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GENERAL STUDIES (TEST CODE : 2370)

Name of Candidate	AMAN TIWARI		
Medium Hindi/Eng.	ENGLISH	Registration Number	1522550
Center	ONLINE	Date	05/09/2024

INDEX TABLE

Q. No.	Maximum Marks	Marks Obtained
1(a)	10	
1(b)	10	
2(a)	10	
2(b)	10	
3(a)	10	
3(b)	10	
3(c)	10	
4(a)	10	
4(b)	10	
5(a)	10	
5(b)	10	
6(a)	10	
6(b)	10	
7	20	
8	20	
9	20	
10	20	
11	20	
12	20	

Total Marks Obtained:

Remarks:

INSTRUCTIONS

- Do furnish the appropriate details in the answer sheet (viz. Name, Registration Number and Test Code).
उत्तर पुस्तिका में सूचनाएं भरना आवश्यक है (नाम, प्रश्न-पत्र कोड, विद्यार्थी क्रमांक आदि)।
- There are **TWELVE** questions printed in **HINDI & ENGLISH**.
इसमें बारह प्रश्न हैं हिन्दी और अंग्रेजी में छपे हैं।
- All questions are compulsory.**
सभी प्रश्न अनिवार्य हैं।
- The number of marks carried by a question/part is indicated against it.
प्रत्येक प्रश्न/भाग के अंक उसके सामने दिए गए हैं।
- Answers must be written in the medium authorized in the Admission Certificate, which must be stated clearly on the cover of this Question-Cum-Answer (QCA) Booklet in the space provided. No marks will be given for answers written in medium other than the authorized one.
प्रश्नों के उत्तर उसी माध्यम में लिखे जाने चाहिए जिसका उल्लेख आपके प्रवेश पत्र में किया गया है और उस माध्यम का स्पष्ट उल्लेख प्रश्न-सह-उत्तर (क्यूसीए) पुस्तिका के मुख्य पृष्ठ पर अंकित निर्दिष्ट स्थान पर किया जाना चाहिए। उल्लिखित माध्यम के अतिरिक्त अन्य किसी माध्यम में लिए गए उत्तर पर कोई अंक नहीं मिलेंगे।
- Word limit in questions, if specified, should be adhered to.
प्रश्नों में शब्द सीमा, जहाँ विनिर्दिष्ट है, का अनुसरण किया जाना चाहिए।
- Any page or portion of the page left blank in the Question-Cum-Answer Booklet must be clearly struck off.
उत्तर पुस्तिका में खाली छोड़ा हुआ पृष्ठ या उसके अंश को स्पष्ट रूप से काटा जाना चाहिए।

Is student recommended for One-to-One mentoring?

Recommended

Strongly Recommended

16-B, 2nd Floor, Above National Trust Building, Bada Bazar Marg, Old Rajinder Nagar, Delhi-110060

Plot No. 857, 1st Floor, Banda Bahadur Marg (Opp. Punjab & Sind Bank), Dr. Mukherjee Nagar, Delhi-110009

EVALUATION INDICATORS

1. Contextual Competence
2. Content Competence
3. Language Competence
4. Introduction Competence
5. Structure - Presentation Competence
6. Conclusion Competence

Overall Macro Comments / feedback / suggestions on Answer Booklet:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

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All the Best

खंड A / SECTION A

निम्नलिखित प्रश्नों के उत्तर 150 से अधिक शब्दों में न दें:

Answer the following questions in not more than 150 words each:

1. (a) क्या नैतिक विवेक हमेशा नैतिक निर्णयन में कानूनों, नियमों और विनियमों का पूरक होता है? उपयुक्त उदाहरणों के साथ अपने उत्तर की पुष्टि कीजिए। (उत्तर 150 शब्दों में दीजिए)

Does moral conscience always complement laws, rules, and regulations in ethical decision-making? Support your answer with suitable examples. (Answer in 150 words)

10

Conscience can be defined as an internal agency that helps humans in critical thinking and making moral and ethical judgements

Moral conscience in complementing laws, rules and regulations

- ① It prevents a person from performing obviously unethical tasks

Eg- Conscience prevents people from stealing, hurting others which are illegal activities.

- ② Conscience also enables civil servants in doing the right thing despite consequences

Eg → Former CEC TN Sheshan
strictly implementing the model
code of conduct in true spirit

But not always is conscience
in line with rules and regulations
which causes crisis of conscience.

Crisis of conscience situations

① It occurs when conscience
conflicts with established rules.

Eg - Jumping the traffic light
against rules to save somebody
(ethical but against laws).

② Conscience when it shows
compassion often conflicts the rules

Eg - Giving PDS ration to a
starving family without any
ration card.

Thus, moral conscience can
go against laws and regulations
and overcoming it requires
Plato's wisdom along with
emotional intelligence.

1. (b) भारत जैसे देश में समाज के कमजोर वर्गों के प्रति करुणा का भाव अनिवार्य है और इससे समझौता नहीं किया जा सकता है। उपयुक्त उदाहरणों के साथ परीक्षण कीजिए। (उत्तर 150 शब्दों में दीजिए)

Compassion towards weaker sections of society is essential and non-negotiable in a country like India. Examine with suitable examples. (Answer in 150 words) 10

In the words of Daniel Goleman, 'True Compassion is not only feeling the pain of others but also being moved enough to help relieve it'.

Compassion towards weaker sections of society being essential and non-negotiable

① In an unequal India where bottom 50% own only 3% of national wealth (Oxfam, 2022), compassionate steps like Neki ki Diwar (Wall of charity) can help.

② When 32% children in country are underweight (NFHS-5), compassion by organizations like Akshaypatra can help feed millions of children.

③ In a feminized agricultural

sector in India, compassionate capitalism in form of Project Purna by Mahindra & Mahindra can help building gender-friendly infrastructure

④ When over 75 PVTGs lack access to basic resources, compassion by officers like IAS Arvish Saran in form of bike ambulance can make tribal healthcare affordable.

⑤ With rising cancer cases, institutes like Tata Memorial Hospital providing free cancer treatment to people can reduce burden.

Thus, as Dalai Lama truly said - 'love and compassion are necessities and not luxuries'.

2. (a) भारतीय समाज में भ्रष्टाचार मौजूद है और निरंतर फल-फूल रहा है क्योंकि इसे सामाजिक रूप से स्वीकार किया जाता है और महत्वकांक्षा को प्रेरित करने वाला माना जाता है। क्या आप इस दृष्टिकोण से सहमत हैं? (उत्तर 150 शब्दों में दीजिए)

Corruption exists and thrives in Indian society because it is socially accepted and even seen as aspirational. Do you agree with this view? (Answer in 150 words) 10

World Bank defines corruption as the misuse of public funds / authorities for private gains. There are multiple reasons for existence of corruption.

Corruption existing and thriving due to social acceptance

- ① Erosion of family and social values have led to normalization of corruption in India.
- ② Economists justify corruption as being the 'grease of the economy'
- ③ Low risk and high rewards associated with it have led to its sanskritization (Kaushik Basu)
- ④ Criminalization of politics with people electing MPs/MLAs with criminal antecedents is evidence

of corruption normalization
(Eq- According to ADR, 40% of
MPs have criminal cases)

- ⑤ India's position at 93/180 in
Corruptions Perception Index is
proof of how normalized corruption
has become.

However, there are evidences
of changing situations -

- ① Massive mobilization of people
in 'India Against Corruption'
movement by Anna Hazare.
- ② Supreme Court reversing its
ruling in 1993 JMM Bribery case
saying corruption not part of
parliamentary privilege

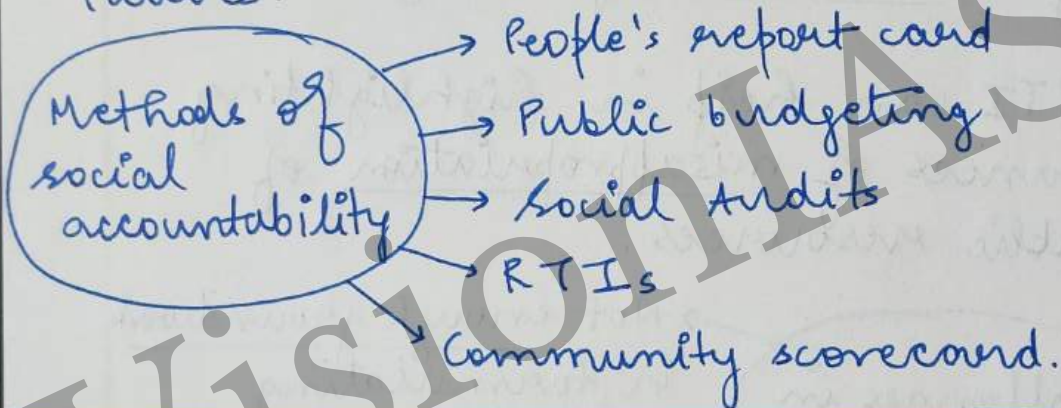
Thus, changing of public
attitude is required as

'Indifference of people is best
breeding ground for corruption
to grow'

2. (b) सामाजिक उत्तरदायित्व को लोकतांत्रिक शासन को बढ़ावा देने और सेवा वितरण में सुधार करने के साधन के रूप में तेजी से मान्यता मिल रही है। विवेचना कीजिए। (उत्तर 150 शब्दों में दीजिए)

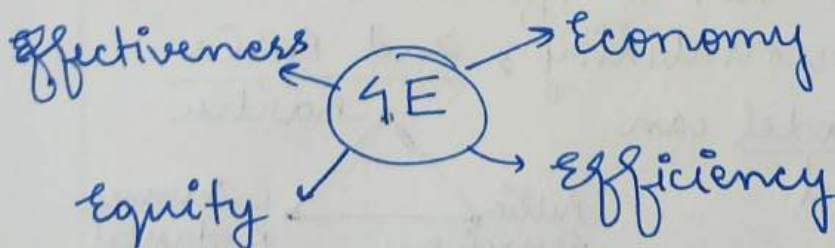
Social accountability is increasingly recognized as a means of enhancing democratic governance and improving service delivery. Discuss. (Answer in 150 words) 10

Social accountability refers to the active involvement of people in ensuring accountability of bureaucrats and public representatives.



Social accountability as a means of enhancing democratic governance and improving service delivery

- ① It ensures the realization of 4Es in public expenditure



② It enables people to actively participate in Governance
(Eg - Public planning in Kerala,
Public budgeting in Gujarat)

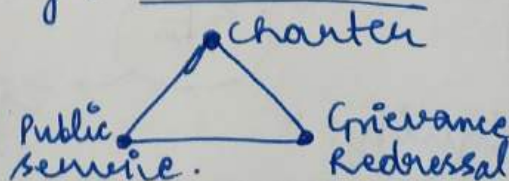
③ Citizens' Charter provide transparency about quality of service and grievance redressal
(Eg - Model Panchayat Citizen Charter)

④ RTI can help in highlighting instances of misappropriation of public resources.

Challenges in current social accountability

- Not enough groundwork in formulating charters.
- (“Pious statements without practical significance” - 2nd ARC)
- ↳ lack of legal backing behind social audits.

Thus, to further bolster social accountability, 2nd ARC's Sevottam Model can be used



3. वर्तमान संदर्भ में निम्नलिखित उद्धरण आपको क्या संदेश देते हैं?

What does the following quotation convey to you in the present context.

(a) "मानवीय आवाज़ कभी भी उस दूरी तक नहीं पहुंच सकती जो अंतरात्मा की पवित्र आवाज़ द्वारा तय की जाती है।" - महात्मा गांधी (उत्तर 150 शब्दों में दीजिए)

"The human voice can never reach the distance that is covered by the still small voice of conscience." - Mahatma Gandhi (Answer in 150 words) 10

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3. (b)

"धैर्य विचारों का मार्शल, इच्छाशक्ति का कवच और तर्क का किला है।" - फ्रांसिस बेकन। (उत्तर 150 शब्दों में दीजिए)

"Fortitude is the marshal of thought, the armor of the will, and the fort of reason."
- Francis Bacon. (Answer in 150 words) 10

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3. (c) "चरित्र बार-बार दोहराई जाने वाली आदतें हैं और बार-बार दोहराई जाने वाली आदतें ही चरित्र को सुधार सकती हैं।" - स्वामी विवेकानंद (उत्तर 150 शब्दों में दीजिए)

"Character is repeated habits, and repeated habits alone can reform character." - Swami Vivekananda (Answer in 150 words) 10

In the above quote, Swami Vivekananda correctly emphasizes on the inter-relationship that exists between character and habits.

Meaning of the quotation in the present context

① Habitual offenders in jails develop a bad character which cause them to repeat offences

↳ it is through continuous socialization and positive value system injection that ~~the~~ such characters can be mended.

② Similarly, people who are corrupt tend to do corruption consistently through bribes. Only consistent regular ethical training can enable them

to quit such activities.

③ Resilience to failure can be developed only when a person fails multiple times. This finally results in success.

(Eg - ~~swan~~ Thomas Alva Edison in the development of electric bulb)

④ Prejudiced character gets formed against communities due to consistent wrong conditioning.

It is only through providing consistent counter-attitudinal information that it can be corrected.

Thus, it is important to develop a good character as Gandhiji has rightly said -
'If character is lost, everything is lost'

4. (a) संगठन कर्मचारियों पर पड़ने वाले अनुचित दबाव को रोकते हुए स्वस्थ प्रतिस्पर्धा को किस प्रकार संतुलित कर सकते हैं? (उत्तर 150 शब्दों में दीजिए)

How can organizations balance healthy competition while preventing undue pressure on employees? (Answer in 150 words) 10

A positive work culture in any organization involves healthy competition among employees while balancing their mental health at same time.

Balancing healthy competition while preventing undue pressure

- ① Creating transparent mechanisms for employee evaluation and appraisals.
- ② Avoiding favouritism and nepotism by constantly praising only a single employee.
- ③ Organizing monthly activities that encourage team bonding and takes care of mental health.
- ④ Rewarding failures also for employees that dare to take risks (Eg - Google)

- ⑤ Not involving excessively high stakes in competition which unduly pressurizes employees.
(Eg - Things like 100% bonus on successfully completing this task)
- ⑥ Encouraging employees to take regular time offs and spend time with family.
- ⑦ Not allowing unnecessary over-time which creates mental pressure on other employees.

Thus, a healthy work culture can contribute to better retention and employee productivity

4. (b) प्रबंध का अर्थ कार्यों को सही करना है; नेतृत्व का अर्थ सही कार्य करना है। विस्तारपूर्वक वर्णन कीजिए।
(उत्तर 150 शब्दों में दीजिए)

Management is doing things right; leadership is doing the right things. Elaborate.
(Answer in 150 words) 10

Management involves perform-
-ing duties according to the
established procedure. Leadership
goes beyond procedure to do what
is ethically and morally correct.

Examples of this elaboration

- ① In case an old widow lacking
Aadhar card comes for help
for pension,
Management → asking her to apply
for card, wait for approval
and then helping her.

Leadership → immediate assistance
while parallelly starting
documentation for card.

- ② Similarly, leadership involves
not fearing consequences while
doing the right.

Eg - Shanmugham Manjunath

displayed exemplary leadership while exposing IOCL corruption.

③ Management is following orders, leadership is doing things at right time.

(Eg - Sam Manekshaw refusing to fight 1971 war in April and instead shifting it to December)

(Eg - Lal Bahadur Shastri opening the 2nd front in 1965 war)

④ Leadership involves going beyond satisfactory to achieve excellence

(Eg - Kiran Bedi, IPS implementing reforms in Tihar jail instead of just managing)

Thus, leadership quality can enable civil servants to transform from rule-based to role-based governance.

5. (a)

अभिवृत्ति का निर्माण समाजीकरण की प्रक्रिया का एक महत्वपूर्ण पहलू है। व्यक्तियों में अभिवृत्ति के विकास में योगदान देने वाले विभिन्न कारकों पर चर्चा कीजिए। (उत्तर 150 शब्दों में दीजिए)

Formation of attitudes is a crucial aspect of the socialization process. Discuss the various factors that contribute to the development of attitudes in individuals. (Answer in 150 words) 10

Attitude is a pre-disposed agency that influences our opinion in consistently favourable or unfavourable manner towards a particular object.

Factors responsible for development of attitudes in individuals

① Family → It is the primary agency of socialization and forms attitude in the formative years
(Eg - Mahavir Singh Phogat's role in attitude formation of Gita and Babita Phogat)

② Education → It transitions a child towards the youth and teacher plays an important role in dispelling negative attitudes

(Eg - Chanakya's role in public

service attitude formation in
(Chandragupta Maurya)

③ Role-playing → Formation of
patriotic attitude in children
through independence day functions

④ Religion → can play an important
role in determining way of life
for people.

Eg → Madhyam Marg in Buddhism
→ Nishkama Karma in Bhagwad
Gita.

⑤ Social Media → can form both
holistic as well as one-sided
attitude depending on way it
is used.

(Eg - Religious polarization through
sharing communal speeches)

Thus, it is very important
to form positive attitudes as
according to Zig Ziglar - "It is
your attitude, not aptitude that
determines altitude"

5. (b) किसी भी कार्यस्थल पर संघर्ष अपरिहार्य होते हैं और प्रशासनिक भूमिकाएं भी इसका अपवाद नहीं हैं। इसके आलोक में, संघर्ष प्रबंधन में भावनात्मक बुद्धिमत्ता की भूमिका पर चर्चा कीजिए। (उत्तर 150 शब्दों में दीजिए)

Conflicts are inevitable in any workplace, and administrative roles are no exception. In light of this, discuss the role of emotional intelligence in conflict management. (Answer in 150 words) 10

According to Mayer and Salovey, emotional intelligence involves the perception, assimilation, understanding and management of emotions in a positive manner.

Emotional intelligence ^(EI) can play an important role in conflict management.

Conflict management through EI

- ① It can help in diffusing social tensions.

(Eg - IAS N. Prasanth's role in relocating a street market in Kozhikode)

- ② It can pacify people and stop communal riots

(Eg - Role of Mahatma Gandhi in Noakhali (West Bengal) during Independence)

③ It can help people to move forward by focussing on the future life prospects

(eg - setting up of Truth and Reconciliation Commission post-Apartheid by Nelson Mandela)

④ It can bring about revolutions through peaceful means.

(eg - Singing revolution in Baltic leading to independence of Estonia, Lithuania & Latvia)

⑤ It can channel the energy in the right direction.

(eg - Mahatma Gandhi channeling people's anger in mass movements)

Thus, inculcation of emotional intelligence amongst administrators can help transforming Weberian bureaucracy to 'Karmyogis'

6. (a) चर्चा कीजिए कि अभिवृत्ति विश्व के साथ हमारी धारणाओं और अंतःक्रियाओं को आकार देने में किस प्रकार महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभाती है। (उत्तर 150 शब्दों में दीजिए)

Discuss how attitude plays a crucial role in shaping our perceptions and interactions with the world. (Answer in 150 words) 10

Attitude can be described as long standing beliefs which people have towards any idea, object or event which is consistent in nature.

Role of attitude in shaping our perceptions and interactions in the world

- ① It helps a person in fulfilling his needs based upon his attitude.

Eg - A person taking risk and finding growth → pro-risk attitude

A person taking risk and failing → risk-averse attitude

- ② Attitude determines how we interact with different events.

Eg - Promotion of colleague.

Egotistical attitude → Jealousy and envy towards person.

Supportive attitude → Proud of the colleague, wishing best for new role.

③ An ego-defensive attitude prevents a person from forming holistic picture & jump to conclusions.

Eg - son-of-soil theory, whataboutism culture

④ Some attitudes can also enable people to express their value systems.

Eg - If value = freedom → Promotes flexible work culture
→ Promotes participative management.

⑤ Attitude also affects our external features.

Eg - Whatsapp status, Instagram profile, quotations on t-shirt.

⑥ Attitude also affects how people see different things (Eg - Patriarchy)

Thus, right socialization can result in forming positive attitudes

6. (b) हाल के अध्ययनों से पता चलता है कि जेनरेशन Z पिछली पीढ़ियों की तुलना में एकाकीपन के उच्च स्तर का अनुभव कर रही है। इस प्रवृत्ति के संभावित कारण क्या हैं? (उत्तर 150 शब्दों में दीजिए)

Recent studies indicate that Generation Z is experiencing higher levels of loneliness than the previous generations. What are the possible reasons for this trend? (Answer in 150 words) 10

Generation Z refers to the recent generation that was born roughly between 1995-2005 and is currently in teenage / youth stage.

Reasons for higher levels of loneliness in Generation Z

- ① Dual-working families - which causes alienation at home and cause incorrect socialization.
- ② Disintegration of joint families - which causes lack of traditional socialization by the grandparents
- ③ Outsourcing of personality to technology - which makes them lose touch with the real world.
- ④ Permissive parenting - with parents not paying enough

attention on kids and remaining involved in gadgets.

- ⑤ Constant need for social validation - which makes them feel lonely when they don't receive the same.

(Eg - loneliness when less reactions, comments on photos on Instagram)

- ⑥ Increasing cut-throat competition in education and job market.

Thus, there is a need to implement measures like digital detox, limiting mobile time to generate positive feelings among Gen Z.

खंड B / SECTION B

निम्नलिखित प्रश्नों में, प्रस्तुत प्रकरणों का ध्यानपूर्वक अध्ययन कीजिए और उनके उपरांत वाले प्रश्नों का उत्तर दीजिए (लगभग 250 शब्दों में)

In the following questions, carefully study the cases presented and then answer the questions that follow (in around 250 words):

7.

नीरज ने हाल ही में कॉलेज से स्नातक किया है और वह एक बड़ी आईटी कंपनी के वित्त एवं विपणन विभाग में कार्य करता है। हाल ही में, नीरज को बिक्री के रिकॉर्ड में एक चिंताजनक विसंगति का पता चला, जिसने सत्यतापूर्ण रिपोर्टिंग हेतु कंपनी की प्रतिबद्धता के बारे में निवेशकों के लिए चिंताएं उत्पन्न कर दीं।

नीरज की कंपनी की विशेषता संवृद्धि को बढ़ाने, बिक्री में तेज़ी लाने और अधिक लाभ कमाने के इच्छुक अन्य व्यवसायों को सॉफ्टवेयर सेवाएं प्रदान करना है। किसी उत्पाद की लागत आवश्यक सेवाओं के प्रकार पर निर्भर करती है। एडवांस पैकेज महंगे होते हैं और इनकी अधिक बिक्री से कंपनी के लिए मजबूत संवृद्धि का संकेत प्राप्त होगा।

हाल ही में, नीरज को एक नया प्रोजेक्ट सौंपा गया जिसमें उत्पादों को खरीदने वाले ग्राहकों की संख्या और एडवांस बनाम बेसिक पैकेजों पर खर्च की गई राशि को दर्शाने वाला एक विज़ुअल विकसित करना था। हालांकि, प्रोजेक्ट के लिए किए गए शोध में, उसे बिक्री की रिपोर्टिंग का एक ऐसा पैटर्न मिला जिसने उसे विचलित कर दिया।

नीरज ने देखा कि यदि किसी ग्राहक ने 50 लाख रुपये के "एडवांस" उत्पाद और 50 लाख रुपये के "बेसिक" उत्पाद खरीदे हैं, तो 1 करोड़ रुपये की समग्र बिक्री को "एडवांस" उत्पादों की बिक्री के रूप में वर्गीकृत किया गया था। उसे इस तरह के कई उदाहरण मिले तथा गलत तरीके से दर्शाई गई राशि करोड़ों रुपये में थी। एक कर्मचारी के तौर पर, वह इस बात से परेशान है कि कंपनी की बिक्री को वास्तविकता से अधिक मजबूत दर्शाने से निवेशकों को भ्रामक जानकारी प्राप्त हो सकती है।

नीरज को लगता है कि सही कार्य यही होगा कि वह अपनी बात कहे और कंपनी के बिक्री संख्या को अभिलेखित करने के तरीके को ठीक करने का प्रयास करे। वह इस बात से बहुत परेशान है कि यह बेईमानी है, और उसकी व्यक्तिगत सत्यनिष्ठा और नैतिक मूल्यों के विरुद्ध है।

हालांकि, नीरज कंपनी में नया कर्मचारी है और कोई बड़ी समस्या नहीं खड़ी करना चाहता है। वह यह भी सोच रहा है कि क्या बिक्री रिकॉर्ड करने के तरीके के लिए कोई उचित स्पष्टीकरण हो सकता है। जब नीरज ने अपने वरिष्ठ से सलाह ली, तो उसे बताया गया कि यह कॉर्पोरेट संगठनों में आम तौर पर इस्तेमाल की जाने वाली "रचनात्मक लेखांकन (क्रिएटिव अकाउंटिंग)" प्रथा है। उन्होंने यह भी संकेत दिया कि बिक्री की कुल राशि में हेराफेरी नहीं की गई है।

इसके अलावा, यह एक तनावपूर्ण समय है, जिसमें कई तकनीकी छंटनी हो रही हैं और नीरज की स्वयं की कंपनी ने छंटनी किए जाने की घोषणा की है। एक नए कर्मचारी के रूप में, वह जानता है कि वह नौकरी से निकाले जाने वाले पहले कर्मचारियों में से एक हो सकता है। इसलिए, वह अभी अपनी नौकरी खोने का जोखिम नहीं उठाना चाहता क्योंकि उसे किराए जैसे अन्य खर्चों के अलावा छात्र ऋण भी चुकाना है।

(a) इस प्रकरण में नीरज के समक्ष कौन-सी नैतिक दुविधाएं हैं?

(b) कार्य संस्कृति किस प्रकार कर्मचारियों द्वारा संभावित गलत कार्यों की रिपोर्ट करने की इच्छा को प्रभावित करती है?

(c) नैतिक कार्य संस्कृति को बढ़ावा देने में नेतृत्व की क्या भूमिका है? (उत्तर 250 शब्दों में दीजिए)

Neeraj is a recent college graduate who works in the finance and analytics department of a large IT company. Recently, Neeraj discovered an alarming discrepancy in the recording of sales, which raised concerns about the company's commitment to truthful reporting to investors.

Neeraj's company specializes in providing software services to other businesses that want to drive their business growth, accelerate sales, and earn more profits. The cost of a product depends on the type of services required. Advanced packages are costlier, and selling more will indicate stronger growth for the company.

Neeraj was recently tasked with a new project to develop a visual showing the number of customers who had purchased products, and the amount spent on advanced vs. basic packages. But, in his research for the project, he came across a pattern of reporting sales information that disturbed him.

Neeraj saw that if a customer had purchased Rs. 50 Lakh worth of "advanced" products and Rs. 50 lakh worth of "basic" products, the entire Rs. 1 Crore worth of sales were classified as sale of "advanced" products. He discovered multiple instances of this kind and the misrepresentation amounted to crores of rupees. As an employee, he grapples with the unsettling realization that investors may be receiving misleading information to make the company's sales look stronger than they in fact are.

Neeraj feels that the right thing to do would be to speak up and try to fix the way the company reports its sales numbers. He is deeply troubled by what appears to be dishonesty, as it conflicts with his personal integrity and moral values.

But, Neeraj is new to the company and does not want to create any major problems. He also wonders if there is some good explanation for the way that the sales are recorded. When Neeraj consulted his senior, he was told that this is a "creative accounting" practice common in corporate organizations. He also indicated that the total amount of sales has not been fudged.

Moreover, it is a stressful time, in which many tech lay-offs are taking place and Neeraj's own company has announced that there would be layoffs. As a new employee, he knows that he may be among the first employees considered for firing. Hence, he does not want to do anything to risk losing his job right now because he has student loan to pay off apart from other expenses like rent.

- (a) What are the ethical dilemmas faced by Neeraj in this case?
- (b) How does the work culture influence employees' willingness to report potential wrongdoing?
- (c) What role does leadership play in fostering an ethical work culture? (Answer in 250 words)

20

The above case is instance of accounting malpractice in firms which is violative of SEBI rules and example of poor corporate governance.

① Ethical dilemmas faced:

① Integrity vs Professional loyalty → as speaking against company would amount to disloyalty and not speaking violates integrity

② Personal interests vs investor interests → speaking up might cost him his job and continuing would be against investors.

③ Self-preservation vs Honesty → as he has student loans to pay off along with rent and honesty means layoffs.

④ Accounting malpractice vs creative accounting → whether to classify it as fraud or ignore it as 'creativity'

⑤ Reporting senior v/s protecting self →
as senior seems to be involved
in this practice.

⑥ Work culture influencing
wrongdoing reporting

① Ethical work culture encourages
employees to actively report
any wrongdoings.

② Robust whistleblower protection can
protect company from potential
frauds due to wrongdoing reporting.

③ Accessibility to seniors encourage
juniors to timely report frauds.

④ Transparent practices also fosters
transparency among the
employees.

⑤ Responsible leadership can also
make employees comfortable in
such situations.

⑥ Accountability on part of
wrongdoers, if ensured by company
can boost timely reporting.

- ② Role of leadership in fostering ethical work culture
- ① Ethical leadership permeates to the bottom of organization
(Eg - Ratan Tata in Tata company)
 - ② Encourages employees to be transparent and accountable
 - ③ Potential conflict of interest disclosures are encouraged if leadership does so.
 - ④ Corrupt leadership brings bad practices in the company.
(Eg - Indictment of Samsung CEO in corruption; faulty mobile phones in form of Galaxy Note 7)
 - ⑤ Ethical leadership serves as role-models
(Eg - Lord Bahadur Shastri)

Thus, it is rightly said that 'work culture determines the success of any organization'

and the night work culture permeates from the very top.

VisionIAS

8.

आप एक सार्वजनिक क्षेत्र के उपक्रम (PSU) के निदेशक हैं, जिसकी विशेषता देश के लिए महत्वपूर्ण रक्षा उत्पादों का निर्माण करना है और इन उत्पादों को विश्व भर में निर्यात करना है। आपका उपक्रम अपनी विशेषज्ञता और दक्षता के लिए प्रसिद्ध है, क्योंकि इसे निरंतर समय पर महत्वपूर्ण उत्पाद वितरित करने के लिए जाना जाता है।

हाल ही में, आपके उपक्रम को एक उच्च प्राथमिकता वाली रक्षा परियोजना के भाग के रूप में विशिष्ट उत्पादों के निर्माण के लिए एक महत्वपूर्ण ऑर्डर प्राप्त हुआ है, जिसकी समय सीमा बहुत कम है। हालांकि, आपको एक कठिन चुनौती का सामना करना पड़ रहा है। कच्चे माल की बढ़ती लागत और बजट की कमी के कारण, वर्ष के लिए आवंटित उपक्रम की धनराशि लगभग समाप्त हो गई है। वहीं, तेजी से निकट आ रही समय सीमा पर इस महत्वपूर्ण रक्षा परियोजना को पूरा करने के लिए अतिरिक्त जनशक्ति को काम पर रखना एक महत्वपूर्ण आवश्यकता है, लेकिन कुछ महीनों बाद किए जाने वाले अगले व्रजतीय आवंटन तक ऐसा संभव नहीं है। इस बीच, आपके मौजूदा कर्मचारी, जो पहले से ही सप्ताह में छह दिन 10-11 घंटे की कठिन शिफ्ट में कार्य कर रहे हैं, स्पष्ट रूप से हतोत्साहित हैं और उनमें थकान के लक्षण दिख रहे हैं।

आपने इस मुद्दे को वरिष्ठ प्रबंधन के समक्ष प्रस्तुत किया, जिसमें अस्थिर कार्य शेड्यूल और संभावित बर्नआउट(थकान) संबंधी जोखिमों को रेखांकित किया गया था। प्रबंधन ने स्थिति को स्वीकार किया, लेकिन वित्तीय घाटे से विवश होकर, आपसे आंतरिक समाधान खोजने का आग्रह किया। यह सुझाव कार्यभार को और अधिक वितरित करने का था, जिससे मौजूदा कर्मचारियों के लिए अधिक ओवरटाइम का प्रावधान किया जा सके।

(a) उपर्युक्त प्रकरण में शामिल नैतिक मुद्दों पर प्रकाश डालिए।

(b) आपके पास उपलब्ध विकल्पों का मूल्यांकन कीजिए। उपर्युक्त मुद्दे का समाधान करने के लिए आप क्या कदम उठाएंगे?

(c) बर्न आउट (थकान) एक महत्वपूर्ण कारक है जिसके परिणामस्वरूप कर्मचारियों का मनोबल गिरता है। इस संबंध में निजी कंपनियों और सरकार को क्या कदम उठाने चाहिए? (उत्तर 250 शब्दों में दें)

You are the Director of a Public Sector Unit (PSU) that specializes in the manufacturing of critical defense products for the country and exports it all over the world. Your unit is renowned for its expertise and efficiency, as it consistently delivers vital products on time.

Your unit has recently received a crucial order to manufacture specific products as part of a high-priority defense project with a tight deadline. However, you face a daunting challenge. With rising raw material costs and budget constraints, the unit has almost exhausted its funds for the year. Hiring additional manpower, a crucial need to meet the fast-approaching deadline for a critical defense project, is out of the question until the next budgetary allocation which is going to happen in months. Meanwhile, your existing workforce, already putting in grueling 10-11 hour shifts, six days a week, is visibly demotivated and showing signs of fatigue.

You presented the issue to the senior management, highlighting the unsustainable work schedule and potential burnout risks. The management acknowledged the situation but, constrained by the funding deficit, urged you to find internal solutions. The suggestion was to further distribute the workload, thereby implying more overtime for the existing employees.

(a) Highlight the ethical issues involved in the above case.

- (b) Evaluate the options available to you. What course of action you will take to address the above issue?
- (c) Burn out is a critical factor resulting in demotivation of employees. What steps should the private companies and government take in this regard? (Answer in 250 words) 20

The above situation is indicative of the toxic work culture which often mistreats employees with workload far beyond capacity.

① Ethical issues involved.

- ① Toxic work culture - with employees being demotivated and fatigued.
- ② Insensitivity of senior management by urging to find 'internal solutions'.
- ③ More overtime - for the employees without any consultation or consent.
- ④ Poor mental health considerations among the senior management w.r.t employee burnout.
- ⑤ Violation of labour laws - with

employees forced to work for long hours.

⑥ Options available to me

Option 1 - Distribute workload and more overtime for employees

Pros

- Project can be done without additional funding
- Deadline can be met

Cons

- Unsustainable work conditions
- Possible employee burnout
- Possible strike due to excessive overtime.

Option 2 - Outright decline the project citing manpower shortage

Pros

- No excessive load on the employees.
- Prevention of perpetuation of toxic work culture

Cons

- Adverse actions by the senior management
- Dent to company's reputation

Option 3 - Write to ministry for additional budget allocation citing manpower shortage

Pros

- Additional budget would help in hiring additional labour and meeting deadline
- Existing employees not overburdened

Cons

- No extra budgetary allocation materializes
- Senior management might become unhappy due to action.

Course of action

- ① I would take senior management into confidence and write to ministry for additional budget allocation
- ② I would make a strong case citing employee demotivation, potential burnout.
- ③ If extra budget does not materialize, I would strongly insist to reject the project, as according to Kant's categorical

imperative, humans can't be treated as means for an end.

③ Steps taken to tackle burnout

- ① Encouraging employees to take leaves at regular intervals
- ② Organize departmental events like activity day etc. to divert mind from consistently working
- ③ Allowing flexible work timings with overall work timings for week/month.
- ④ Allowing hybrid mode of working by including work from home
- ⑤ Foster strong group coordination for better workload distribution
- ⑥ Practices like no work after 5 pm Friday can also help.

It is essential to foster competitive but sustainable work culture to enable maximum employee productivity.

9. एक अग्रणी न्यूट्रास्युटिकल कंपनी में अनुसंधान एवं विकास विज्ञेपक के रूप में, आप पोषक तत्वों से भरपूर बायोमास, जो त्वचा और हड्डियों के स्वास्थ्य में सुधार करता है, के विकास में सक्रिय रूप से शामिल रहे हैं। शोध के परिणाम आशाजनक हैं और आपकी टीम आगामी उत्पाद को लॉन्च करने के बारे में उत्साहित है। नियमित रूप से होने वाली अंतर-टीम मीटिंग के दौरान, आपको अकस्मात ही अपनी कंपनी के किसी अन्य उत्पाद से संबंधित शोध परीक्षणों और दस्तावेजों के बारे में पता चलता है। यह उत्पाद वजन कम करने और रोग प्रतिरोधक क्षमता बढ़ाने का दावा करता है, लेकिन गहन निरीक्षण करने पर, आपको पता चलता है कि परीक्षण गलत तरीके से किए गए थे और शोध के परिणाम सामान्यीकृत थे, हालांकि, इस उत्पाद के कोई दुष्प्रभाव नहीं थे। यह उत्पाद केवल प्लेसीबो प्रभाव पर काम करता है। संभवतः इस उत्पाद के लिए उत्तरदायी टीम अंतर-टीम मीटिंग के बाद इन दस्तावेजों को अपने साथ ले जाना भूल गई। कंपनी की नीति के अनुसार, अन्य टीमों के शोध परीक्षणों के बारे में जानना कठोरता से प्रतिबंधित है। इस उत्पाद से जुड़े झूठे दावे कंपनी के भीतर इसकी उच्च बिक्री में महत्वपूर्ण रूप से योगदान करते हैं। यदि झूठे दावों के बारे में जानकारी उजागर हो जाती है, तो इससे संभावित रूप से कंपनी को नुकसान हो सकता है। इसके परिणामस्वरूप कंपनी बंद होने जैसे गंभीर परिणाम भी उत्पन्न हो सकते हैं और आपके द्वारा अपने उत्पाद, जिसके प्रतिरोधक स्वास्थ्य सेवा के लिए वास्तविक और महत्वपूर्ण परिणाम हैं, में निवेश की गई वर्षों की कड़ी मेहनत के लिए जोखिम उत्पन्न हो सकता है।
- (a) उपर्युक्त प्रकरण में शामिल नैतिक मुद्दे क्या हैं?
- (b) आपके लिए उपलब्ध विकल्पों का मूल्यांकन कीजिए।
- (c) आपके द्वारा की जाने वाली कार्रवाई क्या होगी? अपनी कार्रवाई का औचित्य सिद्ध कीजिए। (उत्तर 250 शब्दों में दीजिए)

As a research and development analyst in a leading nutraceutical company, you have been actively involved in the development of a nutrient-rich biomass that improves skin and bone health. The research outcomes are promising, and your team is enthusiastic about the upcoming product launch. During routine inter-team meetings, you accidentally come across research trials and documents related to another product of your company. This product claims to reduce weight and enhance immunity, but upon closer inspection, you discover that the trials were falsely conducted, and the research outcomes were generalized, however, there were no side-effects of the product. The product works on the placebo effect only. The team responsible for this product seems to have overlooked taking these documents along with them after the inter-team meeting. As per company's policy, going through the research trials of other teams is strictly prohibited. The false claims associated with this product contribute significantly to its high sales within the company. If the information regarding the false claims is revealed, it could potentially harm the company, leading to severe consequences such as closure, and jeopardize the years of hard work you have invested in your product, which has genuine and significant results for preventive healthcare.

- (a) What are the ethical issues involved in the above case?
- (b) Evaluate the options available to you.
- (c) What will be your course of action? Justify. (Answer in 250 words)

20

The above involves use of malpractices in product advertising which is detrimental to the interests of the consumers.

① Ethical issues involved.

- ① Malpractices - within the company such as false trials, and research generalization.
- ② Poor corporate governance - by focussing only on profits and not on people.
- ③ Violation of company policy - as going through research trials of other teams is strictly prohibited.
- ④ Public interests v/s Personal interests
→ as exposing wrong trials might jeopardize hard work but not exposing will be detrimental to public interests.
- ⑤ Integrity v/s loyalty → as integrity requires to stay true to values while loyalty requires to stay true to company.

⑥ Options available to me

Option 1 → Not revealing the false claims

Pros

- No closure of the company
- The product-nutrient-rich biomass gets launched as planned

Cons

- Against rights to know of the consumer.
- Violation of the Consumer Protection Act, 2019

Option 2 → leaking the product's false claims to media

Pros

- Investigation against company
- Consumer rights protected.

Cons

- closure of the company might happen
- Years of hard work in the biomass product is destroyed.

Option 3 → Confronting the senior management and demanding investigation

Pros

- Internal investigations will create future deterrence
- Company apologizes to public and recalls product

Cons

- Senior management might fire me from company
- Product launch might be cancelled destroying years of work

③ Course of action

- ① I will confront the senior management regarding the possible malpractices.
- ② Then, I will strongly insist for an internal inquiry along with public apology and product recall
- ③ Ask the management to put up strong policies discouraging fudging of any future data.
- ④ If company does not agree, I will report matter to Central Consumer Protection Authority

demanding investigation.

This is because good corporate governance involves taking care of people also along with profits. As Mervyn King has rightly said -

'Corporate Governance is about intellectual honesty and not just sticking to rules & regulations'

VisionIAS

10.

भारत के एक दूरस्थ और आकांक्षी जिले के मुख्य विकास अधिकारी अनमोल को एक जटिल नैतिक दुविधा का सामना करना पड़ रहा है। जिले को सरकार की हालिया विकास पहलों से लाभ मिला है, लेकिन यह अभी भी स्वास्थ्य और शिक्षा के क्षेत्र में संघर्ष कर रहा है। एक राष्ट्रीय गैर-सरकारी संगठन(NGO) के साथ साझेदारी करते हुए अनमोल ने इन क्षेत्रों में महत्वपूर्ण सुधार देखे हैं, विशेषकर प्राकृतिक आपदाओं के दौरान, जब जीवनरक्षक दवाएं पहुंचाने में इस NGO की भूमिका अत्यधिक महत्वपूर्ण थी। इसी तरह की एक आपदा के दौरान, NGO ने लोगों को महत्वपूर्ण जीवन रक्षक दवाइयां उपलब्ध कराने और लोगों की जान बचाने तथा संक्रामक रोगों के प्रसार को रोकने में महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभाई। इस दौरान अनमोल एवं NGO के कार्य को व्यापक रूप से सराहा गया और केंद्र व राज्य सरकारों द्वारा पुरस्कृत भी किया गया। हालांकि, अनमोल को बाद में पता चलता कि NGO स्थानीय अधिकारियों को प्रभावी ढंग से कार्य करने के लिए रिश्वत देने में संलग्न रहा है। हालांकि यह एक अवैध प्रथा है, लेकिन जिले में व्यापक रूप से प्रचलित है। अनमोल अब एक दुविधा में फंसा हुआ है, उसे यह निर्णय लेना है कि NGO द्वारा प्रदान की जाने वाली आवश्यक सेवाओं को खतरे में डाले बिना इस मुद्दे का समाधान कैसे किया जाए, क्योंकि ये सरकारी प्रयासों की पूरक हैं और इस क्षेत्र में कोई वैकल्पिक सेवाएं उपलब्ध नहीं हैं।

(a) इस प्रकरण में शामिल नैतिक मुद्दे क्या हैं?

(b) अनमोल के लिए उपलब्ध विकल्पों को सूचीबद्ध कीजिए और उनके गुण-दोषों का मूल्यांकन कीजिए।

(c) अनमोल को कौन-सा विकल्प चुनना चाहिए और क्यों? तर्क सहित औचित्य सिद्ध कीजिए। (उत्तर 250 शब्दों में दीजिए)

Anmol, the Chief Development Officer of a remote and aspirational district in India, faces a complex ethical dilemma. The district benefitted from the government's recent development initiatives, but it still struggles in the fields of health and education. Partnering with a national NGO, Anmol has seen significant improvements in these areas, especially during natural disasters when the NGO's role in delivering lifesaving medicines was critical. During one such disaster, the NGO played a significant role in providing critical life-saving medicines to people and prevented the loss of lives and spread of communicable diseases. Anmol's as well as the NGO's work during this time was recognised widely and even rewarded by the state and Central governments. However, Anmol later learned that the NGO has been involved in bribing local officials to operate effectively. This practice, although illegal, is seemingly widespread in the district. Anmol is now at a crossroads, having to decide how to address this issue without jeopardizing the essential services provided by the NGO, as they complement the government's efforts and there are no viable alternatives in the region.

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

(b) List the options available to Anmol and evaluate their merits and demerits.

(c) Which option should Anmol choose and why? Justify with arguments. (Answer in 250 words)

20

The above case highlights systemic corruption prevalent in public institutions which impedes effective public service delivery.

② ethical issues involved

- ① Corruption - among the local officials which prevents effective operation of NGO.
- ② Impediment to public service delivery due to bribing practices.
- ③ Indifference to corruption - as the NGO has not reported about the bribe taking officials.
- ④ Lack of integrity - among local officials demanding bribes for performing their duty.
- ⑤ Jeopardy to essential services - if NGO is punished along with local officials for being complicit in corruption.

⑥ Options available to Anmol

Option 1 → Ignore the issue and let bribing continue.

Pros

- NGO continues to operate effectively
- No jeopardy to any essential service provided by NGO

Cons

- Perpetuation of corruption in the district.
- Against public service ethics.

Option 2 → Banning the NGO and reporting local officials to Vigilance Department

Pros

- Deterrence for future NGOs against being complicit in corruption
- Punishment to local officials for coercive corruption

Cons

- Essential services provided by NGO is jeopardized.
- No other NGO might be willing to work after this practice.

Option 3 - Strict warning to NGO
along with sensitization
and reporting corrupt officials
to vigilance department

Pros

- Essential services
still continue
- warning serves
as deterrence
against any bribe
delivery

Cons

- Warning is
ignored and
corruption continues
unabated.

© Anmol should choose Option 3
keeping in mind the kind of
positive impact NGO has on the
lives of people in district.

Along with it there should
be strict sensitization of
public officials & NGO workers
against any type of corruption.

In addition to this, future
guidelines regarding what to
do in case of ineffective public

service delivery along with
grievance redressal mechanisms
must be implemented.

Tolerating corruption causes
corruption to perpetuate as '
Indifference of public is best
breeding ground for corruption
to grow'

VisionIAS

11.

एक साधारण पृष्ठभूमि से आने वाले रवीश ने एक प्रतिष्ठित विश्वविद्यालय में प्रवेश पाने के लिए कड़ी मेहनत की। उत्कृष्ट शैक्षणिक प्रमाण-पत्रों के साथ स्नातक होने के बाद उसने एक प्रमुख बहुराष्ट्रीय कंपनी में एक अच्छी सैलरी वाली नौकरी प्राप्त की। महत्वाकांक्षा से प्रेरित होकर उसने कुछ वर्षों का अनुभव प्राप्त करने के बाद स्टार्ट-अप शुरू करने के लिए नौकरी छोड़ दी।

देश में स्टार्ट-अप बूम के कारण, रवीश को निवेशकों से अपेक्षाकृत आसानी से पर्याप्त पूंजी प्राप्त करने में सफलता मिली। उनकी कड़ी मेहनत और समर्पण ने उनके स्टार्ट-अप की तीव्र वृद्धि और सफलता को बढ़ावा दिया।

हालांकि, जब कंपनी समृद्ध होने लगी, तब रवीश की विलासिता पूर्ण जीवनशैली ने लोगों का ध्यान अपनी ओर आकर्षित करना शुरू कर दिया। संस्थापक और सी.ई.ओ. के रूप में उसे संतोषजनक वेतन मिलता था, जो कि उसकी कंपनी को शून्य से खड़ा करने की मेहनत के लिए उचित था।

कुछ वर्षों बाद, आर्थिक मंदी ने रवीश की स्टार्ट-अप कंपनी को वित्तीय संकट में डाल दिया। अब निवेशकों ने लाभप्रदता पर ध्यान केंद्रित करते हुए अपना समर्थन वापस ले लिया, जिससे रवीश पर व्यवसाय को बनाए रखने के लिए लागत में कटौती करने का अत्यधिक दबाव आ गया। परिणामस्वरूप, उसने कर्मचारियों की संख्या कम करने का फैसला किया और एक व्यक्तिगत वीडियो संदेश के माध्यम से अपने कर्मचारियों को इस निर्णय के बारे में सूचना दी।

वीडियो के रिलीज होने के कुछ ही घंटों के भीतर यह संदेश रवीश की दो महीने पहले हुई भ्रष्ट शादी की तस्वीरों के साथ सोशल मीडिया पर वायरल हो गया। लोगों ने रवीश की इस बात के लिए आलोचना की कि उसने एक तरफ तो बहुत बड़ी संख्या में कर्मचारियों को नौकरी से निकाल दिया, वहीं दूसरी तरफ अपनी विलासिता पूर्ण जीवनशैली का आनंद ले रहा था।

(a) दिए गए प्रकरण में शामिल नैतिक मुद्दे क्या हैं?

(b) उपर्युक्त प्रकरण के आलोक में, कॉर्पोरेट संगठनों में शीर्ष-स्तरीय नेताओं और उनके अधीनस्थों के बीच पारिष्पृष्टिक संबंधी असमानताओं से जुड़े नैतिक पहलुओं पर चर्चा कीजिए। (उत्तर 250 शब्दों में दीजिए)

Ravish, hailing from a modest background, worked diligently to gain admission to a prestigious university. After graduating with commendable academic credentials, he secured a well-paying job at a leading multinational company. Driven by ambition, he left the job after gaining a few years of experience to launch his own startup.

Thanks to the startup boom in the country, Ravish was able to secure significant capital from investors with relative ease. His hard work and dedication fueled the rapid growth and success of his startup.

However, as the company flourished, Ravish's extravagant lifestyle began to attract public attention. As the founder and CEO, he drew a substantial salary, believing it to be justified given his efforts in building the company from scratch.

A few years later, an economic downturn put Ravish's startup under financial strain. Investors, now focused on profitability, withdrew their support, leaving Ravish under immense pressure to cut costs in order to sustain the business. Consequently, he decided to downsize the workforce and communicated this decision through a personalized video message to his employees.

Within hours of the video's release, it went viral on social media, accompanied by images from Ravish's lavish wedding that had taken place just two months prior. The public criticized Ravish for his opulent lifestyle while simultaneously laying off a significant number of employees.

- (a) What are the ethical issues involved in the given case?
- (b) In light of the above case, discuss the ethical considerations regarding disparities in remuneration between top-level leaders and their subordinates in corporate organizations. (Answer in 250 words) 20

The above case revolves around insensitive leadership and poor employee relations practices in the current startup culture, especially in India.

② Ethical issues involved

- ① Insensitivity - with Ravish downsizing workforce over a video message rather than over personal talks.
- ② Extravagance - which is in stark contrast to traditional Indian value of minimalism.
- ③ Poor financial management - due to Ravish's opulence which put startup under financial strain in tough times.

④ Poor corporate governance - Not focussing on employees and only on profitability

⑤ Huge CEO-employee wage gap - with Ravish drawing substantial salary for extravagance.

⑥ Lack of emotional intelligence - in communication with employees

⑦ Poor risk management - which is responsible for funding crisis during funding winter.

⑧ Ethical considerations of disparity in CEO-employee remuneration in corporate organizations

① Indicates toxic work culture with top leaders being insensitive of employees.

② leads to only superficial loyalty towards organizations which causes subpar employee productivity

③ Employees might resort to quiet

quitting (working only required hours) without putting extra effort.

④ causes inequality and wealth concentration in only few hands

(Oxfam → 10% of Indians owning 77% of national wealth)
2022

⑤ Against the idea of socialism as propounded by Marx.

⑥ Violative of Kant's categorical imperative as CEO's merely use employees to maximize profits without giving back proportionately.

⑦ Might cause frictions between management and employees, hampering organizational productivity.

Therefore, top level leaders must strive to ensure equity in remunerations and lead a simple life (eg - Narayan and Sudha Murthy)

This will improve standard

of living and will be in line
with SDG 12 (Responsible Production
and Consumption)

VISION IAS

12.

विक्रम, जो एक वरिष्ठ डेटा वैज्ञानिक हैं, एक ई-कॉमर्स प्लेटफॉर्म के लिए आर्टिफिशियल इंटेलिजेंस (AI) सिस्टम विकसित करने वाली टीम का नेतृत्व कर रहे हैं। उसे उपयोगकर्ता के व्यवहार के आधार पर व्यक्तिगत सिफारिशें प्रदान करके ग्राहक अनुभव को बेहतर बनाना है।

इस परियोजना की सफलता न केवल कंपनी की संवृद्धि के लिए बल्कि विक्रम की टीम के लिए भी महत्वपूर्ण है, जो पिछले कुछ महीनों में खराब प्रदर्शन कर रही है। जोखिम बहुत बड़ा है और यदि टीम इस परियोजना को पूरा करने में विफल रहती है तो इसे निलंबित किया जा सकता है।

विक्रम की टीम AI एल्गोरिदम की सटीकता को सुधारने के लिए उपयोगकर्ताओं की खरीदारी का इतिहास, अवस्थिति के आंकड़े, स्वास्थ्य संबंधी रिकॉर्ड और सोशल मीडिया गतिविधियों सहित संवेदनशील व्यक्तिगत जानकारी को शामिल करने पर विचार कर रही है। यद्यपि इससे सिस्टम की प्रभावशीलता में काफी वृद्धि हो सकती है, लेकिन यह निजता और संवेदनशील डेटा के संभावित दुरुपयोग के बारे में चिंताएं भी उत्पन्न हो जाती हैं।

इसके अलावा, ई-कॉमर्स प्लेटफॉर्म पर पहले भी डेटा चोरी की घटना हो चुकी है और इससे हजारों उपयोगकर्ताओं की निजी जानकारी अनधिकृत संस्थाओं के लिए उजागर हो गई थी। इस घटना का व्यापक स्तर पर प्रचार हुआ, जिसके कारण कंपनी के खिलाफ विनियामक जांच और उचित कानूनी कार्रवाई की गई।

विक्रम पर कंपनी के विपणन विभाग द्वारा यह दबाव डाला गया है कि वह उपयोगकर्ता की निजता के बजाय राजस्व सृजन को प्राथमिकता दे। विपणन टीम ने सुझाव दिया कि ऐसी कार्यनीतियां लागू की जाएं जो उपयोगकर्ताओं को अधिक खरीदारी करने के लिए प्रोत्साहित करें, भले ही इसके लिए उनकी प्राथमिकताओं में हेरफेर करना पड़े या उनके बीच एक तरह की तात्कालिकता की भावना पैदा करनी पड़े।

- विक्रम द्वारा AI सिस्टम विकसित करते समय सामना किए जाने वाले नैतिक मुद्दों की पहचान कीजिए।
- इस मामले को सुलझाने के लिए विक्रम के पास कौन-कौन से विकल्प उपलब्ध हैं?
- नैतिकता AI सिस्टम का अभिन्न अंग कैसे बन सकती है? (उत्तर 250 शब्दों में दीजिए)

Vikram, a senior data scientist, is leading a team to develop an Artificial Intelligence (AI) system for a e-commerce platform. He has to enhance customer experience by providing personalized recommendations based on user behaviour.

The success of this project is critical not only for the company's growth but also for Vikram's team, which has been underperforming in the recent months. The stakes are high, and the team is at risk of suspension if it fails to deliver on this project.

To improve the accuracy of the AI algorithms, Vikram's team considers incorporating sensitive personal information, including users' purchasing history, location data, health records and social media activities. While this could significantly enhance the system's effectiveness, it raises concerns about privacy and the potential misuse of sensitive data.

Also, a data breach has occurred earlier on the e-commerce platform, and personal information of thousands of users was exposed to unauthorized entities. The incident became widely publicized, leading to regulatory scrutiny and potential legal action against the company.

Vikram faces pressure from the company's marketing department to prioritize revenue generation over user privacy. The marketing team suggests implementing tactics that subtly encourage users to make more purchases, even if it means manipulating their preferences or creating a sense of urgency.

- (a) Identify the ethical issues faced by Vikram in developing the AI system.
- (b) What are the options available to Vikram in addressing this case?
- (c) How can ethics be an integral component of AI systems? (Answer in 250 words) 20

The above case underscores the misuse of personal information that can be done by big corporates which is violative of Right to Privacy under Article 21.

① Ethical issues faced by Vikram

- ① Non-consensual data usage - that too sensitive personal information of the users.
- ② Violation of privacy - of individuals which is violation of fundamental rights as per Puttaswamy judgement.
- ③ Irresponsible management - causing data breach exposing sensitive information of public.
- ④ Poor corporate governance - in prioritization of revenue over people's privacy.

⑤ Usage of dark patterns - which goes against guidelines of Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI).

⑥ Options available to Vikram

Option 1 - Develop the AI system as demanded by the company.

Pros

- Helps in high revenue generation for company.

Cons

- Violation of user privacy.
- Possible legal action in case information leaks out.

Option 2 - Refuse to develop the AI system

Pros

- Privacy of users is protected.
- Unethical practices are avoided.

Cons

- Possible adverse actions including termination.
- Somebody might be assigned to develop the system.

Option 3 - Take senior management into confidence about perils of such systems and develop ethical AI system.

Pros

- Privacy of users protected
- No misuse of personal info.
- Company might frame guidelines for future.

Cons

- Company still insists on unethical practices
- lesser revenue generation for companies.

② Ethics as integral component of AI systems

① Taking informed consent of user before accessing personal data.

② Proportionality in accessing the data (i.e. access only whatever is required & permitted by user)

③ Taking steps to remove bias

from data to avoid mistraining
of AI systems.

(Eg - Classifying blacks as criminals
or Islamophobia)

④ Actively filtering out prompts
that are racist, sexist in nature
(Eg - Filters in Open AI systems)

⑤ Holding wider consultations to
share best practices in AI systems
training with other stakeholders.

Thus, the recent steps
of Bletchley AI summit and
New Delhi declaration in GPAI
are steps in right direction
towards responsible AI.