

Family pehchan patra(ID) for J&K residents

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In news— Jammu and Kashmir Lt Governor has recently announced that the government has decided to introduce a family pehchan patra (identity card) for residents of the Union Territory.

What is family pehchan patra proposed for J & K residents?

- It will be **an identity card with a unique eight-digit alphanumeric number to identify each family and its members** through the head of the family.
- The card will **contain details of all members of the family, including their names, ages, qualifications, employment status, etc.**
- The card will be **linked with the Aadhaar and bank account number** of the head of the family.
- It will be a single identifier for every family and individual in the UT that will instantly confirm their eligibility for government welfare schemes and facilitate direct transfer of benefits to their bank accounts with minimum human interference, officials said.
- According to government officials, the **primary objective is to create an authentic, verified, and reliable database of families in J&K** to ensure speedy and transparent doorstep delivery of welfare schemes to eligible beneficiaries.
- The database will help to identify and weed out duplicate ration cards and Aadhaar, and will help the government identify families that may have a number of educated youth, but without jobs.
- Since the database will have information on births, deaths, and marriages that will be continuously and automatically updated, it will help the government plan

policy based on authentic, updated population data.

- Because updations such as the removal of a woman's name from the family of her parents and addition in the family of her husband will be carried out automatically, people will no longer have to visit local officials for such purposes.
- The government has said that the **database will be created only with the consent of the family.**
- **But the families that do not consent to having the card will likely face practical difficulties** because benefits such as subsidised rations through the targeted public distribution system under the National Food Security Act, free medical treatment, old age/ widow pensions, help to victims of militancy, family pensions in case of death of sole earning member of a family, scholarships, etc. will be linked with the family ID card.

Similar initiatives by other states-

- **Several other states have proposed or created similar databases. Haryana was the first state to introduce** the concept of the family pehchan patra, and **Punjab introduced it** in 2021 for direct transfer of benefits to families who are eligible for various social service schemes of the government.
- **In November 2022, the Uttar Pradesh government decided to launch a UP Parivar Kalyan Card** for similar purposes.

Rajasthan's Congress government has introduced something called a "Jan Aadhaar" which "aims to be the single identifier of a family and also an individual", and "the sole vehicle on which delivery of all kinds of cash as well non-cash benefits and services are riding and reaching to the door-step of the residents".