Ethics & Morality · GS - IV

You are the head of the Human Resources department of an organisation. One day one of the workers died on duty. His family was demanding compensation. However, the company denied compensation because it was revealed in investigation that he was drunk at the time of the accident. The workers of the company went to strike demanding compensation for the family of the deceased. The Chairman of the management board has asked for your recommendation.

What recommendation would you provide the management?

Discuss the merits and demerits of each of the recommendations.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
2017	GS - IV	Ethics & Morality

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
20	~250 words

Answer Hint

Human dignity; workplace safety; employee welfare; legal liability; corporate responsibility; compassion; impartial investigation; industrial relations; compensation; ethical decision-making

Model Answer

Introduction

The case involves employee safety, the deceased worker's conduct, the family's welfare and the organisation's legal and ethical responsibilities. The decision should be evidence-based, compassionate and consistent with applicable law.

Recommendations to Management

1. Verify the Investigation

An independent review should establish the cause of the accident, the worker's level of intoxication, workplace safety compliance and whether negligence by management contributed.

2. Provide Legally Entitled Compensation

The company should fulfil all statutory obligations and applicable insurance commitments. Intoxication should not be treated as automatically eliminating every possible liability; the relevant law and facts must be examined.

3. Consider Humanitarian Assistance

Even where statutory compensation is legally unavailable, management may consider lawful ex gratia support, insurance facilitation and assistance to the family.

4. Resolve the Strike Through Dialogue

Management should communicate findings transparently, consult worker representatives and agree on preventive measures. Disciplinary action should follow due process.

Merits and Demerits

- **Strict denial of compensation:** May reinforce workplace rules, but risks injustice if liability is misunderstood and can deepen industrial conflict.
- **Full compensation without investigation:** Offers immediate relief and may restore trust, but could disregard legal requirements and weaken safety accountability.
- **Evidence-based legal settlement with humanitarian support:** Balances fairness, compliance and compassion, although it may involve additional costs and negotiation.

Conclusion

I would recommend a lawful, impartial investigation, payment of all legally due benefits and reasonable humanitarian assistance. Prevention through safety training and strict workplace alcohol policies is equally essential.