Ethics & Morality · GS - IV

You are heading the rescue operations in an area affected by severe natural calamity. Thousands of people are rendered homeless and deprived of food, drinking water and other basic amenities. Rescue work has been disrupted by heavy rainfall and damage to supply routes. The local people are seething with anger against the delayed limited rescue operations. When your team reaches the affected area, the people there heckle and even assault some of the team members . One of your team members is even severely injured. Faced with this crisis, some team members plead with you to call off the operations fearing threats to their life.

In such trying circumstances, what will be your response?

Examine the qualities of a public servant which will be required to manage the situation.

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EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
2019	GS - IV	Ethics & Morality

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
20	~250 words

Answer Hint

Crisis management; human compassion; leadership; emotional intelligence; courage; team safety; coordination; accountability; effective communication; ethical decision-making

Model Answer

Introduction

A natural calamity creates a humanitarian emergency requiring swift, compassionate and coordinated action. As the rescue leader, my responsibility would be to protect human lives, ensure the safety of my team and restore public confidence without compromising operational discipline.

Response to the Situation

1. Immediate Medical Assistance

- Arrange emergency medical treatment and evacuation for the severely injured team member.
- Assess the safety of rescue personnel and move them away from immediate danger if necessary.

2. Continue Rescue Operations Safely

- Reorganise the team and prioritise children, elderly persons, persons with disabilities and critically ill victims.
- Use alternative transport routes, boats, helicopters or local volunteers where feasible.
- Request additional rescue personnel, medical teams, food, drinking water and essential supplies.

3. Address Public Anger

- Communicate calmly with affected residents and acknowledge their suffering.
- Explain the difficulties caused by heavy rainfall and damaged supply routes without making excuses.
- Involve trusted community leaders and local volunteers in identifying urgent needs and distributing relief fairly.

4. Coordinate and Restore Access

- Coordinate with disaster-response agencies, police, health services, local administration and engineering teams.
- Prioritise the restoration of roads, bridges and communication networks.
- Establish transparent relief-distribution arrangements and regular public updates.

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5. Protect the Team

- Listen to team members' safety concerns, provide protective measures and rotate exhausted personnel.
- Do not abandon operations merely because of hostility; adapt the response to the actual threat and available resources.

Qualities Required in a Public Servant

- **Compassion:** Recognising the suffering and dignity of disaster victims.
- **Courage:** Continuing essential duties despite adversity, without taking reckless risks.
- **Leadership:** Maintaining team morale and making timely decisions.
- **Emotional intelligence:** Managing anger, fear and conflict calmly.
- **Integrity and impartiality:** Distributing relief fairly, without favouritism.
- **Accountability:** Communicating honestly and accepting responsibility for decisions.

Conclusion

Effective disaster leadership combines empathy with discipline, courage with prudence, and rapid action with accountability. The objective is to save lives while protecting responders and rebuilding public trust.

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