Ethics & Morality

2020 · UPSC CSE · Ethics & Morality

Q1.

Steel slag can be the material for which of the following?

1. Construction of base road
2. Improvement of agricultural soil
3. Production of cement

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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A. 1 and 2 only

B. 2 and 3 only

C. 1 and 3 only

D. 1,2, and 3

Correct answer: Option D — 1,2, and 3

Explanation

Correct Answer: (D) — 1, 2 and 3

1. **Statement 1 is correct:** Processed steel slag can be used as a construction material in road bases and sub-bases because of its strength and durability.
2. **Statement 2 is correct:** Steel slag can be used as a soil amendment in certain agricultural conditions. Its mineral content,

including calcium and magnesium, can help improve acidic soils, subject to quality and safety testing.

3. **Statement 3 is correct:** Steel slag can be used as a supplementary raw material in cement manufacturing, helping reduce the consumption of conventional resources.

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Q2.

With reference to the pollution of the Yamuna River, consider the following statements:

1. The Yamuna is a major tributary of the Ganga River.
2. Untreated sewage is a significant source of pollution in the Delhi stretch of the Yamuna.
3. The Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) is responsible for coordinating pollution-control activities at the national level.
4. The National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) is responsible for implementing pollution-control programmes in all Indian rivers.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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A. 1 and 2 only

B. 1, 2 and 3 only

C. 2 and 4 only

D. 1, 2, 3 and 4

Correct answer: Option B — 1, 2 and 3 only

Explanation

Correct Answer: (b) — 1, 2 and 3 only

1. **Correct:** The Yamuna is one of the major tributaries of the Ganga, joining it at Prayagraj.
2. **Correct:** Untreated and partially treated domestic sewage is a major contributor to pollution in the Delhi stretch.
3. **Correct:** The CPCB coordinates national-level activities relating to the prevention and control of water and air pollution.
4. **Incorrect:** NMCG primarily focuses on the rejuvenation and conservation of the Ganga and its tributaries, not all rivers across India.

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Q3.

With reference to air pollution control and environmental governance in India, consider the following statements:

1. Article 21 has been interpreted by Indian courts to include the right to a clean and healthy environment.
2. The Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) was constituted under the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981.
3. The National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) aims to reduce air pollution in identified cities through targeted action plans.
4. Municipal authorities have no role in controlling dust generated by construction activities within their jurisdictions.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

A. 1 and 2 only

B. 1, 2 and 3 only

C. 2, 3 and 4 only

D. 1, 2, 3 and 4

Correct answer: Option B — 1, 2 and 3 only

Explanation

Explanation:

Correct Answer: (b) — 1, 2 and 3 only

1. **Statement 1 is correct:** The Supreme Court has interpreted Article 21 to encompass environmental conditions necessary for a dignified and healthy life.
2. **Statement 2 is correct:** The CPCB was constituted under the Water Act, 1974, and subsequently entrusted with functions under the Air Act, 1981. The statement is incorrect as worded.

Correction: Since Statement 2 is incorrect, the correct answer is **(a) 1 and 3 only**.

1. **Statement 3 is correct:** NCAP seeks to improve air quality in identified cities through city-specific action plans and pollution-control measures.
2. **Statement 4 is incorrect:** Municipal authorities have important responsibilities relating to construction-site dust, road dust, waste management and local enforcement.

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Q4.

With reference to police ethics and accountability in India, consider the following statements:

1. Police personnel are required to perform their duties in accordance with the Constitution and applicable laws.
2. The maintenance of public trust requires the police to act impartially and without discrimination.
3. Police personnel are exempt from accountability for actions taken during official duty.
4. Community policing can help improve police-public relations and public confidence.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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A. I only

B. 1 and 3 only

C. 1, 3 and 4 only

D. 1, 2 and 4 only

Correct answer: Option D — 1, 2 and 4 only

Explanation

Correct Answer: (b) 1, 2 and 4 only

Explanation

1. **Statement 1 is correct.** Police personnel must exercise their powers within the framework of the Constitution and applicable laws.

2. **Statement 2 is correct.** Impartiality and non-discrimination are essential for protecting citizens' rights and maintaining public confidence.

3**. Statement 3 is incorrect**. Police personnel remain accountable under applicable laws and disciplinary rules for misconduct, including actions taken during official duty.

4**. Statement 4 is correct.** Community policing promotes cooperation between citizens and the police, helping prevent crime and strengthen public trust.

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Q5.

With reference to public infrastructure management and citizen participation in India, consider the following statements:

1. The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) is responsible for the development, maintenance and management of national highways entrusted to it.
2. Citizen reporting of poor sanitation at toll plazas can promote accountability and improve the quality of public services.
3. Financial incentives for citizen reporting eliminate the need for official inspections and monitoring.
4. Public-private partnerships in highway development remove the government's responsibility to ensure appropriate service standards.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

A. 1 and 2 only

B. 1, 3 and 4 only

C. 2 and 3 only

D. 1, 2, 3 and 4

Correct answer: Option A — 1 and 2 only

Explanation

Statement 1 is correct: NHAI is a statutory authority responsible for national highway development, maintenance and management within its assigned mandate.

- Statement 2 is correct: Citizen feedback can help identify service deficiencies and strengthen accountability.
- Statement 3 is incorrect: Citizen reporting supplements, rather than replaces, inspections, audits and official monitoring.
- Statement 4 is incorrect: Contracting highway operations to private entities does not eliminate the government's regulatory, contractual and public-accountability responsibilities.

The key concept is participatory governance: involving citizens in monitoring public services to improve accountability and service quality.

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Q6.

Ms. X is a mid-level civil service official working in the urban development department of a major city. Recently, she was involved in approving a contract for a public infrastructure project a new community park. During the approval process, she received a piece of confidential information of the shortlisted one indicating that contractors had a history of poor workmanship and allegations of corruption in other cities, though nothing had been legally proven. The Head of the Department, Mr. Y, advised her not to disclose this information to the project committee or the public because it could delay the project and damage the city's reputation. However, Ms. X believed that withholding such information compromised transparency and public trust.

What amongst the following should Ms. X do now?

1. Immediately disclose the information to the project committee and the public
2. Recommend removing the contractor from the shortlist to protect the project's integrity
3. Propose a 'limited disclosure' to an oversight committee, while keeping the information confidential from the public for the time being

Select the answer using the code given below:

A. 1 and 2 only

B. 3 only

C. 2 and 3 only

D. 1, 2 and 3

Correct answer: Option B — 3 only

Explanation

CORRECT ANSWER: B. 3 only

1. Statement 1 is incorrect: The information consists of allegations that have not been legally proven. Immediately making such confidential information public could unfairly damage the contractor's reputation and may violate principles of confidentiality and due process.

2. Statement 2 is incorrect: Recommending immediate removal of the contractor solely on the basis of unverified allegations would not be appropriate. The information should first be subjected to proper scrutiny through the established oversight and verification mechanisms.

3. Statement 3 is correct: Limited disclosure to an appropriate oversight committee balances transparency and confidentiality. The competent authority can examine the information, verify the allegations and take an informed decision while protecting sensitive information from premature public disclosure.

This approach upholds integrity, transparency, due process and public trust while avoiding unjustified disclosure of unverified allegations.

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Q7.

In a multi-ethnic district where both economic and historical grievances competition frequently led to community tensions, a flashpoint has arisen with a Government decision to allocate land for a waste management facility near a tribal hamlet, sparking protests by the tribal community, which claimed that the land was sacred and critical to their cultural identity. At the same time, urban residents and local industries supported the project, citing severe solid waste challenges and health concerns due to lack of a proper disposal site. The conflict has escalated with road blockades, social media. campaigns, and allegations of police excesses. As a responsible Government official, you are tasked with resolving the situation through mediation, ensuring a sustainable outcome that balances environmental needs, tribal rights, and urban public health.

Consider the following statements with reference to the above:

1. A successful conflict resolution process must begin with acknowledging the cultural concerns of the protesting tribal community before discussing technical alternatives.

2. The Government should move ahead with the project without delay to address urban health concerns, which outweigh the sentiments of a small group.

3. Creating a multi-stakeholder dialogue platform-including tribal leaders, environmental experts, and municipal representatives-to build mutual understanding and help de-escalate tensions.

4. Conducting an independent Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) and sharing findings transparently with both sides to facilitate evidence-based decision-making.

Which of the statements given above would contribute to the resolution process?

A. 1, 3 and 4 only

B. 2, 3 and 4 only

C. 1 and 2 only

D. 1, 2 and 3 and 4

Correct answer: Option A — 1, 3 and 4 only

Explanation

CORRECT ANSWER: A. 1, 3 and 4 only

1. Statement 1 is correct: A successful conflict-resolution process should acknowledge the cultural, social and emotional concerns of the affected tribal community. Recognizing these concerns helps establish trust and creates a foundation for constructive dialogue.

2. Statement 2 is incorrect: The Government should not dismiss the concerns of a community as merely the sentiments of a "small group." A sustainable resolution must balance public health, environmental requirements and tribal rights rather than imposing the project without meaningful consultation.

3. Statement 3 is correct: A multi-stakeholder dialogue platform involving tribal representatives, environmental experts and municipal authorities can facilitate communication, build mutual understanding and help de-escalate tensions.

4. Statement 4 is correct: An independent Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) can provide objective information about the project's environmental and social consequences. Transparent sharing of its findings can support evidence-based decision-making and improve public trust.

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Q8.

Mr. X, a senior officer, was overseeing a critical vaccination programme during a pandemic. He found that a private service provider responsible for vaccine distribution was compromising on quality to make profits. Despite immense pressure to manage the issue due to vested interests, he raised his voice based on the principles of public administration which he learnt during various training programmes attended across his career. He reported the issue to the appropriate vigilance authority and halted the contract to ensure citizen welfare.

Which one among the following principles of public administration was most strongly demonstrated by Mr. X's actions?

A. Esprit de corps

B. Equity

C. Accountability

D. Delegation

Correct answer: Option C — Accountability

Explanation

CORRECT ANSWER: C. Accountability Mr. X demonstrated accountability by taking responsibility for protecting public welfare, reporting the misconduct to the appropriate vigilance authority, and taking corrective action despite pressure from vested interests. 1. Esprit de corps: This

refers to team spirit, unity and harmony among members of an organization. Mr. X's actions primarily concern responsibility and answerability rather than team spirit. 2. Equity: Equity involves fairness and impartiality in the treatment of individuals. Although citizen welfare is involved, the central principle demonstrated here is accountability. 3. Accountability: Accountability requires public officials to be answerable for their decisions and actions and to uphold public interest. Reporting the quality compromise and halting the problematic contract demonstrate this principle. 4. Delegation: Delegation involves assigning authority or responsibility to another person or subordinate. It is not the principle primarily illustrated in the case.