



100 Years of the Self-Respect Movement

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2025 marked the centenary of the [Self-Respect Movement](#), which advocated **rationalism, social equality, and anti-caste ideology**.

Self-Respect Movement

- **About:** It was launched by [EV Ramasamy \(Periyar\)](#) in 1925 in Tamil Nadu, who later established the **Dravidar Kazhagam** and started the Tamil weekly **Kudi Arasu (Republic)**.
 - Periyar was influenced by social reformers like [Jyotirao Phule](#) and [BR Ambedkar](#), and also participated in the [Vaikom Satyagraha](#).
- **Objectives:** It aimed to **eradicate the caste system, reject Brahminical dominance**, and promote **rational thinking** and **individual dignity**, as outlined in its pamphlets **Namathu Kurikkol** and **Tiravitak Kalaka Lateiyam**.
- **Key Features:**
 - **Pioneered Self-Respect Marriages**- simple **priest-less ceremonies** that were **legally recognized**.
 - **Fought against social evils** like the **Devadasi system, caste discrimination, and restrictions on widow remarriage**.
 - **Promoted women's leadership**, with notable figures like **Annai Meenambal** and **Veeramal**.
 - **Meenambal** bestowed the title '**Periyar**' on **EV Ramaswamy**, and was referred to as "**my sister Meena**" by **BR Ambedkar**.

Read More: [Caste Movement in India](#)

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