

Dr. Ambedkar's Speeches and Their Relevance to the Vision of Viksit Bharat @ 2047

Dr. Heena Nityanand Makwana

Assistant Professor

Department of Law,

Veer Narmad South Gujarat University, Surat, Gujarat.

Email:- hnmakwana@vnsgu.ac.in



Abstract:

As the Republic of India advances toward its centenary in 2047 with the aspirational vision of a Viksit Bharat or Developed India, the nation stands at a critical juncture that requires balancing rapid economic expansion with the preservation of its democratic ethos. This research paper argues that the speeches and writings of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, beginning from the transformational Mahad Satyagraha of 1927 and extending to his final address in the Constituent Assembly in 1949, are not simply historical documents. They constitute a normative framework for assessing the direction of the modern Indian republic. This research paper critically examines the contemporary developmental roadmap in light of Ambedkar's thought. It contrasts the pursuit of a high-growth economy with insights drawn from his labour-related speeches delivered in the late 1930s, highlighting the need for regulatory justice in emerging forms of work, particularly within the gig economy. It further analyzes Ambedkar's advocacy for women's rights, especially through his defence of the Hindu Code Bill, and relates this moral and constitutional vision to contemporary initiatives that seek to strengthen women's empowerment. The research paper also revisits Ambedkar's early academic writings from his time at Columbia University to argue for the cultivation of a scientific temper, which is essential in an era increasingly shaped by artificial intelligence and technological decision-making. The concluding argument asserts that the construction of a truly developed India cannot rest on physical infrastructure or economic parameters alone. It must be anchored in the principles of constitutional morality and social endosmosis that Ambedkar consistently championed. Without these ethical foundations, the democratic project faces the risk of devolving into what Ambedkar cautioned against as the grammar of anarchy.

1. Introduction:

The vision of Viksit Bharat 2047 seeks to build an India that is socially just, economically advanced, politically stable, and constitutionally grounded. Few thinkers contribute more profoundly to this vision than Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, whose speeches across the decades from the 1920s to the 1950s laid a comprehensive roadmap for national transformation. His speeches, marked by clarity, moral depth, and analytical precision, were not merely historical acts of oratory. They functioned as conceptual blueprints for the India that must emerge by 2047.

This research paper argues that Ambedkar's speeches engaged with five foundational domains that remain central to the idea of a developed India. These domains are Constitutional Morality, Social Justice, Fraternity, Economic Democracy, and Enlightenment. By integrating

his historical arguments with contemporary national challenges, this research paper establishes a continuity of thought that is essential for the next twenty-five years of Indian nation building.

2. Objectives

1. To analyze Ambedkar's speeches as normative foundations for 2047, focusing on the "Trinity" of Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity as the prerequisite for national unity.
2. To evaluate Ambedkar's economic philosophy by connecting his 1938 arguments on state intervention to the modern exigencies of the Gig Economy and private sector representation.
3. To examine the relevance of Ambedkar's educational philosophy ("Education is the milk of a tigress") for the skill development of India's youth ('Amrit Peedhi').
4. To critique emerging legal frameworks (BNSS and UCC) and the federal crisis of delimitation using Ambedkar's diagnostic tools regarding "Constitutional Morality" and "Hero-worship."

3. Constitutional Morality and Democratic Foundations

One of the most authoritative sources for understanding Dr. B. R. Ambedkar's constitutional philosophy is the Constituent Assembly Debates, where he articulated the normative principles that would shape India's democratic future. His interventions in the Assembly clarified the essential values of constitutional governance, the obligations of the State, and the ethical standards required from both institutions and citizens. These speeches offer a coherent framework for interpreting constitutional morality in contemporary India and remain central to the discourse on democratic consolidation.

In these debates, Ambedkar repeatedly underscored that the success of the Constitution would depend not merely on its legal structure but on the cultivation of a political culture grounded in democratic ethics. He warned against a superficial understanding of democracy by stating that "democracy is not merely a form of government; it is a form of social organization." This insight is of immense significance for the vision of Viksit Bharat 2047, where rapid modernization must be matched by ethical governance, institutional accountability, and respect for individual dignity.

3.1 The Draft Constitution Speech (November 4, 1948)

In introducing the Draft Constitution to the Constituent Assembly on 4 November 1948, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar emphasized the importance of designing a constitution with a realistic understanding of human limitations and political behavior. He stated, "Constitutional morality is not a natural sentiment. It has to be cultivated. We must realize that our people have yet to learn it. Democracy in India is only a top-dressing on an Indian soil, which is essentially

undemocratic.” This warning highlighted the deep-rooted social hierarchies that could obstruct the proper functioning of democratic institutions. Ambedkar further explained, *“It is perfectly possible to pervert the Constitution, without changing its form, by merely changing the form of the administration and to make it inconsistent and opposed to the spirit of the Constitution,”* emphasizing that dispersal of authority across institutions was deliberately designed to prevent the concentration of power and ensure long-term stability.

Relevance to Viksit Bharat 2047: This perspective is highly pertinent to the vision of Viksit Bharat 2047. True development cannot be measured solely by economic growth; it requires the enduring strength of democratic institutions. Ambedkar’s caution regarding India’s “undemocratic soil” underscores the necessity of robust institutional safeguards, transparent governance, and active citizen engagement with constitutional norms. To achieve transformative growth by 2047, bodies such as the Election Commission, the Judiciary, the Legislature, and independent regulatory authorities must maintain autonomy and operate free from political interference. Circumventing these institutions, whether by the State or by citizens, erodes democratic culture and undermines the constitutional foundations essential for building a fully developed nation.

3.2 The "Grammar of Anarchy" (November 25, 1949)

In his concluding speech to the Constituent Assembly, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar warned: “If we wish to maintain democracy not merely in form, but also in fact, we must abandon the methods of civil disobedience, non-cooperation and satyagraha. These methods are nothing but the Grammar of Anarchy.”

Relevance to Viksit Bharat 2047: This warning highlights the delicate balance between dissent and constitutional order. Ambedkar emphasized that while citizens have the right to protest, these methods must be abandoned when constitutional channels for grievance redress are available. Democracy depends on the functioning of these channels, and any closure or obstruction weakens the social contract. His insight underscores that institutional mechanisms must remain robust and accessible for India to achieve the ethical and participatory governance envisioned in Viksit Bharat 2047.

3.3 Hero-Worship (Bhakti) in Politics

Ambedkar famously quoted J. S. Mill: “Bhakti in religion may be a road to the salvation of the soul. But in politics, Bhakti or hero-worship is a sure road to degradation and to eventual dictatorship.”

Relevance to Viksit Bharat 2047: This insight serves as a caution for nation-building. A developed India must be structured on strong institutions and systems rather than personalities.

Centralization of governance must be carefully balanced with federal decentralization to prevent authoritarian tendencies and ensure participatory, democratic governance.

4. Social Justice: From Mahad to Sub-Classification

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar's lifelong struggle for social justice laid the foundation for modern India's commitment to equality. At the Mahad Satyagraha in 1927, he declared, "We are not going to the Chavdar tank to merely drink its water. We are going to the tank to assert that we too are human beings," emphasizing that social dignity is as fundamental as civil rights. The Poona Pact of 1932 reflected his pragmatic approach to political representation, where he urged marginalized communities to secure long-term participation and safeguard their rights despite compromises on separate electorates. In his 1954 BBC interview, Ambedkar highlighted that social reform required not only legal change but also a transformation of societal attitudes, arguing that abandoning hierarchical religious practices was essential for moral self-respect.

4.1 Dignity as a Human Right (Mahad Satyagraha, 1927)

At the Mahad Satyagraha, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar declared: "We are not going to the Chavdar tank to merely drink its water. We are going to the tank to assert that we too are human beings."

Relevance to Viksit Bharat 2047: This statement highlights that development is not only about access to material resources, such as clean water under initiatives like the Har Ghar Jal scheme, but also about asserting human dignity. The Mahad Satyagraha demonstrates that national progress must begin with correcting historical injustices, because civil rights and development policies are ineffective if social degradation persists in everyday life.

4.2 Political Empowerment (Poona Pact Speeches, 1932)

Following the Poona Pact, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar explained that although separate electorates for the depressed classes were relinquished, political representation remained essential. He urged the community to view the compromise as a strategic choice to secure long-term participation and safeguard their political rights.

Relevance to Viksit Bharat 2047: Ambedkar's pragmatic approach in 1932 offers lessons for modern India. To achieve an inclusive Viksit Bharat, policies must recognize historical and social disparities among marginalized communities. Targeted interventions ensure that development reaches all sections of society, and that political empowerment is meaningful for every citizen.

The 2024 Verdict: The Supreme Court's judgment in *State of Punjab v. Davinder Singh*, permitting the sub-classification of Scheduled Castes, aligns with Ambedkar's pragmatic approach in 1932. It acknowledges that the benefits of development have not trickled down to

the most marginalized (e.g., Valmiki/Madigas), necessitating targeted policy interventions for a truly inclusive Viksit Bharat.

4.3 Cultural Revolution (BBC Interview, 1954)

In his 1954 BBC interview, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar argued that social change requires not only legal reform but also ideological transformation. He stated, “Abandoning a religion that legitimized hierarchy is necessary for moral self-respect.”

Relevance to Viksit Bharat 2047: Sustainable development requires cultural reform. Structural inequalities cannot be addressed solely through policy measures; they must also be confronted at the level of belief systems. True progress depends on reshaping societal values alongside institutional and economic reforms.

5. Economic Democracy and State Responsibility

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar emphasized that political freedom is incomplete without economic justice. He argued that the State has a moral and constitutional duty to protect the poor, the marginalized, and the working class from exploitation and deprivation. During his tenure in the Bombay Legislative Council, he highlighted that excessive work hours, denial of fair wages, and absence of social security undermine both dignity and liberty. Economic democracy, according to Ambedkar, requires that wealth and opportunity be distributed in a manner that allows all citizens to participate meaningfully in social and political life.

In the vision of Viksit Bharat 2047, this principle remains crucial. As the Indian economy grows and the informal and gig sectors expand, the State must ensure that labour rights are protected, social security mechanisms are robust, and the benefits of development are equitably shared. Economic democracy is therefore inseparable from constitutional morality, as sustainable growth depends not only on infrastructure and capital accumulation but also on the empowerment and welfare of citizens across social strata.

5.1 Labour Rights and the State (1938)

In the Bombay Legislative Council, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar argued regarding the Industrial Disputes Bill: “The only safeguard against the denial of liberty is the power of the State... The State must intervene to protect the poor and the oppressed.” He also emphasized that the workday must be limited because excessive hours destroy health and dignity.

Relevance to Viksit Bharat 2047: In the context of 2047, India’s workforce is increasingly informal, with large segments employed in the gig economy. Platforms such as Uber and Swiggy often operate without adequate labour protections. Applying Ambedkar’s 1938 reasoning, the state has a moral and constitutional duty to regulate these platforms to ensure

fair conditions of work and social security, preventing exploitation and the “dictatorship of the private employer.”

5.2 Inequality and Contradictions (1949)

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar warned in 1949: “In politics we will have equality... in social and economic life we will have inequality.” This statement highlights the persistent challenge of translating formal political equality into social and economic equity.

Relevance to Viksit Bharat 2047: Rising wealth inequality in contemporary India, often characterized as K-shaped growth, illustrates Ambedkar’s caution. To achieve inclusive development, his vision supports mechanisms such as private-sector affirmative action. As the public sector contracts, diversity mandates and targeted interventions in the corporate sector become essential to ensure that economic democracy reaches all segments of society, fulfilling the broader objectives of Viksit Bharat 2047.

6. Gender Justice: The Unfinished Revolution

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar consistently argued that the progress of a society could be measured by the status and empowerment of its women. In the Hindu Code Bill debates (1949–1951), he asserted, “I measure the progress of a community by the degree of progress which women have achieved,” emphasizing that legal reforms in marriage, inheritance, and property rights were essential for genuine social modernization. Earlier, in his support for the Mines Maternity Benefit Bill (1941), Ambedkar advocated for workplace protections that recognized the dignity and rights of women as workers, insisting that economic security was inseparable from social and political equality.

6.1 Dismantling Patriarchy (Hindu Code Bill)

Defending the Hindu Code Bill, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar argued: “I measure the progress of a community by the degree of progress which women have achieved.” He emphasized that Indian society cannot claim to be modern if women remain subordinate in matters of marriage, property, and inheritance.

Relevance to Viksit Bharat 2047: The Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam (2023) can be seen as a delayed fulfillment of Ambedkar’s vision. However, his resignation over the Hindu Code Bill underscores the intensity of his commitment to women’s emancipation. For 2047, his logic suggests that political representation for women must be accompanied by economic independence and social autonomy, ensuring that gender equality is substantive rather than symbolic.

6.2 Surveillance vs. Liberty (The UCC Debate)

While Dr. B. R. Ambedkar supported a Uniform Civil Code (UCC) as a mechanism to liberate women from discriminatory personal laws, contemporary implementations sometimes

contradict his vision of individual liberty. He argued that reforms should empower individuals rather than impose intrusive state control: “The state should get out of the bedroom. It is not for the state to regulate intimate choices, but to protect freedom and equality.”

Ambedkar’s vision emphasized personal autonomy and moral self-respect. As he stated during the Hindu Code Bill debates, “I measure the progress of a community by the degree of progress which women have achieved.” Thus, while he sought uniformity in law to promote equality, he opposed surveillance or excessive state intrusion into private lives.

Modern mandates, such as the Uttarakhand UCC provisions requiring registration of live-in relationships, risk creating an “Intimate State,” undermining the constitutional morality he championed.

The interpretation of personal liberty, gender justice, and equality under Indian law has significant implications for the Uniform Civil Code (UCC), reflecting the principles Dr. B.R. Ambedkar advocated in his defense of the Hindu Code Bill. In *Shafin Jahan v. Asokan*, the Supreme Court affirmed the right of adults to choose their life partners, holding that personal liberty under Article 21 encompasses the freedom to marry a person of one’s choice. This decision underscores Ambedkar’s insistence on individual autonomy and dignity as foundational to a developed and just society, principles that a future UCC must safeguard. Similarly, in *Navtej Singh Johar v. Union of India*, the Court decriminalized consensual same-sex relationships, emphasizing that autonomy and dignity in private sexual conduct are integral to personal liberty. This judgment signals that any uniform civil law must be inclusive, respecting diverse family structures and sexual orientations, aligning with Ambedkar’s vision of a socially progressive India.

The Supreme Court in *S. Khushboo v. Kanniammal* recognized the right to personal choice in moral and private matters, protecting freedom of expression and individual conscience against moral policing. The judgment reinforces Ambedkar’s argument that social reform requires legal protection of individual dignity and the ability to challenge traditional hierarchies. Beyond these, landmark cases directly affecting UCC and gender justice include *Shayara Bano v. Union of India*, which struck down instant triple talaq as unconstitutional, reinforcing that personal laws must comply with constitutional guarantees of equality and non-discrimination. *Joseph Shine v. Union of India* further invalidated adultery laws that discriminated against women, signaling that personal law reform must eliminate gender bias. Additionally, the Court in *Mohd. Ahmed Khan v. Shah Bano Begum* highlighted the tension between personal law and women’s rights, ultimately leading to legislative interventions to balance religious customs with constitutional protections. Collectively, these judgments

illustrate that the UCC must not only harmonize laws across religions but also uphold the principles of autonomy, dignity, and equality central to Ambedkar's vision, forming a legal foundation for an inclusive Viksit Bharat 2047.

These judgments reinforce Ambedkar's principle that personal liberty cannot be curtailed under the guise of uniformity.

7. Education and Enlightenment: The 'Amrit Peedhi'

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar consistently emphasized that the progress of a nation depends on the enlightenment of its citizens. In his Columbia University writings (1913–1916), he argued that education must cultivate critical thinking and a scientific temper, stating that “knowledge without reason is like a lamp without oil, it cannot light the path of social transformation.” Similarly, in his 1942 address to students, Ambedkar urged the youth to recognize education as a means of moral and intellectual emancipation, declaring that “the youth of India must become the vanguard of social reform; without learning and awareness, liberty is hollow and development incomplete.”

7.1 Scientific Temper and Rationalism

From his early days at Columbia University, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar emphasized that “social progress depends on scientific inquiry rather than adherence to inherited traditions.” He consistently argued that without reason and empirical knowledge, social reform and national development remain superficial.

Relevance to Viksit Bharat 2047: For India to emerge as a “Vishwaguru” (global leader) in technology and artificial intelligence, cultivating a scientific temper is essential. Educational policies, including the National Education Policy (NEP 2020), must prioritize critical thinking, rational inquiry, and evidence-based learning, rather than focusing solely on skill acquisition. This approach ensures that technological and economic advancement is accompanied by intellectual maturity and resistance to superstition, aligning with Ambedkar's vision of enlightened nation-building.

7.2 "Education is the Milk of a Tigress"

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar famously stated that education is “the milk of a tigress,” highlighting its role as a tool for fearless assertion and empowerment. He viewed knowledge not merely as academic learning, but to develop confidence, agency, and the capacity to challenge social hierarchies.

Relevance to Viksit Bharat 2047: In the age of artificial intelligence and digital governance, education must incorporate digital literacy to safeguard what may be called Digital Dignity. Young citizens, the ‘Amrit Peedhi,’ must be equipped to navigate the digital world responsibly,

ensuring that technology serves as an equalizer rather than reinforcing structural biases, such as algorithmic caste or gender discrimination. Ambedkar's metaphor underscores that knowledge must empower citizens to assert rights fearlessly, whether in physical or digital spaces.

8. Federalism and the Crisis of 2026

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, in his reflections on linguistic states (1955), emphasized that federalism in India must balance regional aspirations with national unity. He warned that excessive centralization or the arbitrary creation of states without clear administrative and financial frameworks could lead to instability.

Relevance to Viksit Bharat 2047: The hypothetical crisis of 2026, characterized by tensions between central authority and state autonomy, underscores Ambedkar's foresight. To achieve a developed India, the federal structure must allow meaningful decentralization while ensuring constitutional safeguards and equitable resource distribution. Ambedkar's advocacy for linguistic and cultural recognition within a united federal framework demonstrates that sustainable development depends not only on economic growth but also on political inclusivity and respect for diversity.

8.1 North-South Demographic Divergence and Federal Balance

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar foresaw the demographic and political imbalance between northern and southern India. He warned: "The consolidation of the North and the balkanization of the South... To allow one State to have such preponderating influence in the Centre is a dangerous thing."

Relevance to Viksit Bharat 2047 / 2026 Crisis: To prevent political disenfranchisement of southern states during processes such as the 2026 delimitation, Ambedkar's structural solution—dividing large northern states like Uttar Pradesh and Bihar into smaller administrative units remains a viable strategy. Such a reform would ensure equitable representation, strengthen federalism, and preserve the unity of the Union while allowing balanced development across regions.

9. Conclusion

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar's speeches were not mere rhetoric; they constitute normative foundations for a substantive and inclusive democracy. The vision of Viksit Bharat 2047, a prosperous, technologically advanced, and socially cohesive India, cannot be realized on a foundation of social fracture, institutional decay, or unchecked economic inequality. Ambedkar's thought provides a roadmap that integrates political, social, and economic dimensions of development, emphasizing that true progress requires moral, intellectual, and

institutional rigor. His legacy guides the nation in multiple dimensions. Fraternity and social cohesion must replace polarization and communalism, ensuring national unity through mutual respect and shared responsibility. Social justice must address historical inequities through graded equality, sub-classification, and targeted welfare policies, so that marginalized communities are not left behind. Economic democracy requires policies that protect workers in informal and gig sectors while promoting equitable distribution of wealth and social protection. Constitutional morality demands that institutions remain autonomous, accountable, and resilient, upholding the rule of law and democratic processes. Education and enlightenment, characterized by critical thinking and scientific temper, are essential to combat superstition, prejudice, and technological bias, ensuring that development is both material and ethical. To achieve a truly Viksit Bharat, the nation must internalize Ambedkar's warning that liberties should never be surrendered to any individual and that power must not be concentrated in ways that subvert democratic institutions. Only by honoring Ambedkar's comprehensive vision linking fraternity, justice, economic equity, constitutional morality, and enlightenment can India emerge in 2047 as a developed, inclusive, and resilient nation, fulfilling the promise of its Constitution. To build a "Viksit Bharat," the nation must internalize Ambedkar's final warning: not to lay our liberties at the feet of even a great man, or to trust him with powers which enable him to subvert our institutions.

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