DBT for Mid Day Meal Scheme

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Why in News

The **Ministry of Education** has approved the proposal **to provide monetary assistance to students through Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) of the cooking cost component of the Mid-Day-Meal (MDM) Scheme**, to all eligible children.

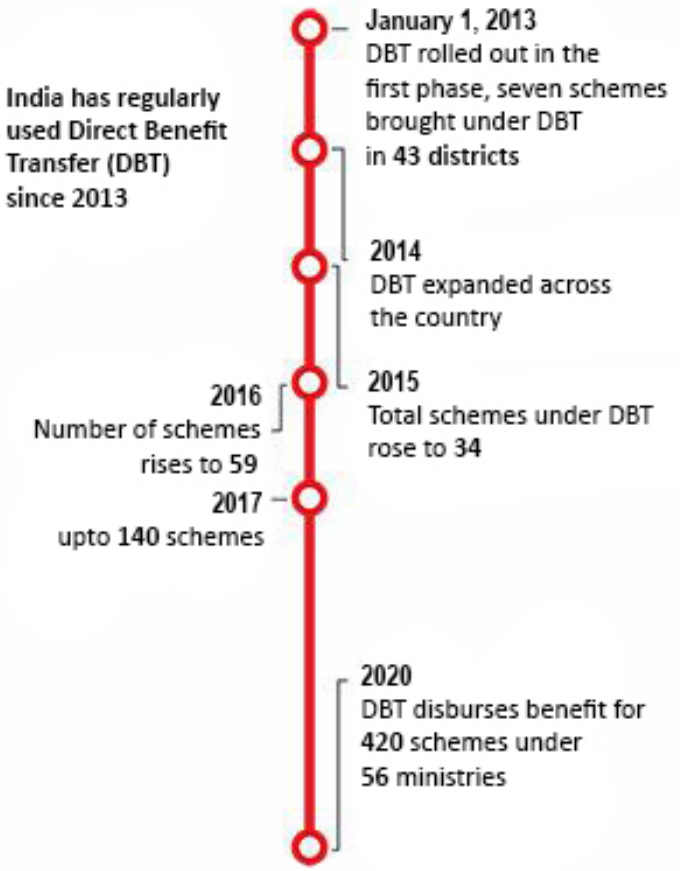
Key Points

- **Implications of DBT for MDM Scheme:**
  - With schools closed for months due to Covid-19, this move will **give a fillip to the Midday Meal programme.**
  - This is **in addition** to the Government of India's announcement of distribution of free-of-cost food grains at Rs. 5/kg per person per month to nearly 80 crore beneficiaries under the **Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PM-GKAY).**
  - It will **help safeguard the nutritional levels of children** and **aid in protecting their immunity** during the challenging pandemic times.
  - This **one time special welfare measure** will **benefit about 11.8 crore children studying in class I to VIII in the 11.20 lakh Government and Government aided schools** across the country.
  - The **central government will provide additional funds of about Rs. 1200 crore** to state governments and UT administrations for this purpose.

- **About Mid-Day-Meal Scheme:**
  - **Launch:** It is a **centrally sponsored scheme** which was **launched in 1995.**
    It is considered as the **world's largest school feeding programme** aimed **to attain the goal of universalization of primary education.**
  - **Nodal Ministry:** Ministry of **Education.**
  - **Aim:** To address hunger and malnutrition, increase enrolment and attendance in school, improve socialisation among castes, provide employment at grassroot level especially to women.
  - **Provisions:**
    - Provides **cooked meals to every child within the age group of six to fourteen years studying in classes I to VIII** who enrolls and attends the school.
    - Cooked meal having **nutritional standards** of 450 calories and 12 gm of protein for primary (I-V class) and 700 calories and 20 gm protein for upper primary (VI-VIII class).
    - If the **Mid-Day Meal is not provided in school on any school day** due to non-availability of food grains or any other reason, **the State Government shall pay food security allowance** by 15th of the succeeding month.
  - **Beneficiaries:** All children in government and aided schools and madrasas supported under **Samagra Shiksha.**

Direct Benefit Transfer Scheme

- **Aim:** It has been visioned as an aid for simpler/faster flow of information and funds to the beneficiaries and to reduce the fraud in the delivery system.
- **Implementation:** It is a mission or an initiative by the government of India started on 1st January 2013 as a way to reform the government delivery system.
  Central Plan Scheme Monitoring System (CPSMS), the earlier version of the **Public Financial Management System (PFMS)**, of the Office of Controller General of Accounts, was chosen to act as the common platform for routing of the Direct Benefit Transfer.
- **Components of DBT:** Primary components in the implementation of DBT schemes include Beneficiary Account Validation System, a robust payment and reconciliation platform integrated with RBI, NPCI, Public & Private Sector Banks, Regional Rural Banks and Cooperative Banks (core banking solutions of banks, settlement systems of RBI, Aadhaar Payment Bridge of NPCI) etc.
- **Other Schemes involving DBT:**
  Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana, **National Food Security Mission**, **Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana**, **PM KISAN**, **Swachh Bharat Mission Gramin**, **Atal Pension Yojana**, **National AYUSH Mission.**


India has regularly used Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) since 2013
January 1, 2013
DBT rolled out in the first phase, seven schemes brought under DBT in 43 districts
2014
DBT expanded across the country
2015
Total schemes under DBT rose to 34
2016
Number of schemes rises to 59
2017
upto 140 schemes
2020
DBT disburses benefit for 420 schemes under 56 ministries

Source: PIB