UPSC Mains practice – reference note

GS-IV · 15-11-2026 · 20 marks · https://www.shanmugamiasacademy.in/upsc-mains-practice/2026-11-15-good-samaritan-golden-hour

Case study. 15 November 2026 is the World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims. Meena, a Block Development Officer in a Tamil Nadu district, is driving to the district headquarters, where at 11 a.m. she must present her block's flood-preparedness plan to the Collector and a visiting Central team before the north-east monsoon peaks. At 10:15 a.m., on a highway stretch, she sees a motorcycle rider and his pillion lying injured after a hit-and-run. A small crowd is filming on mobile phones, but no one helps – "why get into a police case?" someone says. The ambulance control room says the nearest ambulance will take about 25 minutes. Her driver warns that she may be held up for hours as a witness, and her superior has told her that the presentation "cannot be missed". (a) Identify the ethical issues involved in the case. (b) Evaluate the options available to Meena. (c) What course of action should she adopt, and why? (20 marks, 250 words)

1. The news (as of 15 November 2026)

- The World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims is observed on the third Sunday of November every year – 15 November in 2026 – to remember those killed and injured on roads and to thank emergency responders.
- MoRTH's report *Road Accidents in India 2023* (released in August 2025): 4,80,583 accidents (up 4.2%) and 1,72,890 deaths (up 2.6%). Tamil Nadu recorded the most accidents – 67,213 (14.0% of the national total) – and ranked second in deaths (10.6%) after Uttar Pradesh (23,652). Two-wheelers accounted for 44.8% of deaths.

2. The legal framework

Provision / case	What it says	Source
Motor Vehicles Act, Section 2(12A)	"Golden hour" – the one hour after a traumatic injury when prompt medical care is most likely to prevent death	MV (Amendment) Act, 2019
Motor Vehicles Act, Section 134A	A Good Samaritan is not liable for any civil or criminal action for injury or death of the victim arising from negligence while giving emergency care	MV (Amendment) Act, 2019
SaveLIFE Foundation v. Union of India (2016)	Supreme Court gave MoRTH's Good Samaritan guidelines and SOP the force of law – no compulsion to disclose identity, no detention, no payment demand at hospitals	Supreme Court of India
Parmanand Katara v. Union of India (1989)	Every doctor, government or private, must give immediate medical aid to preserve life; legal formalities come later	Supreme Court of India

Cashless Treatment of Road Accident Victims Scheme, 2025	Cashless treatment up to ₹1.5 lakh per victim for up to 7 days from the accident, on any road; in force from 5 May 2025; National Health Authority implements	MoRTH notification (May 2025)
Rah-Veer scheme	₹25,000 reward for a person who rushes a seriously injured road accident victim to hospital	MoRTH

3. Key terms

- **Good Samaritan** – a person who, in good faith and without expecting reward, gives emergency help to an accident victim (Section 2(18A) of the MV Act).
- **Bystander effect** – the more people present, the less likely any one of them is to help, because responsibility feels shared.
- **Compassion vs empathy** – empathy is feeling with the sufferer; compassion adds the will to act to relieve the suffering.
- **Crisis of conscience** – the inner conflict when two duties pull in opposite directions; resolved by the priority of life and by finding a way to honour both duties.

4. Tamil Nadu angle

- Innuyir Kappom – Nammai Kaakkum 48 (launched in December 2021): free emergency treatment in the first 48 hours for road accident victims at empanelled government and private hospitals; the cover was raised from ₹1 lakh to ₹2 lakh, and more than 3.2 lakh victims had benefited through 721 hospitals (Health Department data, January 2025).
- 108 emergency ambulance service and the State's trauma care network; Tamil Nadu tops the country in the number of accidents, so its response capacity decides how many survive.

5. Value-adding words

- sanctity of life, golden hour, bystander apathy, Good Samaritan, compassion, courage of conviction, crisis of conscience, delegation, accountability, Gandhiji's talisman, Article 21, role model.

Official sources

- Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (morth.nic.in) – Road Accidents in India 2023; Good Samaritan, cashless treatment and Rah-Veer schemes – https://morth.nic.in/
- ThePrint (PTI) – India saw 4.8 lakh road accidents in 2023; Tamil Nadu accounted for 14% (29 August 2025) – https://theprint.in/india/india-saw-4-8-lakh-road-accidents-in-2023-tamil-nadu-accounted-for-14-highest-fatalities-in-up/2731870
- ThePrint (PTI) – Govt notifies cashless treatment scheme for road accident victims nationwide (6 May 2025) – https://theprint.in/economy/govt-notifies-cashless-treatment-scheme-for-road-accident-victims-nationwide/2616815
- DT Next – Financial assistance under TN Govt's Innuyir Kappom scheme increased to Rs 2 lakh (25 December 2024) – https://www.dtnext.in/news/tamilnadu/financial-assistance-under-tn-govts-innuyir-kappom-scheme-increased-to-rs-2-lakh-816630

Shanmugam IAS Academy – your next step

- **Courses:** TNPSC Group 1, 2 / 2A (Prelims + Mains), Group 4, UPSC / IAS, Bank, SSC, SI – Coimbatore · Madurai · Online – https://www.shanmugamiasacademy.in/fees
- **Books (PDF):** TNPSC PYQ books, UPSC books – https://www.shanmugamiasacademy.in/study-materials
- **More free PDFs:** https://www.shanmugamiasacademy.in/free-pdf-download · This page: https://www.shanmugamiasacademy.in/upsc-mains-practice/2026-11-15-good-samaritan-golden-hour

Admissions – call / WhatsApp: 99941 46662 · 99944 27714 · www.shanmugamiasacademy.in

SHANMUGAM IAS ACADEMY
www.shanmugamiasacademy.in
YOUR DREAM... OUR RESPONSE...