

Surrender bogus Ration Cards or face criminal prosecution- Food Ministry

WHILE hearing Writ Petition (Civil) No. 196 of 2001, People's Union for Civil Liberties V/s Union of India & Ors. on 31.08.2010, the Supreme Court has directed that a warning be issued asking all the bogus card holders to surrender the bogus cards forthwith, in any event, within two weeks of the date of advertisement, otherwise criminal prosecution may be initiated against the bogus card holders.

Public Distribution System (Control) Order, 2001 mandates State/UT Governments to carry out all required action to ensure smooth functioning of Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS). Besides, in order to streamline the functioning of TPDS, a 9-point Action Plan is under implementation by States/Union Territory (UT) Governments since July, 2006. As part of this action plan, State and UT Governments have been advised to continuously review lists of Below Poverty Line (BPL) and Antyodaya Anna Yojna (AAY) families to eliminate bogus ration cards and issue ration cards to eligible families. Instructions have also been issued to all State/UT Governments on 26.08.2009 and 05.10.2009 to carry out an intensive campaign to eliminate ineligible/bogus ration cards and units contained therein and to take action as per law against the persons found in possession of bogus/fake ration cards and those responsible for issuing ration cards to ineligible families/persons.

In the context of the Hon'ble Supreme Court Order, Department of Food & Public Distribution vide letter dated 01.09.2010 has also impressed upon Principal Secretary/Secretary, Department of Food and Civil Supplies of all States/UTs to issue a Newspaper advertisement and take action as directed by the Hon'ble Supreme Court.

In view of the forgoing, all the bogus/ineligible ration card holder families/persons are hereby warned to surrender the bogus ration cards possessed by them under the Targeted Public Distribution System/Public Distribution System to the

concerned authorities of the respective State/UT Governments forthwith, otherwise criminal prosecution shall be initiated against them by the concerned authorities in the States/UTs under relevant provisions of the law