resources but also strengthen **public trust**, helping India accelerate its growth trajectory and rise as a global economic leader.

Section B

Question 7

7. Case Study

Vijay was Deputy Commissioner of remote district of Hilly Northern State of the country for the last two years. In the month of August heavy rains lashed the complete state followed by cloud burst in the upper reaches of the said district. The damage was very heavy in the complete state especially in the affected district. The complete road network and telecommunication were disrupted and the buildings were damaged extensively. People's houses have been destroyed and they were forced to stay in open. More than 200 people have been killed and about 5000 were badly injured. The Civil Administration under Vijay got activated and started conducting rescue and relief operations. Temporary shelter camps and hospitals were established to provide shelter and medical facilities to the homeless and injured people. Helicopter services were pressed in, for evacuating sick and old people from remote areas. Vijay got a message from his hometown in Kerala that his mother was seriously sick. After two days Vijay received the unfortunate message that his mother has expired. Vijay has no close relative except one elder sister who was US citizen and staying there for last several years. In the meantime, the situation in the affected district deteriorated further due to resumption of heavy rains after a gap of five days. At the same time, continuous messages were coming on his mobile from his hometown to reach at the earliest for performing last rites of his mother.

(a) What are the options available with Vijay?
(b) What are the ethical dilemma being faced by Vijay?
(c) Critically evaluate and examine each of these options identified by Vijay.
(d) Which of the options, do you think, would be most appropriate for Vijay to adopt and why?

(Answer in 250 words) 20

(a) Options available to Vijay:

Vijay has several options to consider in this situation:

1. **Leave the district immediately and attend the last rites of his mother.**
   - He can travel to Kerala, prioritizing his personal loss and family responsibility.
2. **Stay in the district and continue overseeing rescue and relief operations.**

- He can dedicate himself to the welfare of the affected people and continue managing the crisis.

3. **Delegate the responsibility of the district to a senior officer and leave for Kerala.**
   - He can hand over control of the operations to a capable subordinate and leave temporarily to attend the funeral.

4. **Request for a short leave or emergency break to attend the funeral and return quickly to resume duties.**
   - Vijay could request a brief leave to fulfill his family obligations while ensuring that the relief efforts continue under his supervision.

(b) Ethical Dilemmas faced by Vijay:

Vijay is caught between **personal and professional** responsibilities. The ethical dilemmas include:

1. **Duty to the affected people vs. personal loss:**
   - His professional duty requires him to be with the people who are suffering, but he also faces the need to attend to his family in a time of grief.

2. **Utilitarianism vs. Compassion:**
   - Should he focus on the greater good (continuing the relief efforts) or act out of compassion for his mother and fulfill his familial duties?

3. **Constitutional responsibility vs. Personal duty:**
   - As a government officer, he has a constitutional responsibility to stay and manage the emergency. However, his personal duty towards his deceased mother cannot be ignored.

4. **Stakeholder interests:**
   - The local people and emergency workers rely on his leadership, but his family members in Kerala need him emotionally and practically.

(c) Evaluation of Options:

1. **Leaving for Kerala immediately:**
   - **Pros:** Vijay can fulfill his emotional and familial obligations, providing comfort to his family.
   - **Cons:** This would leave the affected district without leadership at a critical time, potentially worsening the situation.

2. **Staying and continuing relief operations:**
   - o **Pros:** Demonstrates strong leadership, focusing on the well-being of thousands of people in distress.
   - o **Cons:** Emotional and personal sacrifice as Vijay would miss the funeral, possibly feeling guilt and internal conflict.

3. **Delegating responsibility:**
   - o **Pros:** Allows Vijay to attend the funeral while ensuring that the relief operations continue under capable hands.
   - o **Cons:** Delegating might be difficult in such a critical situation, and the person taking over might not have the same level of experience or commitment.

4. **Requesting short leave for the funeral:**
   - o **Pros:** This approach allows Vijay to balance both duties. It provides him the space to mourn while ensuring that his absence is not prolonged.
   - o **Cons:** Emergency situations may require constant leadership, and even a brief absence might cause disruptions.

(d) Most Appropriate Option:

The **most appropriate option** for Vijay is to **request a short leave or emergency break to attend the funeral** while ensuring that his absence does not significantly impact the ongoing relief operations. This approach allows him to fulfill his family duty without neglecting his professional responsibilities. Before leaving, Vijay could ensure that a competent officer takes charge of the operations and the relief work continues smoothly.

This solution respects his emotional needs and balances them with his duty to the public, ensuring that he returns quickly to continue his essential role in managing the crisis.

Question 8

In line with the Directive Principles of State Policy enshrined in the Indian Constitution, the government has a constitutional obligation to ensure basic needs – *"Roti, Kapda aur Makan (Food, Clothes and Shelter)"* – for the under-privileged. Pursuing this mandate, the district administration proposed clearing a portion of forest land to develop housing for the homeless and economically weaker sections of the society.

The proposed land, however, is an ecologically sensitive zone densely populated with age-old trees, medicinal plants and vital biodiversity. Besides, these forests help to regulate micro-climate and rainfalls; provide habitat for wildlife, support soil fertility and prevent land/soil erosion and sustain livelihoods of tribal and nomadic communities.

Inspite of the ecological and social costs, the administration argues in favour of the said proposal by highlighting that this very initiative would provide housing to human rights as a critical welfare priority. Besides it, it fulfils the government's duty to uplift and empower the poor through inclusive housing development. Further, these forest areas have become unsafe due to wild-animal threats and recurring human-wild life conflicts. Lastly, clearing forest-zones may help to curb anti-social elements allegedly using these areas as hideouts, thereby enhancing law and order.

(a) Can deforestation be ethically justified in the pursuit of social welfare objectives like, housing for the homeless?

(b) What are the socio-economic, administrative and ethical challenges in balancing environmental conservation with human development?

(c) What substantial alternatives or policy interventions can be proposed to ensure that both environmental integrity and human dignity are protected?

(Answer in 250 words) 20

(a) Can deforestation be ethically justified in the pursuit of social welfare objectives like housing for the homeless?

Deforestation, in the context of providing **housing for the homeless**, presents a significant ethical dilemma. While addressing **basic human needs** like food, shelter, and clothing is essential, **ecological preservation** is equally important. From an ethical standpoint, **utilitarianism** (the greatest good for the greatest number) might justify deforestation if the immediate **welfare** of the homeless is prioritized.

However, this overlooks long-term consequences such as environmental degradation, loss of biodiversity, and the displacement of indigenous communities. The ethical justification can only be valid if there is a **balanced approach**, considering both immediate human welfare and long-term ecological sustainability.

(b) Socio-economic, Administrative, and Ethical Challenges in Balancing Environmental Conservation with Human Development:

1. **Socio-economic Challenges:**
   - **Conflicting Interests:** The marginalized sections of society require basic amenities, and **housing for the homeless** can be seen as a critical social welfare intervention. On the other hand, clearing ecologically sensitive areas may harm local communities, including **tribal groups** dependent on forests for their livelihoods.
   - **Resource Distribution:** Allocating land for housing in ecologically sensitive zones often puts pressure on natural resources, reducing the quality of life for both urban and rural populations in the long run.
2. **Administrative Challenges:**
   - **Lack of Coordination:** There may be a **disjointed approach** between various government departments (urban development, environment, and forestry), making it difficult to create a **sustainable development plan**.
   - **Monitoring and Enforcement:** Ensuring that forest land is not misused after clearance or for purposes other than housing poses a significant challenge to the administration.
3. **Ethical Challenges:**
   - **Moral Dilemma:** Balancing human **rights** (housing and welfare) against **environmental ethics** (preservation of nature and biodiversity) is complex. The risk is that **short-term gains** for people in need could lead to long-term damage for future generations.
   - **Indigenous Rights:** The displacement of forest-dependent communities and potential damage to their culture and traditions raises questions about justice and fairness.

(c) Substantial Alternatives or Policy Interventions to Balance Environmental Integrity and Human Dignity:

1. **Adopt a Sustainable Land Development Approach:**
   - Develop **brownfield** or **marginal lands** for housing instead of forest areas. These lands are often less ecologically sensitive and can accommodate large populations.

2. **Eco-friendly Housing Solutions:**
   - Encourage **vertical development** or the construction of **eco-friendly homes** to minimize land use, such as using **solar energy** or **rainwater harvesting** techniques.

3. **Relocation and Rehabilitation of Affected Communities:**
   - **Tribal and nomadic communities** should be provided with adequate compensation and support to relocate sustainably without compromising their rights and culture.

4. **Develop Green Corridors:**
   - Where forest land must be used, ensure **green corridors** are maintained to protect biodiversity and mitigate ecological damage. This would involve creating buffer zones or integrating **sustainable forestry practices**.

5. **Enhance Urban Planning:**
   - The government should prioritize **smart urban planning** that minimizes ecological disruption and integrates green spaces within urban developments. **Community participation** should also be encouraged in the planning process to ensure that the voices of both the **environmentally affected** and **displaced communities** are heard.

   In conclusion, a **balanced and sustainable approach** to development is essential, where **environmental conservation** and **human dignity** are treated as complementary rather than conflicting goals.

Question 9

Subash is Secretary, PWD in the State Government. He is a senior officer, known for his competence, integrity and dedication to work. He enjoys the trust and confidence of Minister Incharge of PWD and Programme Implementation. As a part of his job profile, he is responsible for policy formulation, execution of projects relating to infrastructure initiatives in the State. Besides, he oversees the technical and administrative aspects relating to planning, designing and construction etc.

Subash's Minister is an important Minister in the state and significant growth in urban infrastructure development and road network has been registered during his tenure. He is very keen for launching of ambitious road construction project in the near future.

Subash is in regular touch with the Minister and is working various modalities of road construction project. Regular meetings, interactions and presentations are made by him to the Minister before a formal public announcement of the project is made by the Minister. Subash's only son Vikas is in real estate business. His son from his own sources is aware that a mega road project is on the anvil and announcement in this regard is expected anytime. He is very keen to know from his father the exact location of the upcoming project. He knows that there would be quantum jump in the prices of land at the proposed location. Buying land at this stage at cheaper prices would pay him rich dividends. He is pleading with him (his father) day in and day out to share him location of the proposed project. He assured him that he would handle the matter discreetly as it would not attract any adverse notice as he in the normal course, keeps on buying land as a part of his business. He feels pressurised because of constant pleadings by his son.

Another significant aspect of the matter pertained to the extra/undue interest in the above project by the Minister PWD. His nephew was also having big infrastructure project company. In fact, the Minister has also introduced his nephew to him and indicated to him to take care of his nephew's business interest in the forthcoming project. The Minister encouraged him to act fast in the matter as early announcement and execution of mega road project would enhance his status in the party and public life.

In the above backdrop, Subash is in a fix as to the future course of action.

(a) Discuss the ethical issues involved in the case.

(b) Critically examine the options available to Subash in the above situation.

(c) Which of the above would be most appropriate and why?

(Answer in 250 words) 20

(a) Ethical Issues Involved in the Case:

1. **Conflict of Interest:**
   o Subash, as a senior officer in charge of a government project, faces a **conflict of interest** when his son, Vikas, seeks insider information about the upcoming road project for personal profit. Sharing this information would be a breach of **public trust** and unethical since it gives his son an unfair advantage.
2. **Nepotism and Favoritism:**
   o The Minister's actions in involving his **nephew** in the project and encouraging Subash to favor him brings **nepotism** into play. This raises concerns about the

fairness and **transparency** of the project and the influence of personal relationships on public decisions.

3. **Corruption and Abuse of Power:**
   o Both the Minister's and Subash's potential actions could be perceived as **corruption**. The Minister's encouragement to use his position to favor his nephew and Subash's potential misuse of privileged information for family gain violate ethical standards. This could lead to **public distrust** and damage to the integrity of the public office.

4. **Misuse of Confidential Information:**
   o Subash holds **confidential information** about the location of the road project. If he shares this information with his son, Vikas, for personal gain, it constitutes a clear violation of **confidentiality** and ethical governance.

5. **Public Trust and Accountability:**
   o Subash, as a public servant, is accountable to the **citizens** and must uphold the highest standards of ethics. Any action that prioritizes personal or familial gain over public good will erode **public trust** in the administrative system.

(b) Critically Examine the Options Available to Subash:

1. **Sharing Information with His Son:**
   o **Pros:** Subash may feel personal pressure and might want to satisfy his son's business interests.
   o **Cons:** This would be an **ethical violation** as it involves the misuse of insider information. It would also be illegal under anti-corruption laws, and it risks **damaging his professional reputation** and **legal consequences**.

2. **Refusing to Share Information with His Son:**
   o **Pros:** Subash would uphold **professional integrity**, maintain **ethical standards**, and **prevent any conflict of interest**. He would also **maintain transparency** in the process and avoid any legal complications.
   o **Cons:** This may cause **personal stress** and strain relations with his son, who may feel disappointed or angry. It may also lead to emotional conflict, as Subash faces constant pressure from his son.

3. **Informing the Minister about Nepotism:**
   o **Pros:** By raising concerns with the Minister about his nephew's interest in the project, Subash could potentially stop any **corrupt or biased actions** in the project. This could lead to more **fairness** and **transparency** in the execution of the project.

- o **Cons:** This could strain Subash's relationship with the Minister, who might feel offended or threatened. It could also affect Subash's **career prospects** if the Minister retaliates.
4. **Recusing Himself from the Project:**
   - o **Pros:** Subash could distance himself from the project to avoid any conflict of interest, ensuring that decisions are made impartially.
   - o **Cons:** This might negatively impact Subash's **career trajectory**, as his involvement in important projects is crucial for his professional growth.

(c) Most Appropriate Course of Action:

The **most appropriate option** for Subash is to **refuse to share the information with his son** and **remain professional**. He must maintain **integrity** and **transparency** in the execution of his duties. While his son's business interests are important, they should not come at the cost of his professional ethics or public responsibility. Subash should also consider **informing the Minister about his concerns** regarding nepotism, urging that the project be handled fairly without favoritism towards his nephew.

By choosing this path, Subash upholds his duty as a public servant, ensures the **accountability** of government decisions, and avoids the **legal and reputational risks** associated with unethical actions. His integrity will not only help maintain trust in the government's work but will also set an example of **ethical leadership** in the public sector.

Question 10

Rajesh is a Group A officer with nine years of service. He is posted as Administrative Officer in an Oil Public Sector undertaking. As an Administrative Officer he is responsible for managing and coordinating various administrative tasks to ensure smooth functioning of office. He also manages office supplies, equipment etc.

Rajesh is now sufficient senior and is expecting his next promotion in JAG (Junior Administrative Grade) in the next one or two years. He knows that promotion is based on examination of ACRs/Performance Appraisal of last few years (5 years or so) of an officer by a DPC (Departmental Promotion Committee) and an officer lacking requisite grading of ACRs may not be found fit for promotion. Consequences of losing promotion may entail financial and reputational loss and set-back for career progression. Though he also puts his best efforts in official discharge of his duties, yet he is unsure of assessment by his superior officer. He is now putting extra efforts so that he gets thumping report at the end of financial year.

As Administrative Officer, Rajesh is regularly interacting with his immediate boss, who is his reporting officer for writing his ACR. One day he calls Rajesh and wants him to buy computer-related stationery on priority from a particular vendor. Rajesh instructs his office to initiate action for procuring these items. During the day, the dealing Assistant brings an estimate of Rupees Thirty Five Lakhs covering all stationery items from the same vendor. It is noticed that as per delegated financial powers, as provided in the GFR (General Financial Rules) as applicable in that Organisation, expenditure for office items exceeding Rupees Thirty Lakhs requires sanction of the next higher authority (boss in the present case). Rajesh knows that immediate superior would expect all these purchases should be done at his level and may not appreciate such lack of initiative on his part. During discussions with office, he learns that common practice of splitting of expenditure (where large order is divided into a series of smaller ones) is followed to avoid obtaining sanction from higher authority. This practice is against the rules and may come to the adverse notice of Audit.

Rajesh is perturbed. He is unsure of taking decision in the matter.

(a) What are the options available with Rajesh in the above situation?
(b) What are the ethical issues involved in this case?
(c) Which would be the most appropriate option for Rajesh and why?

(Answer in 250 words) 20

(a) Options Available with Rajesh:

1. **Follow the Rules and Seek Higher Sanction:**
   - Rajesh can **adhere to the financial rules** and inform his immediate superior that the expenditure exceeds the sanctioned limit and requires approval from the next higher authority.
2. **Split the Expenditure to Avoid Seeking Higher Sanction:**
   - Rajesh could opt to **split the expenditure** into smaller parts (as per the common practice) to keep the total cost below the threshold and avoid needing higher approval. This would bypass the rules, but it may allow him to satisfy his superior's expectations.
3. **Raise Concern about the Practice with His Superior:**
   - Rajesh can respectfully bring up the **ethical implications** of splitting the expenditure with his superior and request an alternative way to manage the purchase while staying compliant with financial rules.
4. **Delay the Purchase or Refuse to Proceed:**

- o Rajesh can **delay** the purchase until he gets formal approval for the expenditure or choose to **refuse** to proceed with the purchase altogether, citing the need for proper sanction from the next authority.

(b) Ethical Issues Involved in the Case:

1. **Violation of Financial Rules:**
   - o Splitting the expenditure to avoid higher sanction is an **ethical violation** because it deliberately **bypasses established financial procedures**, which could result in **misuse of public funds**. This could also lead to legal consequences if discovered.
2. **Pressure from Superiors:**
   - o Rajesh is under pressure from his superior officer to act in a way that might conflict with the official rules. This situation brings out an issue of **obedience vs. integrity**, where Rajesh needs to choose between following orders or adhering to ethical standards.
3. **Conflict Between Professionalism and Career Progression:**
   - o Rajesh is concerned about his **promotion prospects**, as not meeting his superior's expectations might affect his **performance appraisal**. The ethical dilemma is between **career ambition** and maintaining **professional integrity**.
4. **Accountability and Transparency:**
   - o The practice of splitting the order reflects a **lack of transparency** and could be seen as **misleading the audit process**, potentially causing harm to the organization's financial integrity.

(c) Most Appropriate Option for Rajesh:

The **most appropriate option** for Rajesh is to **follow the financial rules and seek the higher authority's sanction** for the expenditure. This approach will uphold his **integrity** and ensure that all actions are transparent and legally compliant. Rajesh's primary responsibility is to **act in the best interest of the organization**, which includes **maintaining financial propriety** and ensuring that no unethical practices are followed, even under pressure.

While it may create temporary tension with his superior, adhering to the rules ensures that Rajesh remains **ethically sound** and avoids any potential legal or reputational risks for himself or the organization. Moreover, it sends a clear message to his superiors and

colleagues about his commitment to **transparency** and **honesty** in his work, which could earn him long-term respect, even if it might initially affect his **performance appraisal**.

By maintaining integrity, Rajesh not only safeguards his **professional reputation** but also sets a standard for ethical conduct within the organization. In the long run, his actions will help build a culture of accountability and adherence to rules, benefiting the public sector organization as a whole.

Question 11

Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Program, MGNREGA was earlier known as National Rural Employment Scheme, NREGA. It is an Indian Social Welfare Program that aimed at fulfilling the 'Right to Work' provisions made in the Constitution. MGNREGA was launched in 2006 under Rural Employment Sector by the Ministry of Rural Development.

Main objective of the program is to give legal guarantee of wage employment to the adult members of rural households who are willing to do unskilled manual labour work subject to a maximum of 100 days per year for every household. Every rural household has the right to register under the scheme, job card is issued to the registered, Job Card holder can seek employment; State Government shall pay 25% of minimum wage for the first 30 days as compensatory daily unemployment allowance to the families and of wage for remaining period of the year. MGNREGA work was undertaken by various Gram Panchayats.

You have been appointed as an Administrator Incharge of the District. You have been given the responsibility of monitoring MGNREGA work undertaken by various Gram Panchayats. You are also given the authority to give technical sanctions to all MGNREGA works.

In one of the Panchayats in your jurisdiction, you notice that your predecessor has mismanaged the Program in terms of:

(i) Money not disbursed to actual job-seekers.
(ii) Muster Rolls of the Labourers not properly maintained.
(iii) Mismatch between the work done and payments made.
(iv) Payments made to fictitious persons.
(v) Job Cards were given without looking into the need of person.
(vi) Mismanagement of funds and to the extent of siphoning of funds.
(vii) Approved works that never existed.

(a) What is your reaction to the above situation and how do you restore the proper functioning of MGNREGA Program in this regard?

(b) What actions would you initiate, to solve the various issues listed above?
(c) How would you deal with the above situation?

(Answer in 250 words) 20

(a) Reaction and Restoration of Proper Functioning of MGNREGA:

The situation described reflects severe mismanagement and corruption in the implementation of MGNREGA. As the new **Administrator Incharge**, my immediate reaction would be one of **shock, concern, and determination** to address the issues. I would consider this a significant challenge to restore **transparency**, **accountability**, and **trust** in the program. To ensure the proper functioning of MGNREGA, it is essential to first **identify the extent** of these malpractices and **initiate corrective measures** in an organized and systematic manner.

The **primary objective** would be to ensure that the funds allocated for the welfare of the rural poor reach the intended beneficiaries, and any fraudulent activities are thoroughly investigated and penalized. This would involve establishing **clear monitoring mechanisms**, **regular audits**, and introducing **community participation** for greater oversight.

(b) Actions to Solve the Issues:

1. **Conduct a Thorough Audit:**
   o The first step would be to **conduct a comprehensive audit** of the financial records and **work completion reports** from the Panchayats. This will help in identifying discrepancies, including improper payments, fictitious names, and unaccounted funds.
2. **Verification of Job Cards:**
   o A **revalidation of all job cards** would be conducted to ensure that they are issued based on actual demand and not arbitrarily. The list of job card holders will be cross-verified with the list of beneficiaries receiving payments.
3. **Muster Rolls and Work Verification:**
   o All **muster rolls** should be carefully inspected to ensure that actual labourers' attendance is accurately recorded. The **work done** and **payments made** should be physically verified, and any mismatch should be addressed immediately.
4. **Fictitious Payments:**
   o All payments made to **fictitious persons** will be immediately flagged. A detailed investigation should be initiated to identify and prosecute those involved in fraudulent activities.
5. **Transparency Mechanisms:**

- o To prevent future occurrences of fraud, I would introduce a more **robust monitoring system** including digital tracking of work progress and payments, thereby minimizing the chance of manipulation.

6. **Public Awareness Campaign:**
   - o Conduct **awareness programs** in the Panchayat to educate people about their rights under MGNREGA, so they are not deceived into signing fraudulent muster rolls or accepting wrongful payments.

(c) Dealing with the Situation:

To deal with this situation effectively, my approach would involve **strong leadership**, **transparency**, and **accountability**. Key steps would include:

1. **Immediate Suspension of Erring Personnel:**
   - o Any **officials or Panchayat members** found complicit in the fraudulent practices would be immediately **suspended** and **investigated**.
2. **Involving Law Enforcement:**
   - o In cases of **siphoning of funds**, **falsification of records**, and **payment to fictitious persons**, I would involve law enforcement agencies to ensure legal action is taken against those responsible.
3. **Restoring Trust with the Community:**
   - o I would engage with **local communities** and **job card holders** to rebuild trust in the MGNREGA system. Regular public meetings and feedback sessions would be held to address concerns and maintain transparency.
4. **Introduce Digital Records:**
   - o To prevent future errors, I would push for the use of **digital platforms** for recording attendance and work done, thus making it easier to track and prevent fraudulent activities.

By taking **swift and decisive action**, I would aim to restore the integrity of the MGNREGA program in the Panchayat, ensuring that the funds meant for rural welfare reach the rightful beneficiaries, and rebuilding the **trust** in the administrative system.

Question 12

Ashok is Divisional Commissioner of one of the border districts of the North East State. A few years back, Military has taken over the neighbouring country after overthrowing the elected civil government. Civil war situation is prevailing in the country especially in last two years. However, internal situation further deteriorated due to rebel groups taking over control of certain populated areas near own border. Due to intense fight between military and rebel groups, civilian casualties has increased manifold in recent past. In the meantime, in one night Ashok got information from the local police guarding the border check post that there are about 200-250 people mainly women and children trying to cross over to our side of the border. There are also about 10 soldiers with their weapons in military uniform part of this group who wants to cross over. Women and Children are also crying and begging for help. A few of them are injured and bleeding profusely need immediate medical care. Ashok tried to contact Home Secretary of the State but failed to do so due to poor connectivity mainly due to inclement weather.

(a) What are the options available with Ashok to cope with the situation?
(b) What are the ethical and legal dilemmas being faced by Ashok?
(c) Which of the options, do you think would be more appropriate for Ashok to adopt and why?
(d) In the present situation, what are the extra precautionary measures to be taken by the Border Guarding Police in dealing with soldiers in uniform?

(Answer in 250 words) 20

(a) Options Available with Ashok to Cope with the Situation:

1. **Allow the Entire Group to Cross the Border:**
   - Ashok can choose to **open the border** and let the entire group, including the soldiers, cross into the country. This would ensure immediate humanitarian aid to the women and children in need of medical attention, but it could pose potential security risks with the presence of armed soldiers.
2. **Allow Only the Civilians to Cross the Border:**
   - Ashok can allow the **women and children** to cross the border for medical aid, but deny entry to the soldiers, treating them as potential security threats. This option prioritizes humanitarian aid but might provoke tension with the military of the neighboring country.
3. **Send the Group Back:**

- o   Ashok could decide to **deny entry to the entire group**, citing legal and security concerns, especially the presence of armed soldiers. This would adhere strictly to border security protocols but may result in significant human suffering.

4. **Contact Higher Authorities for Guidance:**
   - o   In the absence of communication with the Home Secretary, Ashok could attempt to **reach out to national or regional authorities** to request guidance on how to proceed, though this might delay immediate action.

(b) Ethical and Legal Dilemmas Being Faced by Ashok:

1. **Humanitarian Ethics vs. National Security:**
   - o   The primary **ethical dilemma** revolves around the choice between addressing the **immediate humanitarian crisis** of innocent women and children needing medical help, and the **potential security risk** posed by allowing armed soldiers into the country. If the soldiers are part of the enemy military, this could jeopardize national security.

2. **Duty of Care vs. Border Security:**
   - o   Ashok is faced with the **moral duty** to help people in distress, but this conflicts with his **legal responsibility** to ensure that no unauthorized personnel or combatants cross the border, especially when security could be compromised.

3. **Legal and Diplomatic Implications:**
   - o   Allowing soldiers to cross may be seen as an **act of support** for the rebel group or military junta, which could have **diplomatic repercussions**. There is also the risk of violating border security laws if the situation is mishandled.

4. **Failure of Communication:**
   - o   The failure to contact the Home Secretary due to **poor connectivity** leaves Ashok in a situation where he must make a decision without clear instructions, increasing his sense of responsibility and ethical burden.

(c) Most Appropriate Option for Ashok to Adopt:

The most **appropriate course of action** for Ashok would be to **allow the women and children to cross the border for immediate humanitarian aid** while **detaining the soldiers** and conducting a careful **assessment** of their intentions. This approach prioritizes **human rights** and **humanitarian aid**, ensuring that innocent civilians are not

left to suffer. Ashok can then **escort the soldiers to a safe location** where they can be **disarmed** and interrogated to determine their identity and purpose.

This option maintains the **humanitarian ethos** while managing security risks. If it's confirmed that the soldiers are part of the rebel group or military, appropriate actions can be taken by national security agencies once the situation is fully assessed. By prioritizing the civilians and ensuring that due process is followed for the soldiers, Ashok strikes a balance between **compassion** and **security concerns**.

(d) Extra Precautionary Measures to be Taken by the Border Guarding Police:

1. **Thorough Identification and Verification:**
   - The **border police** must immediately conduct a **thorough identification** and **verification** of the soldiers in uniform. They should check if the soldiers are indeed part of the neighboring country's military or if they have joined rebel groups. This can be done by conducting quick **interviews** and examining their military identification.
2. **Disarm the Soldiers:**
   - To prevent any **threat to security**, the **border police** should **disarm the soldiers** before they are allowed to cross the border. This will reduce the risk of potential conflict or sabotage.
3. **Isolate the Soldiers:**
   - The **soldiers should be isolated** from the civilians and moved to a secure area where they can be properly interrogated. This ensures that the soldiers do not have access to sensitive areas or act as spies.
4. **Increased Surveillance:**
   - The **border police should increase surveillance** around the area to monitor any changes in the situation. This would include tracking any movements of potential reinforcements or hostile groups nearby.
5. **Coordinate with National Authorities:**
   - The border police should **immediately inform** higher security authorities, including the **military** and **intelligence agencies**, to assess the broader security situation and provide guidance on how to handle the soldiers and the group.

By taking these precautionary measures, the **border police** can ensure that the security of the nation is not compromised while still upholding humanitarian values in addressing the crisis.