Ethics & Morality · GS - IV

Ramesh is State Civil Services Officer who got the opportunity of getting posted to the capital of a border State after rendering 20 years of service. Ramesh's mother has recently been detected cancer and has been admitted in the leading cancer hospital of the city. His two adolescent children have also got admission in one of the best public schools of the town. After settling down in his appointment as Director in the Home Department of the State, Ramesh got confidential report through intelligence sources that illegal migrants are infiltrating in the State from the neighbouring country. He decided to personally carry out surprise check of the border posts along with his Home Department team. To his surprise, he caught red-handed two families of 12 members infiltrated with the connivance of the security personnel at the border posts. On further inquiry and investigation, it was found that after the migrants from neighbouring country infiltrate, their documentation like Aadhaar Card, Ration Card and Voter Card are also forged and they are made to settle down in a particular area of the State. Ramesh prepared the detailed and comprehensive report and submitted to the Additional Secretary of the State. However, he has summoned by the Additional Home Secretary after a week and was instructed to withdraw the report. The Additional Home Secretary informed Ramesh that the report submitted by him has not been appreciated by the higher authorities. He further

cautioned him that if he fails to withdraw the confidential report, he will not only be posted out from the prestigious appointment from the State capital but his further promotion which is due in near future will also get in jeopardy.

(a) What are the options available to Ramesh as the Director of the Home Department of the bordering State?

(b) What option should Ramesh adopt and why?

(c) Critically evaluate each of the options.

(d) What are the ethical dilemmas being faced by Ramesh?

(e) What policy measures would you suggest to combat the menace of infiltration of illegal migrants from the neighbouring country?

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
2022	GS - IV	Ethics & Morality

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
20	~250 words

Answer Hint

(a) Options Available: Withdraw the report, comply partially by revising it objectively, refuse to withdraw it, escalate the matter through official channels, or seek protection under applicable service rules.

(b) Best Option: Retain the factual report, resist improper pressure, and escalate the matter through documented, lawful channels while protecting his family's welfare through legitimate means.

(c) Critical Evaluation: Withdrawal protects his posting and promotion but compromises integrity and national security. Refusal upholds duty but may invite retaliation. Lawful escalation safeguards accountability and institutional procedure.

(d) Ethical Dilemmas: Personal and family welfare versus public duty; loyalty to superiors versus constitutional responsibility; career advancement versus integrity; confidentiality versus accountability; compassion towards migrants versus border security and rule of law.

(e) Policy Measures: Strengthen border surveillance, improve inter-agency coordination, prosecute corrupt officials and document forgers, establish secure identity verification, conduct lawful investigations, and protect whistle-blowers.

Model Answer

Introduction

Ramesh faces a conflict between personal interests and his responsibility to uphold integrity, national security, and the rule of law. The demand to withdraw a fact-based report raises concerns about administrative accountability and political or bureaucratic interference.

(a) Options Available to Ramesh

He can withdraw the report to protect his posting and promotion, revise it if objective errors are identified, refuse the improper instruction, or escalate the matter through authorised departmental and vigilance channels. He can also preserve the evidence and seek guidance under applicable service rules.

(b) Most Appropriate Option

Ramesh should retain the evidence-based report and refuse to withdraw it merely to satisfy senior officials. He should formally record the instruction, seek written clarification, and escalate the matter through lawful channels. His family's medical and educational needs are important, but cannot justify concealing a serious security breach.

(c) Critical Evaluation of Options

Withdrawing the report may protect his career temporarily but would undermine integrity, encourage corruption, and weaken national security. Revising it is appropriate only if evidence-based errors exist; changes

made under pressure would compromise impartiality. Direct refusal upholds conscience but may invite retaliation. Documented escalation offers the best balance of professional courage, due process, and accountability.

(d) Ethical Dilemmas

Ramesh faces personal welfare versus public duty, loyalty to superiors versus constitutional responsibility, career security versus honesty, and confidentiality versus accountability. He must also balance humane treatment of migrants with lawful border control, ensuring that genuine refugees or vulnerable persons are not unfairly treated.

(e) Policy Measures

The government should strengthen border fencing, surveillance, intelligence-sharing, and risk-based monitoring. Independent investigations must address collusion by security personnel and networks forging identity documents. Aadhaar, ration cards, and voter registration systems should use robust verification and interdepartmental checks. Whistle-blower protection, transparent disciplinary action, specialised border units, and coordination between central and state agencies are essential. All measures must comply with law, due process, and human rights.

Conclusion

Ramesh should act with integrity, preserve documentary evidence, and pursue lawful escalation. Effective governance requires both secure borders and officials who cannot be pressured into suppressing verified facts.

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