Context:

In a major step towards achieving ‘One Nation One Ration Card’, Union Minister Shri Ram Vilas Paswan inaugurated inter-State portability in two clusters of adjoining States of Andhra Pradesh & Telangana and Gujarat & Maharashtra.

Key Points:

This move will enable beneficiaries from either States’ cluster to avail the benefits accruing to them under the National Food Security Act (NFSA) from any of the two States.

The Minister said that this marks the beginning of National level portability of Ration Cards in the country.

It is envisaged that the inter-State portability shall be introduced in the 11 States having already implemented intra-State portability by 1st January 2020. The 11 states are: Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Haryana, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra, Punjab, Rajasthan, Telangana and Tripura.

All other states and UTs shall be integrated in a phased manner.

This will enable nation-wide portability of ration card holders to receive subsidized food grains under NFSA from anywhere in India by 1st June 2020.

The move is especially beneficial for migrant population of the country who move from one part of the country to another in search of employment, for marriage, etc.

Installation of electronic Point of Sale (ePoS) devices at Fair Price Shops (FPSs) is the main enabler of portability of ration card holders, supported by the biometric/Aadhaar authentication.

More than 4.1 lakh (77%) ePoS devices are already operational in various parts of the country.

Also, more than 85% ration cards (at least one member) in the country have been seeded with the Aadhaar numbers of the beneficiaries.