

**IN THE SUPREME COURT OF INDIA**  
**CIVIL ORIGINAL JURISDICTION**  
**WRIT PETITION (CIVIL) NO.196 OF 2001**

**People's Union for Civil Liberties ... Petitioner (s)**

**-Versus-**

**Union of India & Ors. ... Respondent (s)**

*Date : 23/07/2001 This Petition was called on for hearing today.*

**UPON hearing counsel the Court made the following ORDER.**

Counsel for the petitioner is permitted to file a fresh application for interim relief. A copy of the same be given to the counsel for the Union of India as well as to the counsel for the States and for the Food Corporation of India. Learned Attorney General states that this should not be regarded as an adversarial litigation and it is a matter of concern for all. In our opinion, what is of utmost importance is to see that food is provided to the aged, infirm, disabled, destitute women, destitute men who are in danger of starvation, pregnant and lactating women and destitute children, especially in cases where they or members of their family do not have sufficient funds to provide food for them. In case of famine, there may be shortage of food, but here the situation is that amongst plenty there is scarcity. Plenty of food is available, but distribution of the same amongst the very poor and the destitute is scarce and non-existent leading to mal-nourishment, starvation and other related problems. Reply affidavits be filed within two weeks by the States and the Union of India as well as the Food Corporation of India.

In the meantime, we are sure that the responsible Governments will act for the benefit of their people. By way of an interim order, we direct the States to see that all the PDS shops, if closed, are re-opened and start functioning within one week from today and regular supplies made. Leave is granted to the petitioner to implead other States also as parties to this petition. On such an application being filed today, notice to issue to them. List the matter for further consideration on 20th August, 2001.

(D.P. WALIA)  
Court Master

(S.L. GOYAL)  
Court Master