



Indian Council of
Social Science Research

ICSSR
Sponsored

National Seminar
ON

**“UNIFORM CIVIL CODE :
AN INSTRUMENT OF UNIFORM JUSTICE”**


Organized by
DEPARTMENT OF LAW
Assam University, Silchar



Date : 12th – 14th August, 2025


Venue : Assam University, Silchar, Assam, India





In the intricate tapestry of human society, the quest for gender justice stands as both a timeless aspiration and an urgent imperative. Across cultures and continents, gender inequality persists as a stubborn stain on the fabric of humanity, perpetuating cycles of discrimination and marginalization that undermine the fundamental principles of equality and dignity. History tells us that sometimes non-discrimination against women and guarantee of their dignity are followed in the society in letter and spirit; sometimes there is deviance from this ideal path for many socio-political reasons as evil obnoxious practices grip the society for centuries. Then again there starts a sincere movement by enlightened sections in the society or by the sufferers themselves towards the goal of achieving non-discrimination and restoration of dignity either in law (includes family laws) or other segments of the society. What is important to be noticed is that some societies are open to newer ideas and adopt the positive changes without resistance while some societies are putting up strong resistance to the paths of gender justice and dignified lives of women; as a result, little change or no change towards emancipation and empowerment of women is seen. Another important historical fact is that some societies inherently are very dynamic in nature but some are very static in nature or static to a certain extent, therefore resulting in slow change towards guaranteeing the women with their basic rights of equality, freedom and dignity, though the fact remains that these societies are not showing this type of rigid approach towards modernisation, the principles of equality, freedom and dignity in many other developed countries.

In this context, the significance of Uniform Civil Code has to be judged. Article 44 of the Constitution of India directs that “The State shall endeavour to secure the citizen a Uniform Civil Code throughout the territory of India” enshrined as DPSP in Part IV of the Constitution. The reluctant attitude of the policy makers of the country to secure Uniform Civil Code for all Indians since the adoption of Indian Constitution implies that it has become a dead letter in the Constitution-though there are strong demands from within the society or judicial suggestions by the apex Court. It is worthy to be mentioned that India is a country where the family laws (or personal laws) are deeply rooted in religion. Four religious communities i.e. Hindus, Muslims, Christians and Parsis, are governed by their own sets of family laws which are prescribed by their respective religions. It is undenyng that these family laws (or personal laws) are discriminatory in nature towards the women (sometimes men also) and show no dignity or freedom for the women, though the degree of the evils vary from religious communities to communities. It is also undenyng that some societies like Hindus, Christians and Parsis show huge liberal attitude towards discarding discrimination and amending those evil laws while Muslim community show little less liberalism in incorporating gender-friendly dignified family laws, though situation is qualitatively changing and it is changing relatively fast towards the goals of freedom, dignity and equality. Hence, Uniform Civil Code i.e. a uniform family laws (or personal laws) for marriage, divorce, maintenance,



succession, adoption and guardianship, is thought to be a panacea where equal and dignified laws would be resonating by making India a place where the great mantra of Manu-smriti would be echoed from every corner of the society i.e. where women are worshipped (honoured), God dwells there and women (including men) of all religious communities would take part in the national reconstruction movement-with their talents and skills peacefully without becoming the victims of discriminatory and undignified family laws. Uniform Civil Code is rooted in Fundamental Right jurisprudence of classical India which are nothing but inalienable Human Rights. In the language of Justice P. N. Bhagwati in *Maneka Gandhi vs. Union of India* [1978 SCC (1) 248], “These fundamental rights represent the basic values cherished by the people of this country since the Vedic times and they are calculated to protect the dignity of the individual and create conditions in which every human being can develop his personality to the fullest extent. They weave a “pattern of guarantees on the basic structure of human rights” and impose negative obligations on the State not to encroach on individual liberty in its various dimensions.” Additionally, Uniform Civil Code would be an ideal one if good ideas from other philosophies are also brought into its realm and Uniform Civil Code should /must not be identified with Hindu laws only.

As the country is marching to the threshold of a new era (national renaissance), marked by evolving norms and shifting paradigms, the imperative to confront and dismantle the entrenched barriers of gender-based discrimination has never been more pressing. For too long, harmful stereotypes and systemic biases have cast a long shadow over the lives of women, constraining their opportunities, stifling their aspirations, and relegating them to the margins of society. The promise of gender justice reminds the country-a promise of a world where every individual, irrespective of gender identity or expression, can flourish and thrive in a landscape of equity, inclusivity, and respect. The inevitable questions do arise before the society while discussing about and researching on Uniform Civil Code: What are the most effective strategies for preventing and addressing gender-based discrimination and implement gender friendly family laws in India? How can media and education be leveraged to challenge gender stereotypes and promote inclusivity in law and the society? What are the implications of India’s Uniform Civil Code for gender equality and uniform justice? What are the root causes of gender violent family laws for some minority religious sections of the society? What are the reasons for accepting social change and amendment of family laws by keeping at par with modernisation and core Constitutional values by the majority community? What are the convergence and divergence of areas of the existing family laws in the larger canvas of Right to Equality, Right to Dignity or Right to religion? Is it really a violation of core Constitutional morality like Equality, Justice, Dignity and Freedom of Religion? Are there areas of similarities and uniformities in the existing religion based family laws which can be guiding factors for policy formulation? Amidst the shadows of adversity, there emerges a beacon of hope-a rallying cry for

change, adaption, transformation, social reform embodied in the form in this **NATIONAL SEMINAR ON “UNIFORM CIVIL CODE: AN INSTRUMENT OF UNIFORM JUSTICE”**.

ABOUT THE SEMINAR

This seminar brings together legal scholars, constitutional experts, policymakers, jurists, social reformers, activists, and students to deliberate on the legal, socio-cultural, historical, and political dimensions of the UCC, with the objective of harmonizing personal laws in line with the principles of justice, equality, dignity, and non-discrimination. The event aims to examine discriminatory practices in existing personal laws, explore shared and secular principles that could serve as a foundation for a model UCC, assess the feasibility of its implementation in a diverse society, and propose actionable, inclusive policy recommendations that uphold constitutional morality. Furthermore, the seminar seeks to foster meaningful national and regional discussions on balancing religious freedom with gender justice and secular governance, while encouraging a multidisciplinary understanding of UCC through insights from law, sociology, political science, and gender studies, thereby contributing constructively to the ongoing national discourse and reform initiatives in India.

Over and above, the potential role of UCC as a mechanism to promote and bring uniformity in a multi-religious secular country like India cannot be forgotten. This is due to the reason that people of India should be governed by one sets of laws-the laws which are in tune with Constitutional Morality. If people are divided on the basis of religious lines, then common brotherhood and fraternity will not be fostered among themselves. And as the personal laws of marriage, divorce, maintenance, succession, guardianship and adoption are based on religion resulting in four sets of laws of four religious communities, definitely it will cause fragmentation, weakening of national integration, destruction of social cohesion and bringing of dis-uniformity. There should not be any division of the people of this country on religious grounds and no deviation from the path of secularism, where Uniform Civil Code will guide the people uniformly in their personal laws. Secularism as basic structure of the Constitution and the religious-based personal laws for Hindus, Muslims, Christians and Parsis are mutually exclusive. Truly speaking, religion-based personal laws in India are damaging, destroying and diluting a core basic structure i.e. Secularism. Unity and integrity is of paramount importance in India which is a sine-qua-non for development, therefore, religion-based personal laws are the stumbling block of unity, uniformity and National Integration.

Theme : Uniform Civil Code – An Instrument of Uniform Justice

• Concept Overview :

- * Envisions the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) as a transformative legal tool to foster equality, dignity, and justice in India's diverse society.
- * Anchored in Article 44 of the Indian Constitution as a Directive Principle of State Policy.
- * Aims to replace religion-based personal laws with uniform civil laws applicable to all citizens, regardless of religion or gender.

• Key Objectives :

- * **Eliminate Gender-Based Discrimination:** Reform unequal laws undermining women's rights in family matters.
- * **Promote Secular Justice:** Base laws on constitutional values rather than religious doctrines.
- * **Align with Constitutional Morality:** Balance equality (Art. 14), religious freedom (Art. 25), and dignity for all.

• Seminar Goals :

- * Critically examine the implementation challenges of UCC.
- * Propose a model UCC based on Indian jurisprudence, global practices, and contemporary needs.
- * Encourage interdisciplinary dialogue on reform strategies and public sensitization.

Sub-Themes for Research Papers

1. Discrimination in Religion-Based Family Laws

- * Analyze gender and religious inequalities in Hindu, Muslim, Christian, and Parsi personal laws.
- * Examine gaps in marriage, divorce, succession, guardianship, and maintenance.
- * Compare customary tribal laws to identify bias.

2. Similarities Across Indian Family Laws

- * Identify common principles (e.g., consent in marriage) across major religions.
- * Explore potential for consensus in UCC drafting.
- * Use commonalities to reduce resistance.

3. Comparative Study: South Asian Family Laws

- * Review gender justice frameworks in Bangladesh, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bhutan, Afghanistan, Maldives.
- * Understand reforms balancing modern law and religious norms.

* Extract learnings for India's UCC.

4. Smritis, Shrutis & Tribal Customary Laws

- * Explore classical jurisprudence (Smritis/Shrutis) and tribal customs.
- * Focus on North-East tribes like Khasi, Garo, Naga.
- * Evaluate historical support for gender equality in Indian traditions.

5. Family Laws in Developed Nations

- * Study secular family laws in USA, UK, Canada, Australia, Germany, France.
- * Learn how they address gender neutrality and legal uniformity.
- * Adapt international best practices to Indian context.

6. Family Laws in Islamic Countries

- * Review reforms in Saudi Arabia, UAE, Albania, Indonesia.
- * Highlight progressive interpretations of Sharia.
- * Address concerns about UCC vs. religious freedom.

7. Role of Media & Education

- * Use media to build public support for UCC.
- * Integrate UCC awareness into education systems.
- * Counter myths and promote gender-sensitive legal literacy.

8. Case Studies: Goa & Uttarakhand UCC

- * Examine existing UCC models at state level.
- * Analyze Goa's long-standing UCC and Uttarakhand's recent initiative.
- * Propose model UCC frameworks for national rollout.

9. Socio-Cultural, Political & Economic Barriers

- * Investigate patriarchal norms, economic dependencies, and political resistance.
- * Study how these factors reinforce discrimination in personal laws.
- * Propose systematic reform strategies.

10. Judiciary's Perspective on UCC

- Analyze landmark judgments : Shah Bano (1985), Sarla Mudgal (1995).
- Highlight judicial advocacy for constitutional morality over religious law.
- Explore role of judicial activism in UCC implementation.

11. Viksit Bharat, Gender Equality & UCC

- Link UCC to India's development agenda.
- Emphasize UCC's role in empowering women and achieving gender parity.
- Present UCC as a tool for inclusive national progress.

Expected Outcome of the National Seminar : Finding all the patent and latent unifying factors in the family laws. Identifying effective strategies and best practices for promoting justice with actionable recommendations for policy reform i.e. models of Uniform Civil Code for laws of marriage, divorce, maintenance, succession, adoption and maintenance for all religious communities.

Call for Research Papers

We invite original research papers from academicians, researchers, legal practitioners, policymakers and students on the seminar's sub-themes. Selected papers will be published in an edited Book with an ISBN (published by National Publisher).

Guidelines for Submission

• **Abstract Submission :**

- Word limit: 300 words.
- Must include title, author(s) name, designation, institution, email, and contact number.
- Keywords: 4–6.
- Format: MS Word, Times New Roman, font size 12, 1.15 line spacing.
- Submit to : ausnationalseminarucc@gmail.com by 30th July 2025.

• **Full Paper Submission :**

- Word limit: 4,000–6,000 words (including references).
- Citation style: Indian Legal Institute Citation Style
- Format: MS Word, Times New Roman, font size 12, 1.5 line spacing.
- Submit by 10th August 2025.
- Originality: Papers must be original in expression and unpublished. Plagiarism will lead to rejection of the paper.
- Presentation: Selected papers will be presented during the seminar (10 minutes per presenter).
- Co-presenters: Allowed up to two presenters.

Important Dates :

- Abstract Submission Deadline: 30th July 2025
- Notification of Abstract Acceptance: 1st August 2025
- Full Paper Submission Deadline: 10th August 2025
- Early Online Registration: 10th August 2025
- Seminar Dates: 12th – 14th August, 2025

Registration Details

- Registration Fees:
- Faculty / Academicians / Industrial Corporations / Professionals: INR 800
- Research Scholars: INR 500

• **Payment Details :**

- **Account Name :** Assam University Project A/C II
- **Bank :** UCO Bank • **Branch :** Assam University, Silchar, 788011 • **A/C No. :** 20050110035450
- **IFSC :** UCBA0002005

• **Registration Process :**

- Complete the online registration form available at : <https://tinyurl.com/NationalSeminarUCC>
- Submit proof of payment (screenshot of transaction) along with the Registration Form.
- Registration includes seminar kit, lunch and tea on all the days of seminar. Accommodation is available only on request at an additional cost.

National Seminar Organizing Committee

- Patron: Prof. Rajive Mohan Pant, Hon'ble Vice-Chancellor, Assam University
- Chairperson: Prof. Dr. Madhumita Dhar Sarkar, Dean, School of Legal Studies
- Seminar Director: Dr. Partha Pratim Paul, Head (In-Charge), School of Legal Studies
- Seminar Coordinator: Dr. Ponkhi. Borah, Assistant Professor, School of Legal Studies
- Members (from faculty side): Prof. R.R.Mishra, Dr. Amitabh Singh, Smt. Pompita Paul, Dr. Suranjan Das, Dr. Deepshikha Bhattacharjee, Dr. Nasruddin Khan, Dr. Thejani-i-Pohena, Dr. Dristirupa Patgiri, Dr. Sandeep Kr. Suman, Dr. Widonlule Newme, Dr. Ashish Ransom, Sri Sangharsh Mishra.
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- **Website** : www.aus.ac.in/uccseminar2025
- **Address** : Department of Law, Assam University, Silchar, Post: Assam University; District: Cachar; P.S: Dwarbandh; State: Assam; PIN : 788011

About Assam University: Assam University (a central university) established under the Assam University Act XIII of 1989, is located approximately 20 KM away from Silchar, covers over 600 acres over several hillocks and is known for its picturesque landscape; It also has a second campus at Diphu in Karvi Anglong District. Assam University with 16 Schools, 40 Departments, and 76 Affiliated Colleges, it serves over 35,000 students. Assam University not only has met the region's higher education needs but also neighbouring states of North-East. The university prioritizes value-based education, research, and leadership, producing graduates who excel in fields Assam University is surrounded by hillocks, tea gardens, and the peaceful, lush environment of the Barak Valley region, Assam University provides an ideal setting for academic pursuits. Assam University is steadily marching towards achieving its core value, "Pratyayabodhakritirupapattaye", meaning "Conviction, Confidence, and Creativity" by fostering an environment of knowledge, research, and socio-cultural exchange in the state and the country.

About the Department of Law: Department of Law was established in 2004 and currently offers a five-year B.A. LL.B. (Hons.) program, a two-year LL.M. program, and a four-year Ph.D. program. Over the past two decades, the Department has made significant contributions to the legal field, having produced good numbers of Academicians working in prestigious Central, State and Private Universities and Colleges all over India and Judicial Magistrates serving in various State Judicial Services. Additionally, many of its alumni are employed as legal consultants in reputed companies and law firms in India and foreign countries, socially responsible lawyers practicing in Trial Courts of this region and other parts of India and Constitutional Courts-High Courts and Supreme Court. The research papers of the teachers of Department of Law published in many reputed National and International Journals have been duly acclaimed in the fields of law and jurisprudence. The Department has emerged as a centre of excellence in North east in legal education and research, having produced a number of doctoral scholars since 2014. At present, the Department is supported by a dedicated faculty of 15 full-time members, including the full time non-law faculty members. Most importantly, Department of Law achieved tremendous success as students started participating National Level Moot Court Competition and bringing laurels to the Department.

Join AUS in this transformative journey to shape a future where justice, equality, and dignity prevail through the Uniform Civil Code.