

'ONORC scheme in Delhi, Bengal soon'

Low Aadhaar seeding delaying 'One Nation One Ration Card' in Assam: govt.

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Delhi and West Bengal are expected to roll out the 'One Nation One Ration Card' (ONORC) scheme by the end of the month, while Chhattisgarh is still in the process of acquiring the necessary devices, according to Food Secretary Sudhanshu Pandey.

However, the low penetration of Aadhaar in Assam due to concerns linked to the National Population Register (NPR) is hampering the implementation of ONORC there, he told presspersons on Monday.

"In Assam, the basic reason is that the Aadhaar penetration is still low and we are working with UIDAI on that. As Aadhaar seeding improves, then Assam should



Women carrying a bag of rice during the distribution of rations in Guwahati last year. ■RITU RAJ KONWAR

also follow. We are pushing hard," he said. "There are issues related to the National Population Register, so Aadhaar seeding [of ration cards] itself is only 36-38% in comparison to the national rate of 92%," he said.

However, he declined to elaborate on how Aadhaar

for ration purposes is linked to the NPR, or the National Register of Citizens (NRC).

The Centre is engaged in political battles with the non-BJP governments in Delhi and West Bengal regarding their failure to roll out ONORC, but has taken a different tack so far on Assam,

which is a BJP-ruled State.

"In the case of Chhattisgarh, process for procurement of ePOS [electronic Point of Sale] has begun. Almost 4000 devices are expected to be delivered in July, and the remaining in August," said Mr. Pandey. "Delhi and West Bengal will be coming on board very soon as their ePOS machines have been installed and testing trials are happening. Central and State teams are working together in close coordination on this."

These are the only four States that are not implementing the ration card portability scheme that the Centre has been pushing as the solution for migrant workers' difficulty to access subsidised food, especially during the pandemic.