

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT MADRAS

DATED : 14.09.2015

CORAM

THE HONOURABLE DR. JUSTICE S.TAMILVANAN

and

THE HONOURABLE MR. JUSTICE C.T.SELVAM

H.C.P.No.1489/2015

Mahendran

...Petitioner/detenu

Vs.

1.The Secretary to the Government,
Government of Tamil Nadu,
(Home) Prohibition & Excise Department,
Secretariat, Fort St George,
Chennai 600009.

2.The Commissioner of Police,
Chennai Police,
Chennai.

... Respondents

Petition filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India praying for issuance of a writ of habeas corpus calling for the entire records connected with the order of the second respondent herein in Memo No.428/BCDFGISSSV/2015 dated 31.05.2015 against the detenu namely Mahendran, son of Jagadeesan, aged about 30 years who is confined at Central Prison, Puzhal, Chennai and set aside the same, consequently, directing the respondents herein to produce the body and person of the detenu before this Court and set him at liberty forthwith.

For Petitioner : Mr.D.Magesh
For Respondents : 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 second respondent vide Proceedings in BCDFGISSSV No.428/2015 dated 31.05.2015, whereby the detenu, by name, Mahendran, son of Jagadeesan, aged 30 years, 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, 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 page Nos. 91 to 95, 97 and certain other pages in the booklet furnished to the detenu are 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 copies of documents referred and relied upon and referred to by the Detaining Authority, in particular, page Nos. 91 to 95, 97 and certain other pages 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 second respondent is set aside. The detenu is directed to be released forthwith unless his presence is required in connection with any other case.

-sd/-

ASSISTANT REGISTRAR

/ TRUE COPY /

SUB-ASSISTANT REGISTRAR

cse

To

- 1.The Secretary to the Government,
Government of Tamil Nadu,
(Home) Prohibition & Excise Department,
Secretariat, Fort St George,
Chennai 600009.
- 2.The Commissioner of Police,
Chennai Police, Chennai.
- 3.The Public Prosecutor,
High Court, Madras.
- 4.The Superintendent of Central Prison,
Puzhal, Chennai.
- 5.The Secretary to Government,
Public (law & order),
Fort St.George, Chennai 600 009.

H.C.P.No.1489/2015

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CO-CTK
JD 08/10/2015