Ethics & Morality · GS - IV

Rajapuram is a border district. Jhara and Biru, its two major communities are in continual conflict with each other. The social fabric is fractured and demands mending.

Ethnic tensions between the two communities have erupted into violence resulting in a large number of deaths. The stated causes are conflicting land claims, uneven resource allocation and inadequate political representation in government bodies. Separate relief camps had to be created for the two communities. The situation is volatile and appears to be getting out of control.

Rajan has been appointed the District Magistrate (DM) of Rajapuram and tasked to quickly get the situation under control. His immediate tasks include restoring administrative authority, reopening the highway and initiating peace talks. On taking over his appointment, Rajan realized that the inter-community rivalry had even seeped into the local administration and police. With functional neutrality being the immediate casualty, it had made both communities distrustful of the government. The neighbouring country could utilize the opportunity to spur insurgent activity and further aggravate the situation.
Rajan favoured a controlled approach starting with opening the highway to restore food and medical supplies. He toyed with the idea of requisitioning CRPF units to help restore administrative control.

(a) Discuss the ethical issues that need to be addressed in this case.

(b) What are the options open to Rajan? Which option would ensure protection of his non-partisan image without compromising ethics?

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
2026	GS - IV	Ethics & Morality

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
20	~250 words

Answer Hint

Neutrality, impartiality, public order, humanitarian relief, communal harmony, rule of law, proportionality, trust, national security, reconciliation

Model Answer

1. Ethical Issues

Rajan must balance restoration of public order with protection of life and dignity. The compromised neutrality of local administration and police creates a serious crisis of institutional trust. Unequal resource allocation, land disputes and political exclusion further raise questions of distributive and procedural justice.

The border location also creates a national-security dimension, but security concerns must not become justification for collective punishment or discrimination.

2. Options

Rajan can rely solely on existing local forces, immediately deploy central forces, or adopt a phased approach combining humanitarian relief, impartial policing and calibrated deployment of additional forces.

3. Recommended Course

Rajan should first restore essential supplies and reopen the highway under neutral security arrangements. Where local neutrality is compromised, requisitioning CRPF assistance is justified to protect civilians and restore

administrative control, provided its deployment remains proportionate and accountable.

Simultaneously, he should separate conflicted personnel from sensitive duties, establish equal relief arrangements, document decisions transparently and initiate dialogue with both communities through respected intermediaries.

4. Long-Term Resolution

An impartial inquiry into land and resource grievances, fair political representation and community reconciliation mechanisms are essential.

Conclusion

Rajan's non-partisan image will be protected not by avoiding decisive action, but by ensuring that every action is lawful, proportionate, transparent and equally applied to both communities.

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