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ದಿನಾಂಕ: DATE:07/06/249

Holiday-trimming exercise ends in 4th Saturday bonus

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru: Bowing to pressure from political parties and several organisations, the state government on Thursday dropped its proposal to trim the number of holidays for its employees, who currently enjoy 105 every year, and, what's worse, may effectively add seven more days.

The additional holidays may come into effect only next year as the list for this year has been frozen and any change now will affect the work schedule, law and parliamentary affairs minister Krishna Byregowda said af-

WHAT'S NEW

+12 | Fourth Saturdays TOTAL

to be holidays -5 | Casual leaves 7 more holidays cut from 15 to 10

WHAT STAYS 24 | General holidays/Jayantis

· 112 52 | Sundays 12 | Second Saturdays 2 | Restricted holidays

ter a cabinet meeting. The government will take a final call on this soon, he added.

a year

bring up

tally to

Going by the new plan, government Karnataka employees will get 112 days off a year. In comparison, staff in Tamil Nadu get 122 days off, while in Maharashtra, the figure is just 94.

By the proposed leave calendar, around 5 lakh government employees will not work on fourth Saturdays of all months. This is in addition to the 24 general holidays and Jayantis: the government's move to work on all Jayantis, except Gandhi Jayanti and Ambedkar Jayanti, has been dropped. To offset the increase in holidays, the number of casual leaves has been cut from 15 to 10.

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Govt dropped earlier idea

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arlier, the government had proposed to convert _Jayantis into restricted holidays, where those who celebrate them could go on leave but it would be a working day for the office. While the Jain community petitioned the government against dropping Mahavir Jayanti from the list, the government feared a backlash from other groups as well and dropped the idea.

The Sixth Pay Commission recommended scrapping holidays on Jayantis and implementing a five-day week system. "We welcome the government's decision to give an additional holiday every month," said HK Ramu, president, Karnataka State Government Employees' Union. Employees had sought a fiveday week but the government only agreed to an additional holiday, he added.

The cabinet in November 2018 decided to constitute a sub-committee headed by Byregowda to look into holidays, including earned leave of government employees, to increase the efficiency of the administration.