



Mains Practice Question

Q. Indian society has a deep-rooted history of caste-based discriminations. Discuss the contributions made by Dr Bhim Rao Ambedkar in order to address this menace. (250 words)

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Approach

- Start your answer with the introduction as how Indian society was entangled in the shackles of caste-based discriminations.
- Discuss the role of Dr Ambedkar in eradicating the casteism from Indian society.
- Conclude with how Dr Ambedkar's contributions have been fruitful and discuss how his efforts work as guiding force even today.

Introduction

"Caste is another name for control. Caste puts a limit on enjoyment. Caste does not allow a person to transgress caste limits in pursuit of his enjoyment..... — **B R Ambedkar**

India's caste system is among the world's oldest forms of surviving social stratification. The caste system is a social structure that divides people into different castes based on their birth, with each caste having its own social status, occupation, and restrictions. The four main castes in Hinduism were Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas, and Shudras, and there are also groups outside the caste system known as Dalits or "untouchables."

Historically, caste-based discrimination has taken many forms, such as untouchability, where people of lower castes were considered ritually impure and barred from certain activities or places, and restricted access to education and employment opportunities for lower caste individuals.

Dr Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar's most significant contribution lay in galvanising the movement for Dalit emancipation. He is credited with awakening the Dalit consciousness, which powered the community's bid for equality in the society.

Body

Dr Bhim Rao Ambedkar's contributions towards eliminating the caste-based discrimination from the society:

- **Drafting the Indian Constitution:** As the chairman of the Drafting Committee, Ambedkar played a crucial role in drafting the Indian Constitution, **which enshrined the principles of equality, liberty, and fraternity and outlawed caste-based discrimination** through various provisions, specially under Fundamental Rights under articles 14 to 18. It also provided a framework for social and economic justice under Directive principals of State policy as well.
- **Campaign for Social Equality:** Ambedkar was a vocal critic of the caste system and campaigned for social equality. He founded the "**Bahishkrit Hitakarini Sabha**" in 1924 to work for the welfare of the untouchables and later established the "**All India Scheduled Castes Federation**" to represent the interests of the marginalized sections of society. He also led the **Mahad Satyagrah**

in 1927 which is considered to be the “foundational event” of the Dalit movement. Earlier in 1930, he had led around 15000 Dalits to enter the Kalaram Temple to help them see God for the first time.

- **Provision of Reservation System:** Ambedkar proposed the reservation system, which ensured that a **certain percentage of government jobs and educational seats were reserved for the socially and economically backward sections of society**. This helped to provide access to education and employment opportunities to these sections and uplift them socially and economically.

Ambedkar **signed the Poona Pact with Mahatma Gandhi in 1932**, facilitating the reservation of seats for Dalits (then known as Depressed Classes).

- **Educational Reforms:** Ambedkar emphasized the importance of education in addressing social inequality and worked to establish educational institutions for the marginalized sections of society.

Conclusion

Ambedkar's efforts to empower Dalits and other marginalized communities through education, political representation, and affirmative policies like reservation and provision of Fundamental Rights such as Right to Equality (Art 14), Abolition of Untouchability (Art 17) and Abolition of titles (Art 18) have had a profound impact on Indian society.

Despite the progress made in recent decades, caste-based discrimination remains a major challenge for Indian society. However, Ambedkar's legacy and vision continue to provide a roadmap for a more inclusive and equitable India.

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