

GS Mains Daily Answer Writing

Week 8 - Day 4

Model Structures

Solve following case study based questions

Case study 1:

Lake Nag is the lifeblood for farming villages around it. Due to climate change year in year its waterline was receding irreversibly. A dam was constructed over it to save whatever water possible and use it for irrigation in these villages. The lake is also a seasonal habitat for migratory flamingos who are involved in breeding here. In summer months, water flow from the dam was increased and due to low rainfall to meet the demand for irrigation the entire lake was drained to feed the farms. This led to instant desertification of the lake and lakhs of baby flamingos died triggering protests from wildlife activists and condemnation from international organisations. In the next year, the government was in dilemma whether to release all the meagre water for irrigation or not. Farmer's groups have been wary of any reduction in water. They started a campaign in social media and news channels that, when humans lack water for themselves it is not wrong to use it for their needs, if they don't get water they don't have any other source of food as they are engaged in subsistence farming, they claim killing humans to save flamingoes is the worst crime, nature itself will prefer to serve humans than other species. In a few days, many farmers also started committing suicides to gather support for their standpoint and drive home the gravity of their maladies. In this context, justify the demands and claims of the farmer groups. (250 words)

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Model Structure

Introduction

- In this case there is a perceived competition between humans and animals to survive (Man-Animal Conflict), the legal administrative system created by humans tends to favour humans and so the water which becomes a contentious good, was made available for humans.

Main Body

- Values Involved:

- Environmentalism and right of all creatures on environment
- Right to Life of Farmers
- Man-Animal Conflict
- Justification of claims of farmers
 - Right to life of farmers guaranteed under Article 21 of Indian Constitution
 - Priority to human life over other life forms
 - Lack of alternative to farmers
- The renaissance movement gave the idea of HUMANISM, which meant humans deserve to be happy as most rational creatures and are not subordinated to anyone, their freedom agency and aspirations should not be curtailed in name of religion or any other moral restrictions that curtail their liberty.
- It's strong belief is that human beings should be the starting point of all moral and philosophical inquiry.
- Farmers have been led by the same thought that farmers are more important than flamingoes. Principle of human supremacy justifies their belief that farmers' livelihood becomes more important than flamingoes.
- To understand what is right, we have a dictum called “man is the measure of all things”, hence what is right for man should be the right action. Here the livelihood of farmers, the farm products utility for human society and any loss of their production leading to inflation or reduced export revenue all together justify that many human interests will be endangered due to reducing irrigation water.
- Charles Darwin also discussed the theory of survival of fittest in which he says nature inherently involves competition and those who are fit alone can survive and any attempt to alter this will lead to collapse of the evolution process. Here humans are rationally and physically more fit than flamingoes.
- Finally, civilisational values are preceded by basic subsistence needs and man cannot exist without subsistence, in the hierarchy of needs food and livelihood comes first and morals, generosity and civilisational norms comes later. Here livelihood of farmers takes precedence over their responsibility to protect the environment.
- Also, we need to differentiate between human action and actions of human. Human action is done owing to human spirit of rationality logic and intellect and there is a choice

eg. poetry. But the actions of humans are tied to natural instincts and we lack freedom from it, they include sleeping, eating, etc. Thus subsistence needs are actions of humans from which we don't have freedom and in ethics it is not right to ask anyone to do what they are not suitable or capable to do.

- **However**, these arguments are from misplaced assumptions. While on surface livelihood seems to be endangered, multiple alternatives exist to meet livelihood food inflation and export concerns. They can be given proper skills and absorbed into the manufacturing sector.
- Conservation farming practices that need least water can be chosen or drought resistant crops can be grown. Human supremacy is also becoming flawed and events like climate change makes us realise we can't dominate nature and it backfires us, so endangering the environment endangers our survival also. Flamingo deaths will affect the food chain and eventually affect us also.
- Finally, as J S Mill said it is better to be a human dissatisfied than a pig satisfied, as humans we have a natural duty to respect everything with love and respect the value of HOLISM.

Conclusion

- Hence, in this case ensuring alternative livelihood, importing food if shortage occurs etc. should be the ideal approach and flamingoes should be saved which helps environmental integrity.

Case Study 2:

One of your neighbouring nations has suffered religious radicalism and become the hotbed of global terrorism. Slowly the terrorists have brought the territories under its control and recently in a civil war they were able to topple the civil government and establish their government. Along with many other nations, your nation also stood for civil government in that country and gave all forms of support. But once the terror outfits gained power all other nations started to recognise them and continued diplomatic relations with them. But your nation was driven by democratic and liberal ideals and it was decided that recognising and fostering a terror outfit at power is a moral sin, since non-violence as a value is followed in your nation conscientiously.

But recently, a nation on the other side of this neighbouring country was hit with a fatal earthquake and the death toll is on rise. It is your friendly nation and it has stood for your nation in many global platforms, some of your countrymen also live there as immigrants. That nation is in dire need of food grains, but you cannot send without passing through the above country ruled by terrorists. This nation has come out strictly that unless you start diplomatic relations and recognise its government it won't allow your grains to pass. There is no other way to pass tonnes of grains, pressure is mounting on your government from locals and also many friendly nations to work as per cost-benefit ratio and not be stubborn about ideals. There are two options:

1. Remain ideal and never compromise the value of non-violence regardless of its effects including being unhelpful to the suffering third nation
2. In light of larger goods, do minimum compromises needed for convincing the neighbouring government and send the food grains to the third nation.

Which of the two options is ethically superior? Justify your choice with the help of supporting arguments.

Model Structure

Introduction

- In this case there is a value conflict between helping the friendly nation vs. being committed to the ideal of non-violence.

Main Body

- Ethical Issues involved
 - Humanitarianism vs Sticking to the values (integrity)

- International Ethics
- Terrorism
- First option is being **deontological**. It means let justice be done even if heaven falls. Be not mindful of effects, and follow only right means even if bad consequences will be produced.
- Second option is **utilitarian** doing what will produce the greatest happiness of the greatest number, it is not mindful of means many times.
- Debating ethical superiority:
 - Option 2 seemingly is not ethically superior, because it will only promote terrorism eventually, it will also show moral hypocrisy and twisting morals to our needs.
 - Option 1 is seemingly superior because it upholds integrity. Here what could be the loss is not being helpful and also possible loss of lives. This option will be superior only if we can avoid loss of lives. While ends do not justify means, if there are no right means to do a right end, we cannot be silent, in fact ends are inherent in means. So, if we can ensure food from other nations to this quake hit country, we can consider option 1 is superior, if we cannot it will be immoral to see loss of lives. Nehru said the test of all morality is welfare of humans and other creatures. If an action is causing loss of lives, it is inferior. That case option 2 becomes superior.
 - But option 2 creates a loss, recognition of the terrorist government. While we can rank this one as superior even this is not purely moral. So, to ensure we do perfect things, efforts to deradicalise this government should be done and democracy should be brought into this, the curse of geography cannot be missed by us, so it is better to change the terror outfit into an ethical party and bring democracy in long term.
 - In the short term we have to tolerate the vice, until a tumour is removed the pain of it needs to be tolerated. Gandhiji also understood that during Quit India Movement violence is condemnable but in extraordinary situations one cannot keep it zero.

Conclusion

- So, if alternatives can be arranged 1 is superior, if not 2 is comparatively better, but not holistically superior until the terror body is made ethical and democracy is brought to that country.
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