Ethics & Morality · GS - IV

“Corruption causes misuse of government treasury, administrative inefficiency and obstruction in the path of national development.” Discuss Kautilya’s views.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
2016	GS - IV	Ethics & Morality

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

Kautilya; Arthashastra; public treasury; corruption; administrative vigilance; accountability; punishment; ethical administration; national development

Model Answer

Introduction

Kautilya's *Arthashastra* recognised corruption as a serious threat to the treasury, administrative efficiency and the welfare of the state.

Kautilya's Views

Kautilya observed that officials handling public funds could misappropriate resources in numerous ways, making supervision and accountability essential.

- **Financial integrity:** Public revenue must be collected and spent for legitimate state purposes.
- **Monitoring officials:** Regular audits, inspections and verification can expose embezzlement and misuse of authority.
- **Punishment:** Proportionate penalties deter corruption and reinforce discipline.
- **Merit and supervision:** Competent appointments and oversight improve administrative performance.
- **Public welfare:** Resources diverted through corruption weaken infrastructure, security and welfare services, obstructing development.

Kautilya also recognised the difficulty of detecting dishonesty, highlighting the need for systematic checks rather than reliance on personal assurances alone.

Contemporary Relevance

Digital payments, transparent procurement, social audits and independent vigilance institutions reflect similar principles of financial accountability.

Conclusion

Kautilya's emphasis on supervision, deterrence and protection of public revenue remains relevant. Corruption control requires strong institutions, transparent procedures and ethical public servants.

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