Art & Culture · GS - I

Discuss how the teachings of Guru Nanak Dev contributed to the development of an egalitarian and inclusive social philosophy in India.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
DAILY PRACTICE 24/11/2026	GS - I	Art & Culture

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
15	~250 words

Answer Hint

Guru Nanak Dev, oneness of God, equality, rejection of caste discrimination, Naam Japna, Kirat Karni, Vand Chakna, langar, social harmony

Model Answer

Introduction

Guru Nanak Dev (1469–1539), founder of Sikhism, articulated a spiritual and social philosophy based on the oneness of God, human equality and ethical living. His teachings challenged prevailing social hierarchies and promoted inclusive community life.

Contributions to an Inclusive Social Philosophy

1. **Universal human equality:** He rejected caste-based discrimination and emphasised the equal dignity of all human beings.
2. **Religious harmony:** His teachings stressed devotion to one Supreme Reality and encouraged respect across religious boundaries.
3. **Ethical livelihood:** Kirat Karni promoted honest work, linking spirituality with responsible social conduct.
4. **Collective responsibility:** Vand Chakna encouraged sharing resources and supporting disadvantaged members of society.

5. **Institutional equality:** The institution of langar enabled people from different social backgrounds to eat together, challenging caste-based restrictions.
6. **Selfless service:** Seva promoted humility, compassion and voluntary service to humanity.

Contemporary Relevance

1. His emphasis on equality remains relevant to combating caste discrimination and social exclusion.
2. Langar demonstrates how community institutions can translate ethical values into everyday social practices.
3. His message of brotherhood can strengthen interfaith understanding and social cohesion.

Conclusion

Guru Nanak Dev's teachings combined spiritual devotion with social responsibility. Their continuing relevance lies in promoting dignity, equality, service and harmony in a diverse society.

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