

Confronting Marginalisation

Q1. List two Fundamental Rights in the Constitution that Dalits can draw upon to insist that they be treated with dignity and as equals. Re-read the Fundamental Rights listed on page 14 to help you answer this question.

Answer Two fundamental rights of Dalits can emphasize that they are treated with respect and they are equal:

1. Right to Equality: All persons are equal before the law. No citizen can be discriminated against on the basis of his socio-economic background, caste, religion, etc. Everyone has the same right to access all public places.
2. Right to Freedom: This includes the right to freedom of expression and expression independently, the right to form associations, the right to reside in any part of the country and the right to practice any profession, occupation or occupation.

Q2. Re-read the story on Rathnam as well as the provisions of the 1989 Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act. Now list one reason why you think he used this law to file a complaint.

Answer The Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Atrocities Prevention Act, 1989 seeks to punish those who humiliate or misbehave a member of Dalit or tribal groups. Rathnam asked supporting the law, thwarting their grievance under the above act, protecting their village from domination and violence of powerful castes.

Q3. Why do Adivasi activists, including C.K. Janu, believe that Adivasis can also use this 1989 Act to fight against dispossession? Is there anything specific in the provisions of the Act that allows her to believe this?

Answer CK including tribal activists Janu believes that tribals can also use this 1989 act to fight against the spread as the act does not guarantee the tribals to be forcibly extracted from the ground resources. They specifically stated that the Act merely confirms that what has already been promised to tribal people in the Constitution, their lands cannot be sold or bought by non-tribal people. In cases where this has happened, the Constitution also guarantees the right of the tribal people to return their land. Tribals who are already evicted and cannot return to their land should get compensation. That is, the government should formulate plans and policies to live and work elsewhere.