

Dr B.R.Ambedkar JAYANTHI

Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar (14 April 1891 – 6 December 1956) was an Indian jurist, economist, social reformer and political leader who headed the committee drafting the Constitution of India from the Constituent Assembly debates, served as Law and Justice minister in the first cabinet of Jawaharlal Nehru, and inspired the Dalit Buddhist movement after renouncing Hinduism.

Ambedkar graduated from Elphinstone College, University of Bombay, and studied economics at Columbia University and the London School of Economics, receiving doctorates in 1927 and 1923 respectively and was among a handful of Indian students to have done so at either institution in the 1920s. He also trained in the law at Gray's Inn, London. In his early career, he was an economist, professor, and lawyer. His later life was marked by his political activities.

Early Life

Ambedkar was born on 14 April 1891 in the town and military cantonment of Mhow (now officially known as Dr Ambedkar Nagar) (now in Madhya Pradesh). He was the 14th and last child of Ramji Maloji Sakpal, an army officer who held the rank of Subedar, and Bhimabai Sakpal, daughter of Laxman Murbadkar. His family was of Marathi background from the town of Ambadawe (Mandangad taluka) in Ratnagiri district of modern-day Maharashtra. Ambedkar was born into a Mahar (dalit) caste, who were treated as untouchables and subjected to socio-economic discrimination.^[17] Ambedkar's ancestors had long worked for the army of the British East India Company, and his father served in the British Indian Army at the Mhow cantonment. Although they attended school, Ambedkar and other untouchable children were segregated and given little attention or help by teachers. They were not allowed to sit inside the class. When they needed to drink water, someone from a higher caste had to pour that water from a height as they were not allowed to touch either the water or the vessel that contained it. This task was usually performed for the young Ambedkar by the school peon, and if the peon was not available then he had to go without water; he described the situation later in his writings as "*No peon, No Water*". He was required to sit on a gunny sack which he had to take home with him.

Ramji Sakpal retired in 1894 and the family moved to Satara two years later. Shortly after their move, Ambedkar's mother died.

The children were cared for by their paternal aunt and lived in difficult circumstances. Three sons – Balaram, Anandrao and Bhimrao – and two daughters – Manjula and Tulasa – of the Ambedkars survived them. Of his brothers and sisters, only Ambedkar passed his examinations and went to high school. His original surname was *Sakpal* but his father registered his name as *Ambadawekar* in school, meaning he comes from his native village 'Ambadawe' in Ratnagiri district. His Marathi Brahmin teacher, Krishnaji Keshav Ambedkar, changed his surname from 'Ambadawekar' to his own surname 'Ambedkar' in school records

The Drafting of Indian Constitution

Upon India's independence on 15 August 1947, the new prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru invited Ambedkar to serve as the Dominion of India's Law Minister; two weeks later, he was appointed Chairman of the Drafting Committee of the Constitution for the future Republic of India.

Indian constitution guarantees and protections for a wide range of civil liberties for individual citizens, including freedom of religion, the abolition of untouchability, and the outlawing of all forms of discrimination. Ambedkar argued for extensive economic and social rights for women, and won the Assembly's support for introducing a system of reservations of jobs in the civil services, schools and colleges for members of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes and Other Backward Class, a system akin to affirmative action. India's lawmakers hoped to eradicate the socio-economic inequalities and lack of opportunities for India's depressed classes through these measures. The Constitution was adopted on 26 November 1949 by the Constituent Assembly.

Ambedkar was the first Indian to pursue a doctorate in economics abroad. He argued that industrialisation and agricultural growth could enhance the Indian economy. He stressed investment in agriculture as the primary industry of India. According to Sharad Pawar, Ambedkar's vision helped the government to achieve its food security goal. Ambedkar advocated national economic and social development, stressing education, public hygiene, community health, residential facilities as the basic amenities

Ambedkar refused to abandon his support for separate electorates until Gandhi was near death. He and the Hindu leaders then agreed to the pact, which declined separate electorates but gave increased representation to the Dalits within the Hindu electorate for a 10-year period. Ambedkar complained of blackmail, but the pact marked the start of the movement against "untouchability" within the Indian nationalist movement.

Communism

Ambedkar's views on Communism were expressed in his essay "Buddhism and Communism." He accepted the Marxist theory that the privileged few's exploitation of the masses perpetuated poverty and its issues. However, he did not see this exploitation as purely economic, theorizing that the cultural aspects of exploitation are as bad or worse than economic exploitation. In addition, he did not see economic relationships as the only important aspect of human life. He also saw Communists as willing to resort to any means to achieve proletarian revolution, including violence, while he himself saw democratic and peaceful measures as the best option for change. Ambedkar also opposed the Marxist idea of controlling all the means of production and private ownership of property: seeing the latter measure as not able to fix the problems of society. In addition, rather than advocating for the eventual annihilation of the state as Marxism does, Ambedkar believed in a classless society, but also believed the state would exist as long as society and that it should be active in development

On 2 April 1967, an 3.66 metre (12 foot) tall bronze statue of Ambedkar was installed in the Parliament of India. The statue, sculpted by B.V. Wagh, was unveiled by the then President of India, Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan. On 12 April 1990, a portrait of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar is put in the Central Hall of Parliament House. The portrait of Ambedkar, painted by Zeba Amrohawi, was unveiled by the then Prime Minister of India, V. P. Singh. Another portrait of Ambedkar is put in the Parliamentary Museum and archives of the Parliament House.

Indian Post issued stamps dedicated to his birthday in 1966, 1973, 1991, 2001, and 2013, and featured him on other stamps in 2009, 2015, 2016, 2017 and 2020.



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