Ethics & Morality · GS - IV

A building permitted for three floors, while being extended illegally to 6 floors by a builder, collapses. As a consequence, a number of innocent labourers including women and children died. These labourers are migrants of different places. The government immediately announced cash relief to the aggrieved families and arrested the builder.

Give reasons for such incidents taking place across the country. Suggest measures to prevent their occurrence.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
2017	GS - IV	Ethics & Morality

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
20	~250 words

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Answer Hint

Illegal construction; regulatory failure; corruption; migrant labour vulnerability; construction safety; urban governance; accountability; building-code enforcement; labour protection; disaster prevention

Model Answer

Introduction

Building collapses caused by unauthorised construction reflect failures of regulation, professional ethics and worker protection. The deaths of vulnerable labourers expose serious gaps in urban governance.

Reasons for Such Incidents

- **Illegal construction:** Builders add unauthorised floors to maximise profits and ignore structural limits.

- **Corruption and weak enforcement:** Bribery, inadequate inspections and delayed action allow violations to continue.
- **Poor construction quality:** Substandard materials and unqualified contractors compromise structural safety.
- **Negligence:** Builders may disregard approved plans, engineering standards and safety requirements.
- **Vulnerable labour:** Migrant workers often lack secure contracts, safety equipment, training and effective grievance mechanisms.
- **Fragmented accountability:** Poor coordination among municipal bodies, engineers and enforcement agencies enables violations.

Preventive Measures

1. **Strict enforcement:** Conduct risk-based inspections and promptly stop unauthorised construction.
2. **Professional accountability:** Penalise negligent builders, engineers and officials, with independent investigation of suspected corruption.
3. **Digital monitoring:** Use geotagged inspections, approved building plans and completion certificates to detect deviations.
4. **Worker protection:** Enforce safety standards, provide protective equipment and ensure access to compensation and insurance.
5. **Community reporting:** Establish accessible complaint mechanisms and protect whistle-blowers.
6. **Emergency preparedness:** Strengthen evacuation procedures, inspections of vulnerable buildings and rescue capacity.

Conclusion

Cash relief and arrests are necessary but insufficient. Prevention requires ethical construction practices, effective regulation and accountability across the entire building process.