Ethics & Morality · GS - IV

“Non-performance of duty by a public servant is a form of corruption”. Do you agree with this view? Justify your answer.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
2019	GS - IV	Ethics & Morality

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

Dereliction of duty; abuse of entrusted authority; public trust; negligence; omission; accountability; distinction between incapacity and misconduct

Model Answer

Introduction

Corruption is commonly associated with bribery and illegal gratification. However, deliberate non-performance of an official duty can also constitute ethical misconduct because public authority is entrusted for public benefit.

Why Non-performance Can Be a Form of Corruption

1. Betrayal of Public Trust

A public servant who deliberately avoids assigned responsibilities fails the citizens who depend on public services.

2. Indirect Benefit to Wrongdoers

Ignoring illegal construction, tax evasion or regulatory violations may allow private interests to benefit at public expense.

3. Denial of Entitlements

Failure to process pensions, ration cards or compensation can deprive eligible citizens of their lawful benefits.

4. Abuse through Inaction

Selective inaction may be used to favour certain individuals, conceal wrongdoing or extract illegal payments.

Qualification

Not every failure to perform a duty is corruption. Genuine emergencies, inadequate resources, unclear procedures or unavoidable errors may explain non-performance. Such cases require fair assessment rather than automatic punishment.

Way Forward

Clear service standards, time-bound grievance redressal, performance audits, whistle-blower protection and proportionate disciplinary action can discourage deliberate negligence.

Conclusion

Deliberate dereliction of duty can be a form of corruption when it abuses entrusted responsibility or facilitates private gain. Ethical administration must distinguish wilful misconduct from genuine incapacity while ensuring accountability.

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