Ethics & Morality · GS - IV

“Judge your success by what you had to give up in order to get it.” — Dalai Lama

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
2022	GS - IV	Ethics & Morality

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

The quotation asks us to assess success not merely through wealth, position or recognition, but through the values, relationships and well-being sacrificed in its pursuit. Genuine success balances ambition with integrity, compassion, health and responsibility towards others.

Model Answer

Introduction

The quotation challenges materialistic measures of success by emphasising the sacrifices and moral costs involved in achieving it.

Meaning and Interpretation

Professional advancement or wealth may appear successful, but its true worth depends on how it was achieved. If success requires dishonesty, exploitation, damaged relationships or abandonment of ethical principles, its moral value is questionable.

For example, an officer who obtains promotion through favouritism may gain status but lose integrity and public trust. Conversely, an officer who refuses corruption may face short-term professional difficulties while preserving self-respect and credibility.

However, the quotation does not suggest that all sacrifice is undesirable. Dedication, hard work and temporary personal inconvenience may be necessary for meaningful achievements. The distinction lies between constructive sacrifice and surrendering essential values or human dignity.

Conclusion

Success should be measured through both achievement and the means used to attain it. Lasting success combines competence and ambition with integrity, balanced living and concern for others.