

Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS)

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In news

Recently, the Centre said that 32 states and Union Territories have implemented 'One Nation One Ration Card' plan, which seeks to give over 80 crore beneficiaries under the NFSA(through TPDS) access to their food grains entitlement from anywhere in the country.

Key updates on ONORC

- Under the Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) reforms, the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution is implementing One Nation One Ration Card (ONORC) plan with an objective
 - To introduce nation-wide portability of all NFSA ration cards and enable the migrant ration card holders under the Act
 - To seamlessly access the Public Distribution System (PDS) anywhere in the country and lift their entitled foodgrains from any electronic Point of Sale (ePoS) enabled Fair Price Shop (FPS) of their choice, by using their existing/same ration card after biometric/ Aadhaar authentication on ePoS device at the time of lifting of foodgrains from the FPS.
- Under the National Food Security Act (NFSA) the Centre provides 5 kg of foodgrains per person per month to over 80 crore beneficiaries at a highly subsidised price of Rs. 2-3 per kg.
- Presently, out of the total given coverage of 81.35 crore persons under the NFSA, around 80 crore beneficiaries are receiving their entitled quota of

foodgrains through public distribution system (PDS) on monthly basis.

- The Department of Food Distribution, Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution in association with State/UT Governments is implementing 'One Nation One Ration Card' (ONORC) plan for nation-wide portability of ration cards under the National Food Security Act, 2013 (NFSA)
- As per the Ministry of Food and Consumer Affairs, the ONORC facility has been enabled in 32 states/UTs covering nearly 69 crore beneficiaries, almost 86% of NFSA population of the country
- TPDS under NFSA is operated under the joint responsibilities of the central and state/UT Governments.
- States are responsible for the identification of eligible beneficiaries under NFSA, issuance of ration cards to them, lifting of foodgrains from the designated depots, distribution to ration cardholders as per their entitlements through ration shops

About the Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS)

- In June, 1997, the Government of India launched the Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) with focus on the poor.
- TPDS aims to provide subsidised food and fuel to the poor through a network of ration shops.
- Under the PDS, States were required to formulate and implement foolproof arrangements for identification of the poor for delivery of foodgrains and for its distribution in a transparent and accountable manner at the FPS level
- The scheme, when introduced, was intended to benefit about 6 crore poor families for whom a quantity of about 72 lakh tonnes of food grains was earmarked annually.

- The identification of the poor under the scheme was done by the States as per State-wise poverty estimates of the Planning Commission for 1993-94 based on the methodology of the **“Expert Group on estimation of proportion and number of poor” chaired by Late Prof Lakdawala.**
- The allocation of food grains to the States/UTs was made on the basis of average consumption in the past i.e. average annual off-take of food grains under the PDS during the past ten years at the time of introduction of TPDS
- Under the operation of TPDS, the beneficiaries come under one of the two categories, namely, “Households Below the Poverty Line” (BPL), and “Households Above the Poverty Line” (APL)
- Further, the functions of this scheme are divided between centre and state.
- The Central Government is responsible for procurement of food grains, as well as transportation to designated depots of Food Corporation of India (FCI).
- The state government is responsible for allocation and distribution of food grains within the state, identification of beneficiaries and issuance of ration cards.
- The FCI and the Commission of Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP) were set up by the government of India, mainly to improve domestic procurement and storage of food grains.

How does TPDS work?

- Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) is operated under the joint responsibility of the Central and the State/Union Territory (UT) Governments.
- The Central Government is responsible for procurement, allocation and transportation of foodgrains upto the designated depots of the Food Corporation of India.
- The operational responsibilities for allocation and

distribution of foodgrains within the States/UTs, identification of eligible beneficiaries, issuance of ration cards to them and supervision over and monitoring of functioning of Fair Price Shops (FPSs) rest with the concerned State/UT Governments.

Public Distribution System (PDS) in India

Public distribution of essential commodities was in existence in India during the interwar period. However, PDS, with its focus on distribution of food grains in urban scarcity areas, had emanated from the critical food shortages of the 1960s. PDS had substantially contributed to the containment of rise in food grains prices and ensured access of food to urban consumers. As the national agricultural production had grown in the aftermath of the Green Revolution, the outreach of PDS was extended to tribal blocks and areas of high incidence of poverty in the 1970s and 1980s.

The Revamped Public Distribution System (RPDS) was launched in June, 1992 with a view to strengthen and streamline the PDS as well as to improve its reach in the far-flung, hilly, remote and inaccessible areas where a substantial section of the poor live.