# Ethics & Morality · GS - IV

**Shakespeare in Henry IV says, "The arms are fair when the intent of bearing them is just". What ethical implications does this have in governance?**

| EXAM YEAR | PAPER | SUBJECT |
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| 2026 | GS - IV | Ethics & Morality |

| MARKS | WORD LIMIT |
|---|---|
| 10 | ~150 words |

## Answer Hint

**Just intention, means and ends, legitimate authority, proportionality, public interest, coercive power, accountability**

## Model Answer

### Introduction

The statement suggests that the ethical legitimacy of power depends significantly upon the purpose for which it is exercised. In governance, however, just ends cannot automatically justify every means.

### 1. Legitimate Purpose

State authority, including coercive powers, may ethically be used to protect citizens, uphold constitutional order and secure justice.

### 2. Ethical Means

Even with a legitimate objective, actions must remain lawful, proportionate, necessary and respectful of human dignity. Excessive force or arbitrary authority cannot become ethical merely because the stated objective is desirable.

### 3. Public Interest

Governance should distinguish genuine public interest from interests presented as public welfare to justify arbitrary action.

**4. Accountability**

Independent oversight, judicial review, transparency and institutional checks ensure that power is not misused.

**Conclusion**

The ethical exercise of governmental power requires convergence of just intention, legitimate authority and ethical means. Good governance therefore demands both righteous purpose and responsible conduct.

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