

Course of action

| | Step | Reason |
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| 1. | Initiate a rescue operation and ensuring the availability of food, medicines and drinking water. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Preventing loss of lives should be of utmost priority. ▪ Children and women are the worst sufferers of any such disaster. They need to be immediately rescued. ▪ District Magistrate must have responsibility to ensure supply of all essential materials. |
| 2. | Assessing the severity of the situation and reaching out to disaster response forces. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ State Disaster Response Force (SDRF)/National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) have appropriate experience of handling flood situations. |
| 3. | Persuading locals not to protest and cooperate with government officials. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Making the locals understand that immediate need is to rescue the stranded people. ▪ Local youth can help in locating stranded people. ▪ They can even help in calming down others with no confidence on government due to corruption allegations. |
| 4. | Forming a Special Investigation Team (SIT) to look into charges of corruption. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Knowing and understanding of the facts would help in pursuing the case further. ▪ SIT report can be used in subverting any political pressure. |
| 5. | Taking strict action against wrongdoers. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ People involved must be identified and held accountable for failure of the embankment. |
| 6. | Flood prevention, mitigation and adaptation. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Since the area is in the flood-prone region, it is the administration's duty to make it safer for the people. |

Dimensions of the crisis

Ethical dimensions:

- **Denial of justice:** Lives of people get completely devastated by the loss of their homes and livelihood due to floods. No monetary amount can compensate for the **sorrow and grief of their loss.**
- **Lack of compassion and respect for human lives:** The urge for monetary benefits and **profit motives** becomes so huge that a person (contractor/politician) can put lives of millions at risk by indulging in petty corruption.
- **Loss of faith in leaders:** People elect their leaders so that they can become their voice and address their grievances. Nexus between people's representatives and contractors render people helpless.

Legal dimensions:

- **Corruption:** Allegations of corruption and putting pressure on the District Magistrate is complete dereliction of duty by political leaders.
- **Governance failure:** It is not just a **failure of government** to take timely measures in preventing a disaster in flood prone area but also a **failure of civil society** which could not

initiate timely actions despite having knowledge of the delay in project completion, violations of rules and misuse of funds.

- **Politicization of bureaucracy:** The District Magistrate facing political pressure expecting him to cover up the issue indicates a defunct **culture of quid pro quo** in the country's governance system.

Measures to deal with the crisis

- The District Magistrate must show **spirit of service** and **conviction** to ensure **justice** to the people. He must work tirelessly for their rescue and rehabilitation and ensuring that strict action is taken against the culprits.
- **Ensuring legal justice** by ensuring that those guilty must be punished. Contractor and politicians involved must face trial in a court of law.
- Taking **confidence building measures** to regain the trust **of people** on the government. Special schemes should be initiated for creating livelihood opportunities and for the education of children affected by floods.
- Long term measures for **flood prevention, mitigation and adaptation** should be taken. Embankments and flood resistant structures must be built after scientific analysis.
- Local people must be made aware about their rights and sense of duty towards ensuring good governance. '**Citizen centric governance**' must be the way forward as recommended by **the 2nd ARC report**. Mechanisms like social audits should be made mandatory for such projects.

PDF Reference URL: <https://www.drishtias.com/printpdf/case-study-18-corruption-nexus-versus-call-of-duty>

