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Q3(c)**"The strength of a society is not in its laws, but in the morality of its people." - Swami Vivekananda**

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2025 · GS IV · 10 marks · Ethics and Human Interface

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Ethics and Human Interface: Essence, determinants and consequences of Ethics in-human actions; dimensions of ethics; ethics - in private and public relationships. Human Values - lessons from the lives and teachings of great leaders, reformers and administrators; role of family, society and educational institutions in inculcating values.

DEMAND

- Explain **Vivekananda**'s line that society's strength lies in people's morality more than in laws. Show what that means for law and for a civil servant

REVISION MAP

- **Vivekananda** held that a society's real strength is the people's morality, not only the size of the law book.
- Laws still matter; they work when character supports them.
- Officers and citizens both share that duty.

INTRODUCTION

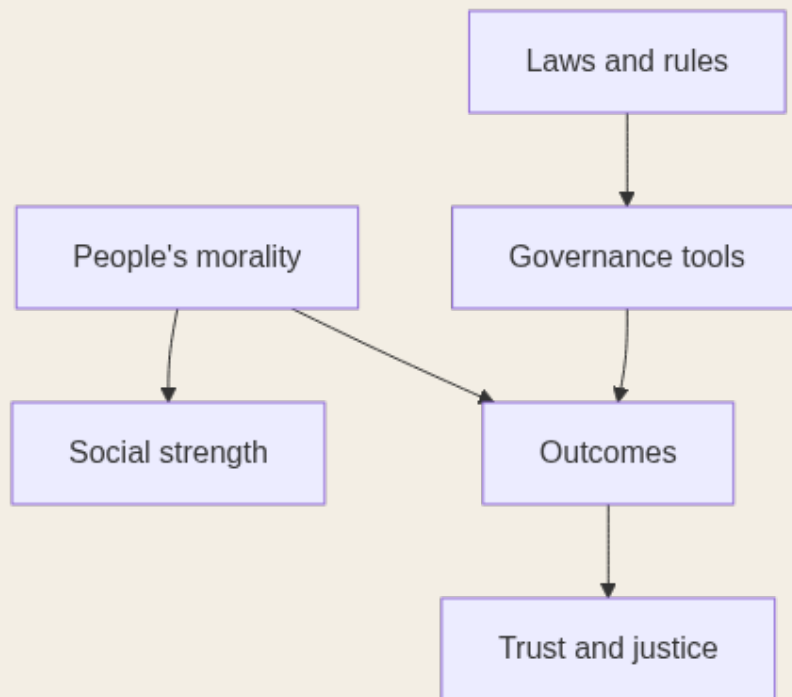
Swami Vivekananda said the strength of a society is not in its laws, but in the morality of its people. He was warning against the hope that a thick statute book alone can build a good nation.

BODY

- Laws set a public floor for behaviour; they do not by themselves create honest hearts.
- If people and officers treat rules as paper, enforcement becomes a never-ending chase.
- India can have many Acts and still leak money, dignity, and trust when character is weak.
- **Vivekananda's nation-building idea was man-making:** character supports institutions.
- A strong society needs citizens who keep promises even when no camera is watching.
- A civil servant must both write and follow fair rules, and also model honesty in small things.
- A Diwali gift that is really a bribe turns the law into a joke inside that office.

- Citizens who will not wait without a tout, and offices that wink at bribes, make every portal look empty.
- **Law still matters:** it protects the weak when conscience fails, and it punishes open wrong.
- The ethical balance is clear law plus living morality, starting with those who hold public power.

Flow diagram



CONCLUSION

Vivekananda is not against law. He is against the illusion that law can replace conscience. A strong society needs both a clear statute and a moral people, starting with those who hold office.

FACTS & FIGURES

Vivekananda on character

He argued that nation-building is man-making: borrowed machinery fails without character.

Law and ethics

Law is external control; ethics is internal guidance. Good governance needs both.

Probity in office

Small honest acts by officers - clean files, fair queues, refused bribes - teach the public more than a speech.

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