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Q3

Given below are three quotations of great thinkers. What do each of the quotations convey to you in the present test? (a) "The simplest arts of kindness are by far more powerful than a thousand heads bowing in prayer."- Mahatma Gandhi (b) To awaken the people, it is the women who must be awakened. Once she is on the move, the family moves, the village moves, the nation moves". - Jawaharlal Nehru (c) "Do not hate anybody, because that hatred that comes out from you must, in the long run, come back to you. If you love, that love will me back to you, completing the circle- Swami Vivekananda.

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2023 · GS IV · 10 marks · Moral Thinkers and Philosophers

Contributions of moral thinkers and philosophers from India and the world.

Core demand of the question

- Three quotations in the present context
- (a) **Gandhi**: the simplest acts of kindness are more powerful than a thousand heads bowing in prayer
- (b) **Nehru**: to awaken the people, awaken women; then family, village and nation move
- (c) **Vivekananda**: do not hate; hatred returns; love completes the circle

Revision summary

Gandhi ranks a simple kind act above a show of prayer; public piety without a working counter fails the test.

Nehru ties national awakening to women's education, safety, voice and economic freedom.

A household or scheme that ignores women is not development.

Vivekananda warns that hatred returns as social heat; fraternity and lawful justice break that circle.

The three quotes together ask for service, gender justice and refusal of communal revenge.

Introduction

Three sentences from **Gandhi**, **Nehru** and **Vivekananda** still test a republic that prays, legislates and argues online. Each quote asks for a public act, not a private feeling.

Body**(a) Gandhi: kindness over a thousand bowed heads**

- **Gandhi** is ranking a small helpful act above a large display of piety.
- Prayer that never becomes food, shelter, or a fair file is incomplete religion.

- In the present context, a viral temple visit or a televised fast does not feed a migrant or stop a communal rumour.
- **Kindness here is concrete:** a midday meal that arrives, a disability pension that is not delayed, a police officer who does not humiliate a complainant.
- The quote does not mock faith; it says faith is proven in the neighbour, which is also the Gita's teaching that worship without care for beings is hollow.
- **For a civil servant the line is a work rule:** the counter is the prayer, and delay is a refusal to bow to the person who needs the service.

(b) **Nehru:** awaken women, then the rest moves

- **Nehru** is stating that social change that leaves women unfree is not national awakening.
- If a woman cannot read, own land, walk safely, or speak in the gram sabha, the family and the village remain half-asleep.
- In the present context this is education, nutrition, political reservation, equal pay, and freedom from domestic and workplace violence.
- Laws such as the **Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005** and the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 are tools; awakening also needs property rights, time-use equality, and girls who finish school.
- A growth story that uses women's unpaid care as invisible subsidy has not heard **Nehru**.
- For governance, a scheme that is designed only by men for a "household head" will miss the person who actually fetches water and stands in the ration line.

(c) **Vivekananda:** do not hate, because hate returns

- **Vivekananda is describing karma in social form:** hatred sent out organises a return of hatred.
- Love here is not a slogan; it is refusal to dehumanise an opponent, a minority, or a defeated group.
- In the present context, communal speech, caste humiliation, and online pile-ons manufacture the circle he named.
- A State that uses hate as a mobilisation tool will later spend that same heat as riot, boycott, and broken trust.
- **The civil servant's duty is fraternity in the Preamble:** protect the unpopular person, refuse a communal file, and do not repay abuse with official revenge.
- **The quote also warns the reformer:** hatred of the corrupt is still hatred if it becomes a licence to lie or to lynch; the circle must be completed by justice under law, not by a crowd.

Flow diagram

Kind act -> Neighbour served
 Women awakened -> Family village nation
 Hate sent -> Hate returns
 Love and law -> Fraternity

Conclusion

Gandhi measures religion by a kind act, not by a crowded prayer. **Nehru** measures a nation's waking by the freedom of its women. **Vivekananda** measures politics by whether it sends out hate or law-bound care. All three are present-tense tests for office and citizenship.

Facts & figures

Gandhi's constructive programme

Village sanitation, spinning and removal of untouchability were treated as religion in action, not as extras after prayer.

Nehru on women

The line is from his public argument that India's social revolution depends on women's movement in family and public life.

Preamble fraternity

The Constitution names fraternity as a goal that assures dignity of the individual and unity of the nation.

Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005

A civil law that recognises domestic violence and gives protection orders, residence rights and maintenance tools.

Vivekananda's practical Vedanta

Service of the living being as service of the divine; hatred of a person is treated as a spiritual and social error.

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