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STATUS OF WOMEN IN INDIA: A LEGAL STUDY

Dr. Vinod Kumar*

Introduction

From inside the womb, till her death, a woman is always face with danger. She faced like molestation, abusing, physical and mental tortures. Women are also human beings they also have a some thoughts, desires and dreams and feel the same pain that men feel. Birth of a girl child is considered as a liability but born of a son is an asset to the family. The Indian women used to enjoy a much better status in Vedic times. Women along with men received education, participated in popular assemblies, observed Brahmcharya and Upanayan was performed for them. During Vedic times women could own property and remarry. Marriage was a sacrament and monogamy was a general rule¹. Child Marriage and Sati were not known. The wife was given a place of honour and participated with her husband in religious ceremonies. But at the same time, history itself is the witness to the fact that time and again injustice has been done to women. The two glaring examples can be found in the Hindu epics: Ramayana and Mahabharata themselves where in the former Goddess Sita was left by Lord Rama in the later, Princess Draupadi was put on stake by the Pandavas, while gambling. Later on, her modesty was outraged in front of her husband by the Kauravas. Hence, from the time immemorial woman is at the mercy of men.

United Nation's and Status of Women

The preamble to the Charter of the United Nations mentions the determination of the people of the United Nations "to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women". The principle of equal rights for men and women has been incorporated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It clearly provides that without any discrimination all fundamental rights and freedoms incorporated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights are equally available to both men and women². The principle of 'Gender Equality' is considered to be the most important in the growth and progress of a civilization, thus the equality provisions available in the Universal Declaration of Human rights are as such incorporated in both the

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¹ However, there were some rich classes which practiced polygamy

² Article 1 "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights."

Article 2 "Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedom set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind including sex".

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