



Menstrual Hygiene Policy

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In News: The Supreme Court of India has directed **pan-India implementation** of the **National Policy on Menstrual Hygiene (MH) for School-going Girls** in all schools for adolescent girls from **Classes 6–12**, reinforcing **menstrual health as a fundamental right**.

Key Highlights of the Judgment

1. Menstrual Health as a Fundamental Right

- Right to life under **Article 21** includes the **right to menstrual health**.
- Ensures access to safe menstrual products, sanitation, and hygiene education.

2. Linkage with Right to Equality (Article 14)

- Inaccessibility of menstrual hygiene measures prevents **equal participation in schools**.
- Menstrual stigma creates **structural discrimination**.

3. Dignity of the Girl Child

- Dignity must translate into **living conditions free from humiliation, stigma, and exclusion**.
- Highlights the intersection of **health, education, and gender equality**.

4. Structural Discrimination

- Lack of sanitary products and facilities infringes on:
- **Right to Education (Article 21A)**
- **RTE Act obligations**
- Reinforces the need for institutional measures.

5. Mandatory Measures in Schools

- Sensitisation of **male teachers and students**.
- **Gender-segregated toilets**.
- Provision of **free sanitary napkins**, preferably through **vending machines**.
- Dedicated **Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM) corners**.

Government Initiatives Promoting Menstrual Hygiene

Initiative

Key Features

Scheme for Promotion of MH

Awareness campaigns, access to sanitary napkins, promotion of eco-friendly disposal.

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National Guidelines on MHM

Part of Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, focus on rural awareness.

Pradhan Mantri Bharatiya Janaushadhi Pariyojna (PMBJP)

Provides 'Suvidha' oxo-biodegradable pads at ₹1/pad through Janaushadhi Kendras.

Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP)

Awareness generation on menstrual hygiene and sanitary pad usage.

Samagra Shiksha Scheme

Installation of **sanitary pad vending machines and incinerators** in schools.

Significance

1Strengthens **gender equity** in schools.

2Links **health, dignity, and education** under fundamental rights.

3Encourages **eco-friendly menstrual product adoption**.

4Promotes **institutional responsibility** rather than individual compliance.