



## Ethical Quandary in the Indian Forest Services

Neha Kapoor is an Indian Forest Services (IFS) officer, who has been assigned to oversee the development of a tourism project in a renowned Tiger Reserve in southern India. The project, funded by a prominent tourism conglomerate, promised to bring economic benefits to the impoverished local communities while also raising awareness about the importance of wildlife conservation.

During her tenure, Neha uncovered evidence of unethical practices by the tourism company where it was engaging in activities that violated environmental regulations and endangered the wildlife.

The tourism company had constructed luxury accommodations and infrastructure deep within the reserve, encroaching upon critical habitats of endangered species. There was also strong evidence to suggest that the company's staff were involved in aiding and abetting poaching activities for the illegal wildlife trade.

However, despite all the evidence against the company, Neha decided to conceal the wrongdoings of the company, believing that the tourism project had indeed brought much-needed economic opportunities to the local communities, including jobs and improved infrastructure and shutting it down could lead to economic hardship for these communities.

Also, exposing the company's illegal activities would jeopardise her own career due to the company's owner's political reach but doing otherwise would result in monetary gains for her. Thus, Neha decides against exposing the company and remains quiet.

What do you think would have been the repercussions had Neha considered alternative approaches to address the issues and how Neha's decision might have impacted her career, and her relationships with local communities?