



Mains Practice Question

Case Studies

Mohan is a young civil servant and has a reputation for his competence, integrity, dedication and relentless pursuit of difficult and onerous jobs. Considering his profile, he was picked up by his bosses to handle a very challenging and sensitive assignment.

He was posted in a tribal-dominated district notorious for illegal sand mining. Excavating sand from the river belt and transporting it through trucks and selling them in black market was rampant. This illegal sand mining mafia was operating with the support of local functionaries and tribal musclemen who in turn were bribing selected poor tribals and had kept the tribal under fear and intimidation.

Mohan being a sharp and energetic officer immediately grasped the ground realities and the modus operandi followed by the mafia through their devious and dubious mechanism. On making inquiries, he gathered that some of their own office employees are hand in glove with them and have developed a close unholy nexus.

Mohan initiated stringent action against them and started conducting raids on their illegal operations of movement of trucks filled with sand. The mafia got rattled as not many officers in the past had taken such strong steps against the mafia. Some of the office employees who were allegedly close to the mafia informed them that the office is determined to clean up the mafia's illegal sand mining operations in that district and may cause them irreparable damage. The mafia turned hostile and launched a counter-offensive.

The tribal musclemen and mafia started threatening him with dire consequences. His family (wife, and old mother) were stalked and were under virtual surveillance and thus causing mental torture, agony and stress to all of them. The matter assumed serious proportions when a muscle man came to his office and threatened him to stop raids, etc., otherwise, his fate will not be different from some of his predecessors (ten years back one officer was killed by the mafia)

- (a) Identify the different options available to Mohan in attending to this situation.
- (b) Critically evaluate each of the options by you.
- (c) Among the options provided, which do you believe would be the most suitable?

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Approach

- Begin the answer by mentioning precisely the facts of the case study.
- Discuss different options available to Mohan in attending to this situation.
- Critically evaluate each of the options listed.
- Conclude as per the demand of case study.

Introduction

Mohan, a young civil servant known for his competence and integrity, faces a daunting challenge in a tribal-dominated district plagued by rampant illegal sand mining. As he initiates strict action against the mafia behind this illicit activity, he and his family become targets of threats and intimidation.

Facts of the Case Study:

- Mohan is a competent and dedicated civil servant assigned to tackle illegal sand mining in a tribal-dominated district.
- The illegal sand mining mafia operates with the support of local functionaries, tribal musclemen, and corrupt office employees.
- Mohan's actions against the mafia lead to threats against him and his family, including stalking and intimidation.

Stakeholders Involved:

- **Mohan:** Represents the administration's integrity and commitment to law enforcement.
- **Illegal Sand Mining Mafia:** Engages in unlawful activities for profit, resisting Mohan's efforts to curb their operations.
- **Local Functionaries and Corrupt Office Employees:** Collude with the mafia, hindering Mohan's enforcement efforts.
- **Tribal Population:** Directly affected by illegal sand mining and may be coerced or incentivized by the mafia.
- **Mohan's Family:** Subjected to threats and surveillance, facing mental distress due to the situation.
- **Public Interest:** Upholding the rule of law and protecting natural resources from exploitation.

Ethical Issues:

- **Integrity and Accountability:** Mohan faces pressure to compromise his integrity or risk harm to himself and his family.
- **Rule of Law:** Balancing law enforcement with personal safety amidst threats and intimidation.
- **Protection of Vulnerable Populations:** Ensuring the welfare of tribal communities exploited by the mafia.
- **Conflict of Interest:** Dealing with corrupt colleagues within the administration while upholding ethical standards.
- **Consequences of Inaction:** Failing to address illegal activities perpetuates environmental degradation and undermines governance credibility.

Options Available to Mohan:

- **Continue Raids and Enforcement Actions:**
 - **Pros:** Upholds the rule of law, sends a message of deterrence to the mafia, and protects public interest.
 - **Cons:** Heightens personal risk and exposes Mohan's family to danger.
- **Seek Assistance from Higher Authorities:**
 - **Pros:** Mobilizes additional resources and support for enforcement efforts.
 - **Cons:** May not guarantee immediate protection for Mohan and his family, risking further escalation.
- **Undercover Operations and Surveillance:**
 - **Pros:** Gathers evidence against the mafia while minimizing direct confrontation.
 - **Cons:** Requires extensive resources and time, and may not eliminate immediate threats to Mohan and his family.
- **Community Engagement and Awareness Campaigns:**
 - **Pros:** Mobilizes public support against the mafia, empowering tribal communities.
 - **Cons:** Vulnerable to infiltration or coercion by the mafia, and may not address immediate security concerns.

Critical Evaluation of Options:

- **Continuing Enforcement Actions:** While essential for upholding the rule of law, it exposes Mohan and his family to significant risks, requiring careful consideration of their safety.
- **Seeking Assistance from Higher Authorities:** Provides additional support but may not offer immediate protection, necessitating a balance between urgency and procedural considerations.
- **Undercover Operations:** Effective in gathering evidence, but resource-intensive and potentially prolongs Mohan's vulnerability.
- **Community Engagement:** Empowers tribal communities but requires cautious implementation to prevent retaliation from the mafia.

Most Suitable Option

- Considering the urgency of the situation and the need to protect Mohan and his family, seeking immediate assistance from higher authorities appears to be the most suitable option.
- This approach combines enforcement actions with enhanced security measures, leveraging institutional support to address both the immediate threats and the underlying issue of illegal sand mining.

Conclusion

Mohan's predicament highlights the complex ethical and practical challenges faced by civil servants in confronting entrenched criminal networks. By carefully evaluating available options and prioritizing the safety of all stakeholders, Mohan can navigate this crisis while upholding the principles of integrity, accountability, and public service.

PDF Reference URL: <https://www.drishtiias.com/mains-practice-question/question-8224/pnt>

