



Perspective: The Legacy of Baba Saheb Ambedkar

For Prelims: [Dr. B.R. Ambedkar](#), [Indian Constitution](#), [Reserve Bank of India](#), [Drafting Committee](#), [Mahad Satyagraha](#), [Kalaram Temple Entry Movement](#)

For Mains: Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's Contributions, Ambedkar's vision of guiding India toward becoming a developed nation by 2047

Why in News?

As India commemorates the [69th Mahaparinirvan Divas](#) on 6th December 2024, marking the **death anniversary of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar**, it is crucial to adopt Ambedkar's philosophy in [education](#), social justice, and [governance](#) to achieve the vision of a [Viksit Bharat \(Developed India\) by 2047](#).

Note:

- Mahaparinirvan, in [Buddhist texts](#), refers to **liberation from the cycle of birth and death**, symbolising ultimate peace.

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Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar



Babasaheb Ambedkar-
The Father of Indian Constitution

14 April 1891- 06 December 1956

1. Brief Profile

- A social reformer, jurist, economist, author and thinker of comparative religions
- Labour member in the **Executive Council of Viceroy (1942)**
- **Chairman** of the **Drafting Committee** for the new Constitution
- **First Law Minister** of India
- Posthumously awarded **Bharat Ratna (1990)**

2. Contributions

- Led the **Mahad Satyagraha in 1927** against Hindus
- Participated in **all three Round Table Conferences**
- Signed the **1932 Poona pact with Mahatma Gandhi** to abandon the idea of separate electorates for the depressed classes

The reserved seats for depressed classes were increased from 71 to 147 in provincial legislatures and to 18% in the Central Legislature.

- **Opposed the special status of J&K (Article 370)**
- Supported **Uniform Civil Code**
- Referred **Article 32** as "**soul of the Constitution and very heart of it**"

3. Resignation and Buddhism

- Differences over **Hindu Code Bill** led to his resignation from Cabinet in **1951**
- Converted to Buddhism; his death is observed as **Mahaparinirvan Diwas**

4. Important Journals

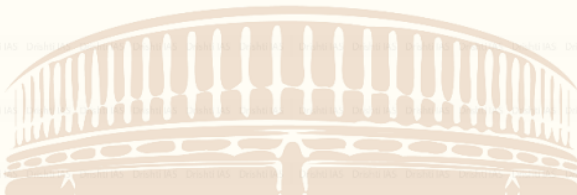
- Mooknayak (**1920**)
- Bahishkrit Bharat (**1927**)
- Samatha (**1929**)
- Janata (**1930**)

5. Books

- Annihilation of Caste
- Buddha or Karl Marx
- **The Untouchable: Who are They and Why They Have Become Untouchables**
- The Rise and Fall of Hindu Women

6. Organisations

- Estd. '**Bahishkrit Hitkarini Sabha**' (**1923**)
- Founded **Independent Labour Party (1936)**
- Founded **Scheduled Castes Federation (1942)**



What are Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's Contributions?

- **Social Reforms and Eradication of Caste Discrimination:**
 - Dr. Ambedkar dedicated his life to eradicating [caste-based discrimination and untouchability](#) in India.
 - His struggle included significant movements like the [Mahad Satyagraha \(1927\)](#) for accessing public water and the [Kalaram Temple Entry Movement \(1930\)](#) advocating equal participation in religious practices.
- **Constitutional Architect:**
 - As the **Chairman of the Drafting Committee** of the [Indian Constitution](#), Dr. Ambedkar ensured that it became a transformative and progressive document, advocating for [equality, justice, and fraternity](#).
 - The Constitution granted [universal adult suffrage](#), giving Indian women [equal voting rights](#) from the start, unlike many older democracies such as the US, the UK, and France.
- **Advocate for Women's Rights:**
 - Dr. Ambedkar championed women's emancipation, advocating for [maternity benefits](#) and equal rights.
 - He is considered a **pioneer in feminism in India**, as he scientifically addressed women's issues and incorporated their rights into the Constitution.
- **Economic Visionary:**
 - Dr. Ambedkar played a pivotal role in setting up institutions like the [Reserve Bank of India \(RBI\)](#) and the [Central Water Management Authority](#), contributing to India's economic and infrastructural development.
- **Education and Empowerment:**
 - A firm believer in education as a tool for liberation, Dr. Ambedkar pursued higher studies at prestigious institutions like Columbia University and the London School of Economics **despite facing severe discrimination**.
 - His emphasis on education as a means of **self and societal upliftment** remains a guiding principle for contemporary India.
- **Infrastructure Vision:** Envisioned and promoted large-scale infrastructure projects such as the [Damodar Valley Project](#), [Hirakud Dam](#), and [Sone River Project](#), ensuring sustainable resource management and national development.
 - Conceptualized the [National Power Grid System](#), demonstrating foresight in energy security and industrial growth.
- **Global Relevance of Teachings:**
 - Dr. Ambedkar's teachings on [labor laws](#), [gender equality](#), and the use of constitutional means to address conflicts have universal applicability.
 - His [Buddhist philosophy](#) and emphasis on social harmony make his ideas relevant to addressing global **socio-political challenges**.

Government's Tributes to Dr. B.R. Ambedkar

- **Bharat Ratna Award:** Dr. Ambedkar was posthumously awarded India's highest civilian honor, the [Bharat Ratna](#), in 1990.
- **Ambedkar Circuit:** Five places associated with Ambedkar's life were developed as pilgrimage centers ([Panchteerth Development](#)):
 - Birthplace in Mhow
 - Memorial in London (Shiksha Bhoomi)
 - Deeksha Bhoomi in Nagpur
 - Chaitya Bhoomi in Mumbai
 - Mahaparinirvan Bhoomi in Delhi
- **Bharat Interface for Money (BHIM) App:** A digital payment app was launched in his honor to promote [digital transactions](#), symbolizing financial inclusion and empowerment.

- **Dr. Ambedkar Centres of Excellence (DACE):** Launched in 31 Central Universities, these centers provide free coaching to [Scheduled Caste](#) students for **Civil Services Examinations**.
- **Ambedkar Social Innovation and Incubation Mission (ASIIM):** Supports Scheduled Caste youth with startup ideas through funding.
- **Commemorative Stamps and Coins:** Coins of Rs 10 and Rs 125 denominations and a commemorative postal stamp were issued to honor Dr. Ambedkar's legacy.
- **Monuments of National Importance:** Sites like the Sankalp Bhumi Banyan tree campus (Vadodara) and Ambedkar's school in Satara were proposed as [national monuments](#).
- **Constitution Day Celebrations:** Since 2015, November 26 has been observed as [Constitution Day](#), commemorating Ambedkar's role as the architect of the Indian Constitution.

What are the Challenges in Realizing Ambedkar's Vision?

- **Educational Disparities:** Access to quality education remains unequal, with [economically and socially weaker sections](#) of society often excluded from the mainstream system.
- **Gender Inequality:** While strides have been made, gender discrimination and [violence against women](#) still demand urgent attention.
- **Prevalence of Caste System:** Despite constitutional provisions, caste-based discrimination continues in various forms, including untouchability, social exclusion, and [violence against Dalits](#) and marginalized groups.
- **Socioeconomic Inequalities:** Bridging the gap between affluent and marginalized communities requires sustained efforts and policy interventions.
- **Lack of Awareness of Rights:** Many individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds remain unaware of their constitutional rights and entitlements.
- **Slow Progress in Mindset Change:** Changing deep-seated social attitudes and dismantling entrenched hierarchies remains a generational challenge.

Way Forward

- **Role of Education:**
 - Ensuring equitable **access to quality education for all**, particularly marginalized sections, remains essential. Teachers and academic institutions **must take proactive steps to integrate his teachings** into curricula and inspire students with his story of overcoming adversity.
- **Social and Economic Reforms:**
 - Ambedkar's vision of a casteless, egalitarian society is still a work in progress. Initiatives to eradicate caste-based discrimination, **improve the representation of marginalized communities**, and promote equal opportunities in employment and education are vital.
- **Accelerating Mindset Change:**
 - Foster dialogue through grassroots movements, media campaigns, and educational content to challenge entrenched hierarchies and prejudices.
 - Leverage cultural tools like storytelling, art, and social media to address stereotypes and promote inclusivity. Encourage inter-community collaboration and shared platforms to build trust and understanding across social divides.
- **Role of Stakeholders:**
 - Civil society organisations, government institutions, and corporate entities all have a part to play in propagating his legacy.
 - **Public-private partnerships** can foster initiatives like scholarships for underprivileged students, community development programs, and awareness campaigns about social justice and constitutional rights.

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Questions (PYQs)

Prelims:

Q. Which of the following parties were established by Dr. B. R. Ambedkar? (2012)

1. The Peasants and Workers Party of India
2. All India Scheduled Castes Federation
3. The Independent Labour Party

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 1 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

Ans: (b)

Mains:

Q. Mahatma Gandhi and Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, despite having divergent approaches and strategies, had a common goal of amelioration of the downtrodden. Elucidate. **(2015)**

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