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BEFORE THE MADURAI BENCH OF MADRAS HIGH COURT

DATED: 19.08.2015

CORAM:

THE HONOURABLE MR.JUSTICE S.NAGAMUTHU
and
THE HONOURABLE MR.JUSTICE V.S.RAVI

H.C.P(MD)No. 432 of 2015

Thomas

.. Petitioner

Vs.

1.The Secretary to Government,
Home, Prohibition and Excise Department,
State of Tamil Nadu, Secretariat,
Fort St. George,
Chennai-9.

2.The District Collector and District Magistrate,
Thoothukudi District,
Thoothukudi.

3.The Superintendent of Prison,
Palayamkottai Prison,
Tirunelveli District.

.. Respondents

PRAYER: Petition filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India praying to issue a Writ of Habeas Corpus, to call for the entire records connected with the detention order of the respondent No.2 in H.S.(M). Confdl. No.17/2015 dated 10.03.2015 and quash the same and direct the respondents to produce of the detenu, by name, Thomas, son of Arthuar, aged about 56 years, now detained in Palayamkottai Central Prison, before this Court and set him at liberty.

For Petitioner : Mr.R.Alagumani

For Respondents : Mr. T.Mohan,

Additional Public Prosecutor.

O R D E R

[Order of the Court was made by **V.S.RAVI,J**]

The petitioner is the detenu, Thomas. He has been detained as per the order of the second respondent under Section 2(gg) of the Tamil Nadu Act 14 of 1982, branding him as "**Sand Offender**".

2.We have heard the learned counsel for the petitioner and the learned Additional Public Prosecutor for the respondents and we have also perused the records carefully.

3.Though several grounds have been raised in the Habeas Corpus Petition, the learned counsel for the Petitioner would mainly focus his argument on the ground that there is violation of procedural safeguards,

which are guaranteed under Articles 21 and 22 of the Constitution of India. The learned counsel would submit that the representation made by the petitioner was not considered on time and there was an inordinate and unexplained delay. The learned counsel has relied on few Judgments of the Hon'ble Supreme Court. Based on the same, the learned counsel would plead for setting aside the detention order.

4. But, the learned Additional Public Prosecutor would, however, oppose this Habeas Corpus Petition. He would submit that though there was delay in considering the representation, on that score, the impugned detention order need not be interfered with, as on account of the said delay, no prejudice has been caused to the detenu and thus, there is no violation of the fundamental rights guaranteed under Articles 21 and 22 of the Constitution of India.

5. We have considered the above submissions.

6. In this case, the Detention Order was passed on 10.03.2015. As against the same, the petitioner made a representation on 27.03.2015. The remarks were called for by the Government from the Detaining Authority on 31.03.2015. The remarks were received on 15.04.2015. Thereafter, the Government considered the issue and passed the order rejecting the representation on 22.04.2015. It is the contention of the petitioner that there was delay of seven days in submitting the remarks by the Detaining Authority and there was delay of four days on the part of the Government in considering the same.

7. Now, the question is as to whether on that score, the impugned order can be quashed.

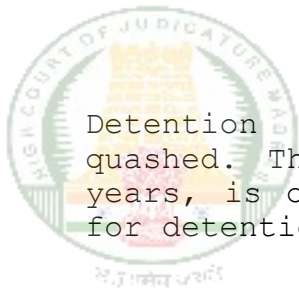
8. In **Rekha Vs. State of Tamil Nadu**, [2011 (5) SCC 244], the Hon'ble Supreme Court has held that the right to life and liberty of a person is protected, under Article 21 of the Constitution of India. The Hon'ble Supreme Court has further held that the procedural safeguards are required to be zealously watched and enforced by the Courts of law and their rigour cannot be allowed to be diluted on the basis of the nature of the alleged activities of the detenu.

9. In **Sumaiya Vs. The Secretary to Government**, [2007 (2) MWN (Cr.) 145], a Division Bench of this Court has held that the unexplained delay of three days in disposal of the representation made on behalf of the detenu/detenu would be sufficient to set aside the detention order.

10. In **Tara Chand Vs. State of Rajasthan and others**, [1980 (2) SCC 321], the Hon'ble Supreme Court has held that any inordinate and unexplained delay on the part of the Government in considering the representation renders the detention illegal. This dictum has been followed in several Judgments consistently by the Hon'ble Supreme Court as well as this Court.

11. Applying the said dictum laid down by the Hon'ble Supreme Court, if we look into the facts of the present case, undoubtedly, there is an inordinate and unexplained delay of eleven working days and therefore, the impugned detention order is liable to be quashed.

12. In the result, this Habeas Corpus Petition is allowed and the impugned Detention Order, passed by the second respondent, in his



Detention Order in H.S.(M).Confdl.No.17/2015, dated 10.03.2015, is quashed. The detenu, by name, Thomas, son of Arthuar, aged about 56 years, is ordered to be set at liberty forthwith, if he is not required for detention in connection with any other case.

Sd/-

Assistant Registrar (Wirts)

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/True Copy/

Sub Assistant Registrar

PJL/RR

To

- 1.The Secretary to Government,
Home, Prohibition and Excise Department,
State of Tamil Nadu, Secretariat,
Fort St. George,
Chennai-9.
 - 2.The District Collector and District Magistrate,
Thoothukudi District,
Thoothukudi.
 - 3.The Superintendent of Prison,
palayampatti Central Prison,
Tirunelveli District. (In Duplicate for communication to the detenu)
 4. The Joint Sectary, Public, Law & Order,
Fort.st, George, Chennai-9
 - 5.The Additional Public Prosecutor,
Madurai Bench of Madras High Court,
Madurai.
- +1CC to M/S.R.Alagumani ADV.SR.No.47999

GJM24.8.15-3P-8C

ORDER MADE IN
H.C.P (MD) No.432 of 2015
19.08.2015