



KAMARAJ IAS ACADEMY
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Menstrual Leave Policy:

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Karnataka's menstrual leave policy: progressive step or symbolic gesture?

About the Policy

The Menstrual Leave Policy refers to granting paid or unpaid leave to menstruating women or persons during their menstrual cycle to address health and productivity concerns.

Constitutional Provisions:

oArticle 15(3) – allows the State to make special provisions for women, justifying menstrual leave as positive discrimination.

oArticle 42 (Directive Principle) – directs the State to ensure just and humane conditions of work and maternity relief, which can extend to menstrual health.

Significance:

oPromotes gender-sensitive workplaces, menstrual health awareness, and work-life balance.

oEncourages inclusive and compassionate employment policies, improving participation of women in the workforce.

Challenges:

oMay lead to stigmatization or discrimination in hiring women employees.

oLack of awareness, infrastructure, and uniform implementation across sectors.

oPossible misuse or difficulty in verifying claim

oThere is no national legislation mandating menstrual leave in India.

Way Forward:

oNeed for a national framework balancing gender equity and workplace productivity.

oPromote menstrual hygiene management, workplace sensitization, and flexible work options rather than rigid leave structures.

Best Practices:

oKarnataka has become the first State in the country to approve one day of paid menstrual leave per month for all women employees, covering both government and private sectors.

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oOdisha and Bihar have similar policies for government employees, while Kerala has implemented this in universities.