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PM-KISAN: Aadhaar must for second instalment

Unique identification is not compulsory for first transfer

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Farmers who wish to avail themselves of benefits under PM-KISAN, the new income support scheme announced in the Union Budget, must have Aadhaar identification to get the money from the second instalment, which would be paid by July 2019. However, this would not be compulsory for the first instalment expected to be disbursed by March 31, before the Lok Sabha polls.

In a letter to the Chief Secretaries of all States and Union Territories, Agriculture Secretary Sanjay Agarwal spelt out guidelines for the States, which would have to do the lion's share of work in actual implementation of the scheme, especially since the first transfer is due in less than two months.

States have been told to prepare a database of beneficiaries – small and marginal landholder farmer families in all villages – including whether they belong to SC/ST, bank account, mobile and Aadhaar details.

For transfer of the first in-



stalment, Aadhaar number “shall be collected wherever available”, wrote Mr. Agarwal. An alternate list of identification documents has also been provided, as options.

“However, for transfer of subsequent instalments, Aadhaar number shall have to be compulsorily captured,” the secretary wrote.

Land records

States have also been told to update their land records, as that would serve as the basis for determination of landholding for beneficiaries. However, the secretary also said that the cut-off date for determination of ownership of land (as per land records) under the scheme was already over; the cut-off date was

February 1, 2019. “Changes thereafter in land records shall not be considered for eligibility of the benefit to the new land holder for next 5 years,” Mr. Agarwal wrote, clarifying that transfer of ownership on account of succession would, however, be allowed.

The situation is slightly more complicated in the northeastern States, as land ownership rights in the region are community-based, making it difficult to identify beneficiaries. An alternate implementation mechanism would be developed by a committee including the State governments, as well as the Union Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region, Land Resources ministry and Agriculture ministry, the official wrote.

States would be given a maximum of 0.25% of funds transferred to beneficiaries in the first instalment to pay for their administrative expenses in the implementation of the scheme. That amount would drop to 0.125% for all further instalments.