



**Date – 19 August 2022**

## **Free Period Product: Scotland**

- Scotland has become the first nation in the world to legally protect the right to access free period products and to make period products free to all by passing the Period Products Act.
- Period Poverty occurs when low-income people cannot afford or access essential period product/s (such as tampons, sanitary pads, etc.).



### **Scotland's Initiative**

- Under the Period Products Act, schools, colleges and universities, as well as local government bodies, must provide a variety of period products in their bathrooms for free.
- Every council in Scotland is required to work with local communities to determine the best access point for menstrual/period products.

### **Accessibility:**

- The mobile phone app (PickUpMyPeriod) also helps people find the nearest location such as a local library or community center where they can get period products.
- Period products will be available in libraries, swimming pools, public gyms, community buildings, town halls, pharmacies and doctor's offices.

### **Status of Menstrual Hygiene in India:**

**According to a study by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) in the year 2011:**

- Only 13% of girls in India are aware of menstruation before menstruation.
- 60% of girls drop out of school because of menstruation.

- 79% faced low self-confidence due to menstruation and 44% were embarrassed and humiliated by restrictions.
- Menstruation adversely affects women's education, equality, maternal and child health.

### **National Family Health Survey 5:**

#### **Use of period products in women aged 15-24 years:**

- In seventeen states and union territories 90% or more of women use period products.
- The share of women using period products in Puducherry and Andaman and Nicobar Islands was 99%.
- Tripura, Chhattisgarh, Assam, Gujarat, Meghalaya, Madhya Pradesh and Bihar – 70% or less of women use period products.
- Bihar is the only state where the figure of less than 60 percent has been recorded.

#### **The top three states that reported an increase in women's use of period products from NFHS 4 to NFHS 5:**

- Bihar: 90%
- Odisha: 72%
- Madhya Pradesh: 61%

### **Government of India Initiative for Menstrual Hygiene:**

#### **Cleanliness plan:**

- Shuchi Yojana aims at creating awareness about menstrual hygiene among adolescent girls.
- It was launched in 2013-14 initially in a centrally sponsored form.
- However, the Center asked the states to take over the scheme from 2015-16.

#### **Menstrual Hygiene Plan:**

- Menstrual Hygiene Scheme 2011 focused on promoting menstrual hygiene among adolescent girls (10-19 years) in rural areas of selected districts.

#### **Sabla Program:**

- It was implemented by the Ministry of Women and Child Development.
- It focuses on nutrition, health, hygiene and reproductive and sexual health.

#### **National Rural Livelihood Mission:**

- It helps self-help groups and small manufacturers to manufacture sanitary pads.

#### **Swachh Bharat Abhiyan and Swachh Bharat: Swachh Vidyalaya (SB:SV):**

- Menstrual hygiene management is also an integral part of the Swachh Bharat Mission.

#### **Guidelines for Gender Issues in Sanitation (2017):**

- These have been developed by the Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation to ensure gender equality and empowerment of women and girls with regard to sanitation.

- Safe and effective menstrual hygiene management is an essential component for better and stronger development of adolescent girls and women.

### **National Guidelines on Menstrual Hygiene Management:**

- It was released by the Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation in the year 2015.
- It addresses every component of menstrual hygiene, including raising awareness, driving behavior change, increasing demand for better hygiene products, and capacity building.

### **Conclusion:**

- Government of India should also consider Scotland's point of view and provide period product or at reasonable price/discount.
- Government can also promote small scale sanitary pad manufacturing units to make low cost pads more easily available, this will also help in income generation for women.
- The government needs to provide directed efforts for awareness and education about menstrual and menstrual hygiene, and access to safe products, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) infrastructure.
- Although menstrual health cannot be achieved through government efforts alone, community and family level interventions are necessary as a social issue.

**Swadeep Kumar**

## **Visit of Gabon Delegation to India**



- Recently a delegation from Gabon visited India and interacted with the Indian business community, also India congratulated Gabon on its Independence Day (17 August).
- Earlier, the Vice President of India visited Gabon, where he signed two MoUs.

### **What are MoUs:**

- Establishment of a Joint Commission between the Governments of India and Gabon.
- Diplomatic Training Institute, Sushma Swaraj Institute of Foreign Services and Gabonese Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
- India signed to work with Gabon to strengthen cooperation in various fields at the bilateral, regional and multilateral levels.

## **India-Gabon Partnership:**

### **Diplomatic:**

- India and Gabon have had cordial and friendly relations since the pre-independence era of Gabon.
- The former Vice President of India visited the African nation of Gabon in May 2022, which was India's first high-level visit to Gabon.
- Both India and Gabon currently serve as non-permanent members of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC).

### **Trade and commerce:**

- Bilateral trade between the two countries has reached US\$ 1.12 billion in the year 2021-22.
- India is the second largest destination for exports from Gabon.
- In the business sector, more than 50 Indian companies are engaged in the Gabon Special Economic Zones.

### **Cooperation on International Forum:**

- Both India and Gabon are members of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM).
- NAM focuses on contemporary mainstream issues of relevance to the developing world.
- Gabon supports India's interests in various international fora.
- India congratulated Gabon on being elected as a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council for the period 2022-23.
- India has supported the Azulwini consensus and the position of ordinary Africans enshrined in the Sirte Declaration.
- The Azulwini Consensus is an agreement on the reform of international relations and the United Nations, agreed upon by the African Union.
- It calls for a more representative and democratic Security Council, in which Africa is represented, like other countries of the world.
- Sirte Declaration (1999), was a resolution adopted to establish the African Union.

### **International Solar Alliance:**

- Gabon is one of the first countries to sign and ratify the International Solar Alliance Agreement.
- India has assured to provide all possible help to Gabon to achieve its renewable energy goals.
- Gabon plans to achieve 100% clean energy by 2030.

### **Education:**

- Many Gabon citizens follow scholarship/training programs offered by India under the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) and ICCR schemes.

### **Energy Cooperation:**

- India imported crude oil worth about US\$ 670 million from Gabon in the year 2021-22, making it an important partner for India's energy security requirement.



### Indian Diaspora:

- The people of the Indian community are basically engaged in infrastructure projects, trade, export of wood and metal scrap.
- The Indian diaspora is making significant contributions to various areas of Gabon.
- The Indian community in Gabon has kept Indian culture alive and major Indian festivals are celebrated together by the entire community.

### Conclusion

- There is a need to enhance India-Gabon cooperation in other areas such as green energy, services, health and agriculture.
- Both countries should widen their economic partnership to attract investments.
- There is immense potential for cooperation in agriculture such as knowledge transfer in the agricultural sector from India to Gabon.

**Swadeep Kumar**

## Historical Significance of Krishna Janmasthan

**Context:** Today, the famous Hindu festival Janmasthan is being celebrated by Hindus across the world. This festival is being celebrated in Islamic countries like Pakistan, Bangladesh, UAE, etc by Hindu communities as well as in many European countries.



### Introduction

Krishna Janmasthan is celebrated as the birth date of the Lord Krishna, the incarnation of Vishnu. The worship of the Lord Krishna has been practiced for 3-4th century BC. The birthplace of the Krishna is considered Mathura, one of the important Mahanpadas existing during the 6th century BC. As per the mythology, Krishna took birth for the elimination of evil and demons and the re-establishment of righteousness (Dharma). In Bhagwat Gita, it has been clearly described that

***Yada Yada hi Dharmasya Glanir bhavata Bharata  
Abhyusthanam Adharsa tadatmanam srijamyham  
Paritranaya cha Sadhunam Vinashaya cha drshkritam  
Dharma Sansthanarthaya Sambhavani Yuge Yuge***

## History of the lord Krishna

Lord Krishna is described as the disciple of the sage Ghor Angiras as per the Chandogya Upanishad. In this Upanishad, lord Krishna is described as the Vrishni tribe who were pastoralists. During the Kushan period, many sculptures related to lord Krishna have been received from the Mount of Mathura (Khinkali Teela). The Vasu Doorjamb Inscription is an early 1st-century CE Sanskrit inscription in Brahmi script dedicated to the deity Vāsudeva, related to the Vaishnavism tradition of Hinduism. Mathura was the center of the Jain culture also.

There are descriptions of the punch Vrishniveer in the inscription (Besnagar Inscription). The tribe of Vrishni is also known as Asthdyayi of Panini. The cult of the Vrishni heroes existed as an independent cult in Mathura. As per the Mora well inscription **Punch, vrashniveers** are worshiped by a particular clan.

The Vrishni heroes are generally identified as

1. Vasudeva- Son of the Devaki and Baasudeva
2. Sankarshan – Son of Rohini and Vasudeva. He is also known as the Balrama or Haldhara (Representing the significance of agriculture)
3. Praduman- Son of Vasudeva Krishna and Rukmini
4. Samba – Son of Vasudeva and Jamvanti
5. Aniruddh – Son of Pradyumna

## Historical Significance of the Lord Krishna

The incarnations of the Vishnu explain about the gradual development of the socio-cultural milieu. Krishna is described as the 9th incarnation of Vishnu who believed in diplomacy. For the victory and political success, Krishna supported the diplomatic tools (Unrighteousness tools, and in many places Krishna violated the rules of the war). In fact, it explains the political milieu of 6-5th century BC when the various states were emerging and conflicting and merging with each other.

## Conclusion

As per the above discussion, it is almost clear that the Krishna Janmashthami festival is not a new festival but it has been celebrated in India for hundreds of years not only in northern India but also in southern India. During the Chola period, many copper sculptures of Krishna are recovered from the Chola dynasty. However Chola kings were the followers of Shaivites but still, the sculptures of Krishna explain the historical significance of Janmashthami. In India, every festival giving some messages to the world is celebrated. This festival also gives a message to the world that the end of evils is inevitable.

Anshul