Ethics & Morality · GS - IV

“The concept of Just and Unjust is contextual. What was just a year back, may turn out to be unjust in today's context. Changing context should be constantly under scrutiny to prevent miscarriage of justice.” Examine the above statement with suitable examples.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
2024	GS - IV	Ethics & Morality

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

Justice, contextual morality, changing social norms, constitutional values, dynamic interpretation, human dignity, social justice, miscarriage of justice

Model Answer

Introduction

Justice is not always static because social values, knowledge, technology and constitutional understandings evolve. Therefore, laws and institutions must periodically examine whether existing practices continue to satisfy contemporary standards of fairness.

Body

What was once considered acceptable may become unjust when society develops a deeper understanding of **equality and human dignity**. Historical discrimination based on caste, race or gender illustrates how social practices can be legally tolerated yet morally questioned.

Similarly, technological developments create new contexts. Data collection that was once regarded as a routine administrative activity is now examined through the lens of privacy and informational autonomy.

The evolution of legal understanding regarding gender equality, disability rights and environmental protection demonstrates that justice can acquire new dimensions over time.

However, contextual justice should not mean arbitrary or majoritarian justice. Constitutional morality, fundamental rights, due process and judicial review provide stable principles against which changing circumstances should be assessed.

A civil servant must therefore remain sensitive to changing social realities while acting within constitutional and legal boundaries.

Conclusion

Justice requires both **principled continuity and contextual sensitivity**. Constant review of laws, policies and administrative practices helps reconcile established rules with evolving conceptions of dignity, equality and fairness and thereby reduces the possibility of miscarriage of justice.

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