Ethics & Morality · GS - IV

What are the major teachings of Mahavir? Explain their relevance in the contemporary world.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
2025	GS - IV	Ethics & Morality

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

Ahimsa, Satya, Asteya, Aparigraha, Brahmacharya, Anekantavada, non-violence, tolerance, sustainability, ethical consumption, peaceful coexistence

Model Answer

Introduction

Mahavira's teachings emphasise self-discipline, non-violence and respect for the plurality of truth. They possess considerable relevance in an age of conflict, consumerism and ecological stress.

Major Teachings and Relevance

1. Ahimsa: Non-violence towards all living beings is relevant to conflict resolution, humane governance and animal welfare.
2. Satya: Truthfulness strengthens personal integrity, institutional trust and public accountability.
3. Asteya: Non-stealing discourages corruption, exploitation and misuse of public resources.
4. Aparigraha: Limiting excessive possessions promotes sustainable consumption and ecological responsibility.
5. Brahmacharya: Self-restraint encourages disciplined conduct and control over desires.
6. Anekantavada: Recognition of multiple perspectives promotes tolerance, dialogue and intellectual humility in plural societies.

Contemporary Application

Anekantavada is particularly relevant to social-media polarisation, where individuals often treat complex issues as absolute binaries. Aparigraha can support sustainable lifestyles, while Ahimsa offers an ethical basis for peaceful dispute resolution.

Conclusion

Mahavira's philosophy combines compassion, restraint and intellectual openness. Its contemporary application can contribute to ethical citizenship, social harmony, responsible consumption and sustainable development.

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