Ethics & Morality · GS - IV

What teachings of Buddha are most relevant today and why? Discuss.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
2020	GS - IV	Ethics & Morality

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

Four Noble Truths, Eightfold Path, Middle Path, non-violence, compassion, mindfulness, tolerance, reduction of desire, ethical conduct, contemporary relevance

Model Answer

Introduction

Gautama Buddha's teachings emphasise freedom from suffering through ethical conduct, wisdom and mental discipline. They remain relevant in a world marked by conflict, consumerism, inequality and psychological stress.

Contemporary relevance of Buddha's teachings

- **Four Noble Truths:** Recognising suffering and its causes encourages individuals and institutions to address problems at their roots rather than merely treating symptoms.
- **Eightfold Path:** Right speech, action and livelihood promote honesty, responsible conduct and ethical professional behaviour.
- **Middle Path:** Avoiding extremes encourages balanced decisions in personal life, governance and public policy.
- **Compassion and non-violence:** These values support peaceful conflict resolution and reduce hatred and discrimination.
- **Mindfulness:** Awareness of thoughts and emotions can improve mental well-being and help individuals respond rather than react impulsively.

- **Control of desires:** Restraining greed challenges excessive consumerism and unsustainable exploitation of natural resources.
- **Tolerance:** Respect for different perspectives supports pluralism and social harmony.

Application today

Governments can draw on compassion in welfare policies, businesses can adopt ethical practices, and individuals can practise mindfulness and responsible consumption.

Conclusion

Buddha's teachings provide a practical ethical framework for individual peace and collective well-being. Their relevance lies not merely in spiritual belief but in their application to everyday conduct and public life.