



## Mains Practice Question

### Case Study

Mr. Verma, a distinguished IAS officer, has been known for his integrity and commitment to public service. He has earned a reputation for effectively implementing various development projects and policies. Over the years, he has developed a deep understanding of the challenges the state faces, including corruption, inadequate healthcare, and educational facilities, and unemployment issues. Motivated by his strong sense of duty and a desire to bring about meaningful change, Mr. Verma decides to contest elections to address these issues at a political level.

However, the state government refuses to accept his resignation, arguing that his expertise and experience are critical for the ongoing development projects. They assert that allowing him to contest elections would disrupt the state's administrative stability.

A. What are the Ethical Issues involved in the Case?

B. What are the guidelines for Civil Servants when it comes to running in elections?

13 Oct, 2023 GS Paper 4 Case Studies

### Approach

- Start your answer by briefly explaining the case.
- List and describe the ethical dilemmas Mr. Verma is grappling with.
- Discuss the guidelines for Civil Servants when it comes to running in elections.
- You can conclude with a way forward approach.

### Introduction

- In the corridors of public service, Mr. Verma finds himself entangled in a web of moral and professional dilemmas that challenge the very essence of his role as a civil servant. With a steadfast personal commitment to serve the public interest and foster social change, Mr. Verma is confronted by the complex reality of adhering to the stringent rules and regulations of the civil service while respecting the authority of the state government.

### Body

#### A. Ethical issues in Mr. Verma's case:

- **Conflict of Interest:** Mr. Verma's dual roles as an IAS officer and a political candidate can lead to **conflicts between his public duties and personal ambitions**, potentially compromising his impartiality and decision-making.
- **Misuse of Government Resources:** There's a concern that Mr. Verma might use government resources, such as staff and facilities, for his political campaign, which could be unethical and misuse of taxpayer funds.
- **Undermining Public Service:** The state government's claim that Mr. Verma's expertise is **crucial for ongoing development projects** highlights the ethical dilemma of whether his

departure would disrupt public service delivery and development goals.

- **Public Trust and Accountability:** Mr. Verma's political aspirations may lead to perceptions of favoritism or political influence within the civil service, potentially eroding public trust and accountability in government agencies.
- **Fairness and Equal Opportunity:** The state government's refusal to accept Mr. Verma's **resignation could be seen as denying him a fair and equal opportunity to participate in the democratic process**, which raises questions about individual rights and democracy's principles.
- **Legal and Ethical Obligations:** Mr. Verma is **bound by ethical guidelines and a code of conduct as an IAS officer**. Balancing his legal responsibilities with his ethical obligations as a public servant is a key challenge.

## B. Guidelines for civil servants when it comes to running in elections:

- According to the Central Civil Services (Conduct) Rules, 1964, which are applicable to the central government civilian employees, no government servant, except with the prior approval of the government, can contest elections to any legislative or local authority.
  - The rules also state that government employees cannot:
    - Canvass for any candidate in an election
    - Use their influence in connection with an election
    - Hold an elective office
- The same rule applies to the All India Services (IAS, IPS, and IFoS), which are governed by the All India Services (Conduct) Rules, 1968.
- If a government servant violates these rules, his election may be treated as illegal and he may have to relinquish his elected post. The competent disciplinary authority may also take disciplinary action against him and impose appropriate penalties prescribed under CCS (CCA) Rules, 1965.
- The civil servants who want to contest elections have to resign from their service before filing their nomination papers. They also have to follow the Model Code of Conduct issued by the Election Commission of India during the election period.

## Conclusion

Mr. Verma faces a difficult ethical and professional challenge. The key is to carefully consider the potential consequences of his actions, engage in open communication with relevant parties, and seek a balanced approach that best serves the interests of the public, the democratic process, and his own values as an ethical leader in the civil service.