

## Duare Ration Scheme declared void



The Calcutta High Court has recently held that West Bengal Government's Duare Ration Scheme is illegal.

### Key facts

- A Division Bench of the Calcutta High Court held that the Duare Ration Scheme ultra vires the National Food Security Act, 2013 (NFSA).
- It called the scheme illegal as it coincides with the National Food Security Act, 2013.
- It held that the West Bengal transgressed the limit of delegation by obliging the fair price shop dealers to undertake doorstep delivery of rations since there are no provisions specifying the same in the NFSA.
- Doorstep delivery of foodgrains can be provided only if the Act is amended by the Central Government for the doorstep delivery or to provide such power to the state government.
- Earlier, the vires of the Duare Ration Scheme was upheld by two single judge orders in the Calcutta High Court.
- Justice Moushumi Bhattacharya upheld the scheme in December 2021 by stating that a reform in the targeted distribution system and a welfare scheme to provide food and nutritional security is critical.
- Justice Krishna Rao was also of the similar view and held that the NFSA, 2013 and the rules and statutory orders issued under Section 3 of the Essential Commodities Act, 1955 do not specify that the state government is not entitled to extend the benefit to the beneficiaries under the NFSA, 2013.

### About Duare Ration Scheme

Duare Ration Scheme was launched by the state government of West Bengal to provide foodgrains under the public distribution system (PDS) at the doorstep of the entire population of the state. Under the scheme, around 21,000 ration dealers were provided with the financial assistance of Rs.1 lakh each to purchase vehicles for delivering the rations at the doorstep. A similar scheme was launched by the Delhi Government but it was halted by the Delhi High Court.