

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT MADRAS

Dated : 27.10.2017

Coram

THE HON'BLE MR.JUSTICE RAJIV SHAKDER
&
THE HON'BLE MR.JUSTICE N.SATHISH KUMAR

H.C.P.No.1348 of 2017

Bagyalakshmi

... Petitioner

Vs.

1.The Secretary to Government,
Home Prohibition and Excise Department
Fort St. George, Chennai - 600 009.

2.The Commissioner of Police
Greater Chennai,
Vepery, Chennai - 600 007.

...Respondents

PRAYER: Petition filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India, to issue a Writ of Habeas Corpus, calling for the records in connection with the order of detention passed by the second respondent dated 14.07.2017 in BCDFGISSSV No.425/2017 against my husband, the detenu herein, now confined at Central Prison, Puzhal, Chennai and set aside the same and direct the respondents to produce the detenu Thiru Lakshmipathy @ Lakshmidar, S/o.Mohanji, aged about 44 years before this Court and set him at liberty.

For Petitioner : Ms.J.Varnashree

For Respondents : Mr.V.M.R.Rajentran,

Addl. Public Prosecutor.

ORDER

(Order of the Court was made by **N.SATHISH KUMAR, J**)

The petitioner is wife of the detenu, namely, Lakshmipathy @ Lakshmidar, S/o.Mohanji, male, aged about 44 years. The detenu has been detained by the second respondent by his order in No.425/BCDFGISSSV/2017 dated 14.07.2017, holding him to be a "Immoral Traffic Offender", as contemplated under 2(g) of Tamil Nadu Act 14 of 1982. The said order is under challenge in this Habeas Corpus Petition.

2. We have heard the learned counsel for the petitioner and the learned Additional Public Prosecutor appearing for the respondents. We have also perused the records produced by the Detaining Authority.

3. Though several grounds have been raised in the Habeas Corpus Petition, the learned counsel appearing for the petitioner would mainly focus his argument on the ground that there is gross violation of procedural safeguards, which would vitiate the detention. The learned counsel, by placing authorities, submitted that the representations made by the petitioner was not considered on time and there was an inordinate and unexplained delay with regard to the same.

4. The learned Additional Public Prosecutor opposed the Habeas Corpus

Petition. He would submit that though there was delay in considering the representation, on that score alone, the impugned detention order cannot be quashed. According to the learned Additional Public Prosecutor, 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. The Detention Order in question was passed on 14.07.2017. The petitioner made a representation, dated 24.07.2017 and the same was received on 25.07.2017. Thereafter, remarks were called for by the Government from the Detaining Authority on 25.07.2017. The remarks were duly received on 27.07.2017. Thereafter, the Government considered the matter and passed the order rejecting the petitioner's representation on 23.08.2017.

6. It is the contention of the petitioner that there was a delay of 2 days in submitting the remarks by the Detaining Authority. Thereafter, there was another delay of 27 days in considering the representation, of which 10 days were Government Holidays and hence there was an inordinate delay of 17 days in considering the representation.

7. In **Rekha vs. State of Tamil Nadu**, reported in 2011 (5) SCC 244, the Honourable Supreme Court has 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 undertaken by the detenu.

8. In **Sumaiya vs. The Secretary to Government**, reported in 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 would be sufficient to set aside the order of detention.

9. In **Tara Chand vs. State of Rajasthan and others**, reported in 1980 (2) SCC 321, the Honourable Supreme Court has held that any inordinate and unexplained delay on the part of the Government in considering the representation renders the very detention illegal.

10. In the subject case, admittedly, there is an inordinate and unexplained delay of 2 days in submitting the remarks by the Detaining Authority and 17 days in considering the representation. The impugned detention order is, therefore, liable to be quashed.

11. In the result, the Habeas Corpus Petition is allowed and the order of detention in No.425/BCDFGISSSV/2017 dated 14.07.2017, passed by the second

respondent is set aside. The detenu, namely, Lakshmipathy @ Lakshmidar, S/o.Mohanji, male, aged about 44 years, is directed to be released forthwith unless his detention is required in connection with any other case. Given the nature of the case, this order will be communicated to the concerned Jail Superintendent by the Registrar General of this Court via Fax.

(R.S.A., J.) (N.S.K., J.)
27.10.2017

Index : yes/no

vsm/sra

Note: Issue order copy today



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RAJIV SHAKDER, J.
and
N.SATHISH KUMAR, J.

To

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Home Prohibition and Excise Department
Fort St. George, Chennai - 600 009.

2.The Commissioner of Police
Greater Chennai,
Vepery, Chennai - 600 007.

3.The Superintendent,
Central Prison,
Puzhal, Chennai

4.The Public Prosecutor,
Madras High Court,
Chennai.

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