

GS IV Ethics Paper 2014

Section A

1.
 - a. All human beings aspire for happiness. Do you agree? What does happiness mean to you? Explain with examples. **150 words**
 - b. What does ethics seek to promote in human life? Why is it all the more important in public administration? **150 words**
2.
 - a. In the context of defence services, 'patriotism' demands readiness to even lay down one's life in protecting the nation. According to you, what does patriotism imply in everyday civil life? Explain with illustrations and justify your answer. **150 words**
 - b. What do you understand by 'probity' in public life? What are the difficulties in practicing it in the present times? How can these difficulties be overcome? **150 words**
3.
 - a. *"Integrity without knowledge is weak and useless, but knowledge without integrity is dangerous and dreadful."* What do you understand by this statement? Explain your stand with illustrations from the modern context. **150 words**
 - b. *"Human beings should always be treated as 'ends' in themselves and never as merely 'means'".* Explain the meaning and significance of this statement, giving its implications in the modern techno-economic society. **150 words**
4.
 - a. Which eminent personality has inspired you the most in the context of ethical conduct in life? Give the gist of his/her teachings. Giving specific examples, describe how you have been able to apply these teachings for your own ethical development. **150 words**
 - b. There is a heavy ethical responsibility on the public servants because they occupy positions of power, handle huge amounts of public funds, and their decisions have wide-ranging impact on society and environment. What steps have you taken to improve your ethical competence to handle such responsibility? **150 words**

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5. a. The current society is plagued with widespread trust-deficit. What are the consequences of this situation for personal well-being and for societal well-being? What can you do at the personal level to make yourself trustworthy? **150 words**
- b. It is often said that poverty leads to corruption. However, there is no dearth of instances where affluent and powerful people indulge in corruption in a big way. What are the basic causes of corruption among people? Support your answer with examples. **150 words**
6. What factors affect the formation of a person's attitude towards social problems? In our society, contrasting attitudes are prevalent about many social problems. What contrasting attitudes do you notice about the caste system in our society? How do you explain the existence of these contrasting attitudes? **150 words**
7. What does accountability mean in the context of public service? What measures can be adopted to ensure individual and collective accountability of public servants? **150 words**
8. We are witnessing increasing instances of sexual violence against women in the country. Despite existing legal provisions against it, the number of such incidences is on the rise. Suggest some innovative measures to tackle this menace. **150 words**

End of Section A

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Section B

9. Now-a-days, there is an increasing thrust on economic development all around the globe. At the same time, there is also an increasing concern about environmental degradation caused by development. Many a time, we face a direct conflict between developmental activity and environmental quality. It is neither feasible to stop or curtail the developmental process, nor is it advisable to keep degrading the environment, as it threatens our very survival. Discuss some possible strategies which could be adopted to eliminate this conflict and which could lead to sustainable development.

250 words

10. Suppose one of your close friends, who is also aspiring for civil services, comes to you to discuss some of the issues related to ethical conduct in public service. He raises the following points:

(i) In the present times, when an unethical environment is quite prevalent, individual attempts to stick to ethical principles may cause a lot of problems in one's career. It may also cause hardship to the family members as well as risk to one's life. Why should we not be pragmatic and follow the path of least resistance, and be happy with doing whatever good we can?

(ii) When so many people are adopting wrong means and are grossly harming the system, what difference would it make if only a small minority tries to be ethical? They are going to be rather ineffective and are bound to get frustrated.

(iii) If we become fussy about ethical considerations, will it not hamper the economic progress of our country? After all, in the present age of high competition, we cannot afford to be left behind in the race of development.

(iv) It is understandable that we should not get involved in grossly unethical practises, but giving and accepting small gratifications and doing small favours increases everybody's motivation. It also makes the system more efficient. What is wrong in adopting such practises?

Critically analyse the above viewpoints. On the basis of this analysis, what will be your advice to your friend?

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11. You are a no-nonsense, honest officer. You have been transferred to a remote district to head a department that is notorious for its inefficiency and callousness. You find that the main cause of the poor state of affairs is the indiscipline of a section of employees. They do not work themselves and also disrupt the working of others. You first warned the troublemakers to mend their ways or else face disciplinary action. When the warning had little effect, you issued a show cause notice to the ringleaders. As a retaliatory measure, these troublemakers instigated a woman employee amongst them to file a complaint of sexual harassment against you with the Women's Commission. The Commission promptly seeks your explanation. The matter is also publicized in the media to embarrass you further. Some of the options to handle this situation could be as follows :

- (i) Give your explanation to the Commission and go soft on the disciplinary action.
- (ii) Ignore the Commission and proceed firmly with the disciplinary action.
- (iii) Brief your higher-ups, seek directions from them and act accordingly. (Suggest any other possible options).

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- 12.** Suppose you are the CEO of a company that manufactures specialised electronic equipment used by a government department. You have submitted your bid for the supply of this equipment to the department. Both the quality and cost of your offer are better than those of the competitors. Yet the concerned officer is demanding a hefty bribe for approving the tender. Getting the order is important both for you and for your company. Not getting the order would mean closing a production line. It may also affect your own career. However, as a value-conscious person, you do not want to give bribes. Valid arguments can be advanced both for giving the bribe and getting the order, and for refusing to pay the bribe and risking the loss of the order. What those arguments could be? Could there be any better way to get out of this dilemma? If so, outline the main elements of this third way, pointing out its merits.

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- 13.** Rameshwar successfully cleared the prestigious civil services examination and was excited about the opportunity that he would get through the civil services to serve the country. However, soon after joining the services, he realised that things are not as rosy as he had imagined. He found a number of malpractices prevailing in the department assigned to him. For example, funds under various schemes and grants were being misappropriated. The official facilities were frequently being used for personal needs by the officers and staff. After some time, he noticed that the process of recruiting the staff was also not up to the mark. Prospective candidates were required to write an examination in which a lot of cheating was going on. Some candidates were provided external help in the examination. Rameshwar brought these incidents to the notice of his seniors. However, he was advised to keep his eyes, ears and mouth shut and ignore all these things which were taking place with the connivance of the higher-ups. Rameshwar felt highly disillusioned and uncomfortable. He comes to you seeking your advice, indicating various options that you think are available in this situation. How would you help him to evaluate

250 words

- 14.** In our country, the migration of rural people to towns and cities is increasing drastically. This is causing serious problems both in the rural as well as in the urban areas. In fact, things are becoming really unmanageable. Can you analyse this problem in detail and indicate not only the socio-economic but also the emotional and attitudinal factors responsible for this problem? Also, distinctly bring out why-

- (a) Educated rural youth are trying to shift to urban areas;
- (b) landless poor people are migrating to urban slums;
- (c) even some farmers are selling off their land and trying to settle in urban areas taking up petty jobs.

250 words

End of Section B
