

Ambedkar & Women's Rights

Why in news?

On the day of Ambedkar Jayanti it is imperative to recognize his work that brought women to the centre of the development process.



I measure the progress of a community by the degree of progress which women have achieved

- B R Ambedkar

What are the efforts taken by Ambedkar towards womens' rights?

- **Equal participation of women** - [Ambedkar](#) advocated for equal participation of women in both personal and professional spheres.
- **Unequal treatment of women in factories** - He is the first to raise his voice against the unequal treatment of women in factories and other workplaces.
- He was instrumental in reducing working hours and improving working conditions for women.
- **Equal pay and equal rights** - He drafted legislation such as the *Mines Maternity Benefit Act*, which demanded equal pay and equal rights for coal mine workers.
- **Maternity leave for women** - He ensured that the question of [maternity leave](#) for women was brought up and they were protected under labour laws.
- **Reproductive rights of women** - He was a strong believer of it and urged them to make their own choices about conception.
- **Joginis and devadasis** - Since they were typically belonged to Dalit he was against devadasi system.
- **Birth control facilities** - In 1938, Ambedkar as a Legislative Assembly member of Bombay, recommended that birth control facilities be made available to women.
- **Hindu Code Bill** - It addressed a variety of issues
 - **Property Rights** - It abolished the idea of birthright to property and unequal ownership of property,
 - **Abolition of caste** - It supported the abolition of caste in matters of marriage
 - **Polygamy & divorce** - It addressed taboo topics such as polygamy and divorce
 - **Conjugal rights** - It led to the restitution of conjugal rights and judiciary rights, which enabled women to consciously make divorce a choice.
- From the Hindu code of bill the following acts were passed
 - **The Hindu Marriage Act, 1955** - Right to divorce and maintenance
 - **The Hindu Succession Act, 1956** - Legal right to inherit property
 - **The Hindu Adoption and Maintenance Act 1956** - Legal right for women to

- adopt a child
- **The Hindu Minority and Guardianship Act 1956** - Granted women the status of natural guardian of her children.
- These reforms led to the enactment of Equal Remuneration Act of 1976 and the Dowry Prohibition Act of 1961.
- **Caste system** - His paper on Castes in India outlines how atrocities on women are rooted in the caste system and denounced sati, child marriage, and the condemnation of widow remarriage.

Unity is meaningless without the accompaniment of women

Education is fruitless without educated women

Agitation is incomplete without the strength of women

- B R Ambedkar

References

[The Indian Express | Ambedkar towards womens rights](#)