



Mains Practice Question

Case Studies

Lakhimpura, a remote district inhabited by a tribal population, is marked by extreme backwardness and abject poverty. Agriculture is the mainstay of the local population, though it is primarily subsistence due to the very small landholdings. There is insignificant industrial or mining activity. Even the targeted welfare programs have inadequately benefited the tribal population. In this restrictive scenario, the youth has begun to migrate to other states to supplement the family income. Plight of minor girls is that their parents are persuaded by labor contractors to send them to work in the Bt Cotton farms of a nearby state. The soft fingers of the minor girls are well suited for plucking the cotton. The inadequate living and working conditions in these farms have caused serious health issues for the minor girls. NGOs in the districts of domicile and the cotton farms appear to be compromised and have not effectively espoused the twin issues of child labour and development of the area.

You are appointed as the District Collector of Lakhimpura. Identify the ethical issues involved. Which specific steps will you initiate to ameliorate the conditions of minor girls of your district and to improve the overall economic scenario in the district?

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Approach

- Start the answer with a discussion that sets a context for the question.
- Discuss the ethical issues involved in this case.
- Discuss the steps to ameliorate the conditions of minor girls and to improve the overall economic scenario in the district.
- Conclude suitably.

Introduction

Lakhimpura grapples with widespread poverty and underdevelopment, as its local population contends with challenges in achieving even a subsistence standard of living. Forced migration, child labor, and significant health concerns further exacerbate the region's difficulties.

Body

Ethical issues involved in the case :

- **Exploitation of Minor Girls:**
 - The coercion of minor girls into labor on Bt Cotton farms constitutes a grave violation of their rights and exposes them to hazardous working conditions, impacting their physical and mental well-being.
 - The practice of employing underage children for labor deprives them of their right to education, leisure, and a proper childhood, perpetuating the cycle of poverty.
- **Neglect of Social Justice:** The insufficient execution of targeted welfare programs reflects a lack of dedication to addressing the needs of the tribal population.
- **Compromised Duty:** The compromised stance of NGOs in both the domicile district and the

cotton farms reflects a failure to uphold their duty to protect and advocate for the rights of vulnerable populations.

Steps Required to Address the Issues:

- **Immediate Rescue and Rehabilitation:** Implement swift rescue operations to retrieve minor girls from exploitative working conditions. Establish rehabilitation centers to provide them with medical care, counseling, education, and vocational training opportunities.
- **Strengthening Legal Framework:** Enforce existing laws against child labor rigorously and advocate for stricter penalties for perpetrators involved in coercing minors into labor.
- **Awareness Campaigns:** Launch awareness campaigns targeting parents, communities, and local authorities about the detrimental effects of child labor and the importance of education for children's future prospects.
- **Empowerment Programs:** Implement programs aimed at empowering families economically, such as skill development training and access to microfinance initiatives, to reduce their reliance on child labor for income generation.
- **Collaborative Efforts:** Forge partnerships with credible NGOs, local communities, and government agencies to jointly address the root causes of child labor and advocate for sustainable development initiatives in the district.
- **Monitoring and Oversight:** Establish a robust monitoring mechanism to ensure compliance with labor laws and standards in both agricultural and industrial sectors, with a focus on protecting the rights of minors.
- **Holistic Development Approach:** Promote diversified livelihood opportunities, such as promoting sustainable agriculture practices, agro-processing industries, and eco-tourism initiatives, to create sustainable economic growth and uplift the overall living standards in the district.

Conclusion

By prioritizing the protection and welfare of minor girls and adopting a holistic approach to socioeconomic development, the District Collector can contribute significantly to foster a more equitable and prosperous future for Lakhimpura.

PDF Reference URL: <https://www.drishtias.com/mains-practice-question/question-8195/pnt>