Ethics & Morality · GS - IV

‘International aid’ is an accepted form of helping ‘resource-challenged’ nations. Comment on ‘ethics in contemporary international aid’. Support your answer with suitable examples.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
2023	GS - IV	Ethics & Morality

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

International aid should be guided by humanity, justice, solidarity and respect for the sovereignty and dignity of recipient nations. Ethical aid must be needs-based, transparent and accountable, without creating political dependence, conditionality-driven coercion or diversion of resources.

Model Answer

Introduction:

International aid reflects the ethical principle of solidarity, whereby countries with greater resources assist nations facing poverty, disasters, conflict or developmental constraints. However, its ethical character depends on how and why aid is provided.

Ethical Dimensions of International Aid:

Aid should prioritise **human dignity and humanitarian need** rather than strategic interests. Assistance must be non-discriminatory and reach vulnerable populations without political manipulation.

Transparency and accountability are essential to prevent corruption and diversion. Donor countries should also respect the **sovereignty, local priorities and cultural context** of recipient nations.

At the same time, excessive conditionality can convert aid into an instrument of geopolitical influence. For instance, humanitarian assistance after natural disasters reflects genuine solidarity, whereas aid tied primarily to securing strategic concessions raises ethical concerns.

Aid should therefore promote **self-reliance and capacity-building** rather than permanent dependency. Technology transfer, education and infrastructure support can create sustainable development.

Conclusion:

Ethical international aid should move from a **charity-based approach to a partnership-based approach**, combining compassion with accountability, dignity, sustainability and respect for national autonomy.

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