

4. Menstrual Leave Policies

Why in News?

- Recently, The Supreme Court of India has rejected a PIL (Public Interest Litigation) regarding menstrual leave for workers and students across the country.

Highlights

- The court called it a policy matter and pointed out that menstrual pain leave has different dimensions and may also act as a disincentive for employers from engaging female employees.
- Menstrual leave or period leave refers to all policies that allow employees or students to take time off when they are experiencing menstrual pain or discomfort.
- Some companies in India have introduced menstrual leave policies, including Zomato, which announced a 10-day paid period leave per year in 2020.
- Other companies, such as Swiggy and Byjus, have also followed suit.
- Bihar and Kerala are the only Indian states that have introduced menstrual leave policies for women.
- Bihar's policy was introduced in 1992, allowing employees two days of paid menstrual leave every month.
- Kerala recently announced that the state's higher education department will grant menstrual and maternity leaves for students in universities under the department, and a Kerala school has also introduced a similar system.
- Parliament has seen attempts to introduce menstrual leave and menstrual health products bills, but they have not been successful so far.
- The Menstruation Benefits Bill, 2017' and Women's Sexual, Reproductive and Menstrual Rights Bill in 2018