



Mains Practice Question

Case Studies

As District Magistrate, you are presented with two competing proposals for a large development project in your district: A modern industrial complex promising significant economic growth and employment, and a wildlife sanctuary aimed at protecting endangered species and preserving ecological balance. Both projects will require land acquisition and displacement of local communities. Additionally, the industrial complex raises concerns about potential environmental pollution.

- A. Discuss the ethical dilemmas involved in choosing between these two seemingly incompatible projects.
- B. Outline a framework for making an ethically sound decision, considering the principles of public good, sustainability, justice, and transparency.

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Approach

- Write a brief introduction about the establishment of an industrial complex and associated environmental problems.
- Mention the ethical dilemmas and the framework for making sound decisions.
- Write a conclusion.

Introduction

The establishment of a modern industrial complex brings with it the potential for environmental pollution, presenting a critical consideration for the District Magistrate. The industrial activities associated with the complex, such as manufacturing processes, waste disposal, and emissions, may pose risks to air, water, and soil quality.

Body

a) Balancing Dilemmas in Decision-Making:

- **Utilitarianism vs. Rights:**
 - Choosing the industrial complex for economic growth may benefit the majority but might infringe on the rights of the displaced minority. Opting for a wildlife sanctuary protects rights but potentially hampers the well-being of those dependent on development.
- **Justice vs. Common Good:**
 - The industrial complex, promoting prosperity, may result in injustice to marginalized groups. Conversely, the wildlife sanctuary upholds justice but might limit overall societal progress.
- **Sustainability vs. Short-Term Gains:**
 - The industrial complex's short-term gains may compromise future sustainability, while the wildlife sanctuary ensures long-term benefits at the expense of immediate development needs.
- **Job Creation vs. Displacement:**

- Both projects necessitate land acquisition, displacing local communities. The industrial complex might offer job opportunities, but disruption to established livelihoods and cultural significance of land needs careful consideration.

b) Framework for Ethical Decision-Making:

- To make an informed and ethical decision, the following principles can be considered:
 - **Public Good:** Both projects claim to serve the public good, but it's vital to determine which benefits a wider range of stakeholders in the long term. A cost-benefit analysis that encompasses economic, social, and environmental factors is essential.
 - **Sustainability:** Prioritize long-term ecological sustainability. Can the industrial complex operate within environmental limits without significant damage? Assess the project's environmental impact assessment and explore mitigation strategies.
 - **Justice:** Ensure justice for all stakeholders, particularly the displaced communities. Conduct participatory assessments to understand their concerns and explore resettlement options that minimize disadvantages and maximize benefits.
 - **Transparency:** Maintain an open and transparent decision-making process. Involve affected communities, environmental experts, and relevant authorities in discussions and ensure access to information.

Conclusion

Choosing between the industrial complex and wildlife sanctuary requires careful consideration of ethical principles, balancing economic aspirations with environmental protection and social justice. By employing a sound decision-making framework, actively engaging stakeholders, and drawing upon relevant legal frameworks, the District Magistrate can strive for a solution that ensures long-term well-being for both the environment and the community.

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