

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT MADRAS

DATED : 24.08.2015

CORAM

THE HONOURABLE DR.JUSTICE S.TAMILVANAN
and
THE HONOURABLE MR.JUSTICE C.T.SELVAM

H.C.P. No.1371 of 2015

Mrs.A.Ammu

.. Petitioner/Wife of
the detenu

Vs.

1.The District Collector cum
District Magistrate,
Dharmapuri, Dharmapuri District.

2.The Secretary to Government,
Home, Prohibition & Excise Department,
Secretariat, Fort St. George,
Chennai 600 009.

.. Respondents

Habeas Corpus Petition filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India praying for the issuance of a writ of Habeas Corpus calling for the records pertaining to the order of the 1st respondent dated 22.04.2015 in S.C. No.17/2015 detaining the detenu M.Arumugam, S/o.Muthu Chettiyar as Goonda under Tamil Nadu Act 14/1982 and set aside the same and direct the respondents to produce the said detenu now detained in the Central Prison, Salem before this Court and set him at liberty.

For Petitioner : Mr.R.Srinivas

For Respondents सत्यमेव जयते Mr.M.Maharaja, APP

ORDER

[Order of the Court was made by S.TAMILVANAN, J.]

Challenge is made to the order of detention passed by the first respondent vide S.C. No.17/2015 whereby the detenu/husband of the petitioner, by name, M.Arumugam, S/o.Muthu Chettiyar, was ordered to be detained under the provisions of the Tamil Nadu Prevention of Dangerous Activities of Bootleggers, Drug Offenders, Forest Offenders, Goondas, Immoral Traffic Offenders, Sand Offenders, Slum-grabbers and Video Pirates Act, 1982 (Tamil Nadu Act 14 of 1982) branding him as a "Goonda".

2.Though many grounds have been raised in the petition, Mr.R.Srinivas, the learned counsel appearing for the petitioner, confines his argument only in respect of non-application of mind on the part of the detaining authority in passing the order of detention.

3.Learned counsel appearing for the petitioner submitted that in the booklet, furnished to the detenu, several pages viz. page Nos.53, 55 and 76 were found to be illegible and could not be read at all. This illegible copies would deprive the detenu of making effective representation to the authorities against the order of detention. Thus, the detention order is vitiated on these grounds and the same is liable to be quashed.

4.Per contra, the learned Additional Public Prosecutor would submit that the order of detention has been passed on cogent and sufficient materials and the same cannot be interfered with at the instance of the petitioner. Therefore, he submits that the Habeas Corpus Petition does not merit any consideration and the same is liable to be dismissed.

5.We have heard the learned counsel for both sides with regard to the facts.

6.A perusal of the booklet supplied to the detenu would show that the several copies of documents referred and relied upon are illegible and are totally unreadable. This has resulted in the detenu being deprived of making an effective representation. Therefore, the detention order is vitiated and liable to be quashed on this ground alone.

7.It is a trite law that personal liberty protected under Article 21 is so sacrosanct and so high in the scale of Constitutional values that it is the obligation of the detaining authority to show that the impugned detention meticulously accords with the procedure established by law. Preventive detention is preventive and not punitive. When ordinary law of the land is sufficient to deal with, taking recourse to the preventive detention law is illegal.

8.In the light of the above facts and law, we have no hesitation in quashing the order of detention on the above mentioned ground.

9.Accordingly, the Habeas Corpus Petition is allowed and the impugned detention order passed by the first respondent is set aside. The detenu is directed to be released forthwith unless his presence is required in connection with any other case.

-s/d-

Assistant Registrar

True Copy

Sub-Assistant Registrar

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To

1.The District Collector cum
District Magistrate,
Dharmapuri, Dharmapuri District.

2.The Secretary to Government,
Home, Prohibition & Excise Department,
Secretariat, Fort St. George,
Chennai 600 009.

3.The Public Prosecutor,
High Court, Madras.

4.The Superintendent,
Central Prison, Salem.

5.The Joint Secretary to Government
Public Law and order
Fort St.George, Chennai-9

+1 cc to Mr.Srinivas Advocate sr.45542

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