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\* **IN THE HIGH COURT OF DELHI AT NEW DELHI**

+ **W.P.(C) 7023/2026**

**AAKASH GOEL**

.....Petitioner

Through: Mr. Kumar Utkarsh, Mr. Manoj  
Kumar & Mr. Devesh Pal, Advocates.

versus

**DEPARTMENT OF FOOD, SUPPLIES AND CONSUMER  
AFFAIRS & ANR.**

.....Respondents

Through: Mr. Sameer Vashisht- Standing  
Counsel along with Ms. Harshita  
Nathrani & Mr. Aryaman Vachher,  
Advocates for Respondent Nos.1 & 2.

**CORAM:**

**HON'BLE THE CHIEF JUSTICE**

**HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE TEJAS KARIA**

**ORDER**

**20.05.2026**

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1. Heard the learned Counsel for the Parties.
2. By means of this Public Interest Litigation Petition, several concerns have been raised in relation to ration cards. One of the grievances raised is that there are certain number of duplicate beneficiaries and non-eKYC beneficiaries and further certain persons have been issued ration cards who are ineligible.
3. Another prayer made is that an appropriate direction be issued to Respondent No. 1 / Department of Food, Supplies and Consumer Affairs to comply with the directions issued by the Hon'ble Supreme Court in its orders dated 20.04.2023 and 19.03.2024 which has been enclosed as Annexures P-9 and P-10 to the Writ Petition.

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4. The said prayer is in relation to e-Shram beneficiaries for issuing ration cards to the eligible e-Shram registrants between the age group of 16 to 60 years without insisting on the statutory cap as provided under Section 3(2) of the National Food Security Act, 2013.

5. The Petitioner has also prayed that a direction to be issued to Respondent No. 1 / Department of Food, Supplies and Consumer Affairs to treat the senior citizens a priority class for the purpose of issuance of ration cards and also that a direction be issued to immediately allocate the ration cards to 17,20,653 approved beneficiaries. So far as the aforesaid prayers are concerned, the Petitioner has already made a representation to the Commissioner, Department of Food, Supplies and Consumer Affairs, GNCTD on 15.04.2026 has enclosed as Annexure P-1 to the Writ Petition.

6. Having regard to the nature of these prayers, we permit the Petitioner to make a fresh representation to the Principal Secretary, Department of Food, Supplies and Consumer Affairs, GNCTD within a fortnight from today taking all the pleas which may be available to him under law and enclosing all the documents on which the Petitioner intends to rely upon. Once any such representation is made, the issues which may be raised shall be appropriately attended to by the State Government and decision and course of action which may be warranted under law shall also be taken, with expedition. The decision which may be taken on the representation to be preferred by the Petitioner under this order shall be communicated to the Petitioner as well.

7. As far as prayer (v) made in the Writ Petition is concerned, the Petitioner has sought quashing of the Delhi Food Security Rules, 2026 to the extent the same requires submission of family income certificate or to read it

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down to the extent that such requirement of family income certificate shall not be insisted by the Respondents, while considering any prayer for issuance of ration cards in case the digital verification of family income of the Applicant concerned is possible.

8. Our attention has been drawn to certain guidelines embodied in and issued *vide* letter dated 08.07.2025, which has been enclosed in the Writ Petition as Annexure P-5.

9. Paragraph Nos. 2 and 4 of the said letter are extracted herein below:

*“2. In continuation of this initiative, the Department has undertaken a comprehensive exercise to further strengthen rightful targeting by matching RCMS data with databases of various Government of India entities including the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT), Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC), Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA), Ministry of Road Transport & Highways (MoRTH), and PM-KISAN.*

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*4. As you are aware, the responsibility for identification of beneficiaries rests with the State Government. You are, therefore, requested to kindly undertake necessary field verification of such flagged cases and initiate appropriate action for data cleansing, wherever ineligibility is established. This exercise is critical to ensure that the resources under TPDS are directed only towards the eligible households.”*

10. According to the said guidelines contained in the letter dated 08.07.2025, it is the responsibility of the State Government to identify the beneficiaries and, therefore, a request was made by the Central Government to undertake necessary field verification of such cases and initiate appropriate action for data cleansing wherever ineligibility is established. The submission is that in such a survey, the family income can also be ascertained and for the said purpose as well, an exhaustive survey may be



ordered to be undertaken by the State Government. For the reason that most of the beneficiaries of ration cards are daily wage earners and if they are insisted upon furnishing the family income certificate that will consume their time, which they will be able to find only if they do not work on particular days, which will ultimately result in them not earning wages.

11. In the aforesaid view of the matter, we direct the State Government to evolve a mechanism for identification of the beneficiaries and, accordingly, issue appropriate directions for issuance of the ration cards only in case the beneficiaries are daily wage earners and not to insist them to produce the family income certificate. Even otherwise, any other mechanism can also be formed for ascertaining the family income of a daily wager by utilizing the services of the State machinery and its officials. Such consideration in this regard shall also be made by the State Government within a period of three months from today.

12. We direct Mr. Sameer Vashisht, learned Standing Counsel to communicate this order to the Principal Secretary of the department concerned.

13. The Writ Petition stands disposed of in the aforesaid terms.

**DEVENDRA KUMAR UPADHYAYA, CJ**

**TEJAS KARIA, J**

**MAY 20, 2026/ 'A'**