

ITEM NO.201

COURT NO.3

SECTION PIL

S U P R E M E C O U R T O F I N D I A  
RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

WRIT PETITION (CIVIL) NO. 196 OF 2001

PEOPLE'S UNION FOR CIVIL LIBERTIES

Petitioner(s)

VERSUS

UNION OF INDIA &amp; ORS.

Respondent(s)

(Regarding Reports submitted by Justice D.P. Wadhwa, Retd. Judge,  
Supreme Court of India)

(REG. PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM)

I.A. Nos.90, 93, 98, 102 to 108, 110, 111 &amp; 112 in

W.P.(C) No.196/2001

(For permission on behalf of Respondent No.17 i.e. State of  
Maharashtra, modification and directions, intervention on behalf  
of West Bengal M.R. Dealers Association and All Bengal Price Shop  
Dealers Welfare Association, impleadment, exemption from filing  
O.T., directions, extension of time on behalf of State of  
Rajasthan, modification of Court's order dt.22.04.2009,  
impleadment on behalf of Karnataka State Taluka Co-operative  
Marketing Society Association to be impleaded as respondents and  
permission to file additional affidavit)

WITH

CONTEMPT PETITION (CIVIL) NO. 99/2009

(With Application for exemption from filing O.T.)

W.P.(C) No. 277/2010

Date:16/03/2012 These Petitions were called on for hearing today.

CORAM :

HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE DALVEER BHANDARI

HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE DIPAK MISRA

For Petitioner(s) Mr. Colin Gonsalves, Sr. Adv.  
Ms. Amiy Shukla, Adv.  
Ms. Jyoti Mendiratta, Adv.

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For Respondent(s) Mr. Mohan Parasaran, ASG  
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Ms. Sushma Suri, Adv.  
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Mr. D.S. Mahra, Adv.  
Mr. T.A. Khan, Adv.

For DDA Mr. Vishnu B. Saharya, Adv.  
For M/s. Saharya & Co., Adv.

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Mr. Lakshay, Adv.

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Mr. Ashutosh Kumar Singh, Adv.  
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Mr. Navnit Kumar, Adv.  
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Ms. Rachana Srivastava, Adv.  
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Mr. Manoj Saxena, Adv.  
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Mr. T.V. George, Adv.

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Mr. Techii Poto, Adv.

Mr. R. Sundaravaradan, Sr. Adv.  
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Mr. Chandan Kumar, Adv.

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Ms. Sampa Sengupta, Adv.  
Mr. B.P. Yadav, Adv.

Mr. Manish Pitale, Adv.  
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Mr. Ujjal Banerjee, Adv.  
Mr. Prashant Kumar, Adv.

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Mr. Manjit Singh, Adv.  
Mr. Tarjit Singh, Adv.  
Mr. Kamal Mohan Gupta, Adv.

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Mr. Rajesh Srivastava, Adv.

Mr. Venkateswara Rao Anumolu, Adv.

Ms. Kamini Jaiswal, Adv.

Mr. Ranjan Mukherjee, Adv.

Mr. Jatinder Kumar Bhatia, Adv.

Mr. B. Balaji, Adv.

Mr. Vikas Mehta, Adv.

Mr. Navin R. Nath, Adv.

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UPON hearing counsel the Court made the following  
O R D E R

In pursuance of the directions of this Court, Dr.  
B.C. Gupta, Secretary to Government of India, Department

of Food and Public Distribution, New Delhi has filed an affidavit. Copies of the said affidavit have been given to the learned counsel for the petitioner and the counsels appearing for other parties.

There seems to be a general consensus that computerization is going to help the public distribution system in the country in a big way. In the affidavit it is stated that the Department of Food and Public Distribution has been pursuing the States to undertake special drive to eliminate bogus/duplicate ration cards and as a result, 209.55 lakh ration cards have been eliminated since 2006 and the annual saving of food-grain subsidy has worked out to about Rs.8200 crore per annum. It is further mentioned in the affidavit that end-to-end computerization of public distribution system comprises creation and management of Digitized Beneficiary Database including biometric identification of the beneficiaries, Supply Chain management of TPDS commodities till Fair Price Shops.

It is further stated in the affidavit that in the State of Gujarat, the process of computerization is at an advanced stage where issue of bar coded ration cards has led to a reduction of 16 lakh ration cards. It is expected that once the biometric details are collected, this number would increase further. For the present, a reduction of 16 lakh ration cards would translate into an annual saving of over Rs.600 crore. This is just to illustrate that computerization would go in a big way to

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help the targeted population of the public distribution system in the country.

In the affidavit it is further mentioned that Government of India has set up a Task Force under the chairmanship of Mr. Nandan Nilekani, Chairman, UIDAI, to recommend, amongst others, an IT strategy for the public distribution system. We request Mr. Nandan Nilekani to suggest us ways and means by which computerization process of the public distribution system can be expedited. Let a brief report/affidavit be filed by Mr. Nandan Nilekani within four weeks from today.

I.A. No.110/2010:

Notice has already been issued in this application. Mr. Gonsalves, learned senior counsel for the petitioner submits that a copy of this application has not been served upon him. Without getting into the controversy, we request the applicant to serve a copy of this application to the learned counsel for the petitioner within a week. Reply to the application be filed within one week thereafter.

List this matter on 9th April, 2012 for further directions. I.A. No.82 also be listed on that date.

A copy of this order be sent to Mr. Nilekani through special messenger.

(A.S. BISHT)  
COURT MASTER

(INDU SATIJA)  
COURT MASTER