

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT MADRAS

DATED : 15.11.2017

CORAM:

THE HONOURABLE MR.JUSTICE RAJIV SHAKDHER
and
THE HONOURABLE MR.JUSTICE N.SATHISH KUMAR

H.C.P.No.1712 of 2017

Ashwini

... Petitioner

-vs-

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

2.The Secretary to Government of Tamil Nadu,
Prohibition & Excise Department (Home),
Secretariat, Fort St. George,
Chennai - 600 009.

... Respondents

PRAYER: Petition filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India, to issue a Writ of Habeas Corpus, to call for the records of the 1st respondent in connection with the order of 1st respondent dated 21.07.2017 in BCDFGISSSV No.435/2017 namely Asha Soundarya, D/o.Ramachandran, aged about 37 years, as a Goonda, Under Tamil Nadu Act 14 of 82 and set aside the same and direct the respondent to produce the body of the said detenu, the detenu now lodged in Special Prison for Women, Central Prison, Puzhal, Chennai, before this Court and set her at liberty.

For Petitioner : Mr.P.Prince Premkumar
For Respondents : Mr.V.M.R.Rajentran
Additional Public Prosecutor

O R D E R

[Order of the Court was made by N.SATHISH KUMAR, J.]

The petitioner is the Daughter of the detenu, namely, Tmt.Asha Soundarya, D/o.Ramachandran, Female, aged about 37 years. The detenu has been detained by the 1st respondent by his order in BCDFGISSSV No.435/2017, dated 21.07.2017, holding

her to be a "Goonda", as contemplated under Section 2(f) 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 representation made by the petitioner was not considered in 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 21.07.2017. The petitioner made a representation, dated 07.09.2017 and the same was received on 11.09.2017. Thereafter, remarks were called for by the Government from the Detaining Authority on the same day, i.e., on 11.09.2017. The remarks were duly received on 18.09.2017. Thereafter, the Government considered the matter and passed the order rejecting the petitioner's representation on 03.10.2017.

6. It is the contention of the petitioner that there was a delay of 6 days in submitting the remarks by the Detaining Authority, of which 2 days were Government Holidays and hence there was an inordinate delay of 4 days in submitting the remarks. Thereafter, there was another delay of 18 days in considering the representation, of which 08 days were Government Holidays, hence, there was another inordinate delay of 10 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.

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 Anbazhagansthan 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 4 days in submitting the remarks by the Detaining Authority and 10 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 BCDFGISSSV No.435/2017, dated 21.07.2017, passed by the 1st respondent is set aside. The detenu, namely, Tmt.Asha Soundarya, D/o.Ramachandran, Female, aged about 37 years, is directed to be released forthwith unless her 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.

Sd/-
Assistant Registrar(CCC)

//True Copy//

Sub Assistant Registrar

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To:

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

2.The Secretary to Government of Tamil Nadu,
Prohibition & Excise Department (Home),
Secretariat, Fort St. George,
Chennai - 600 009.

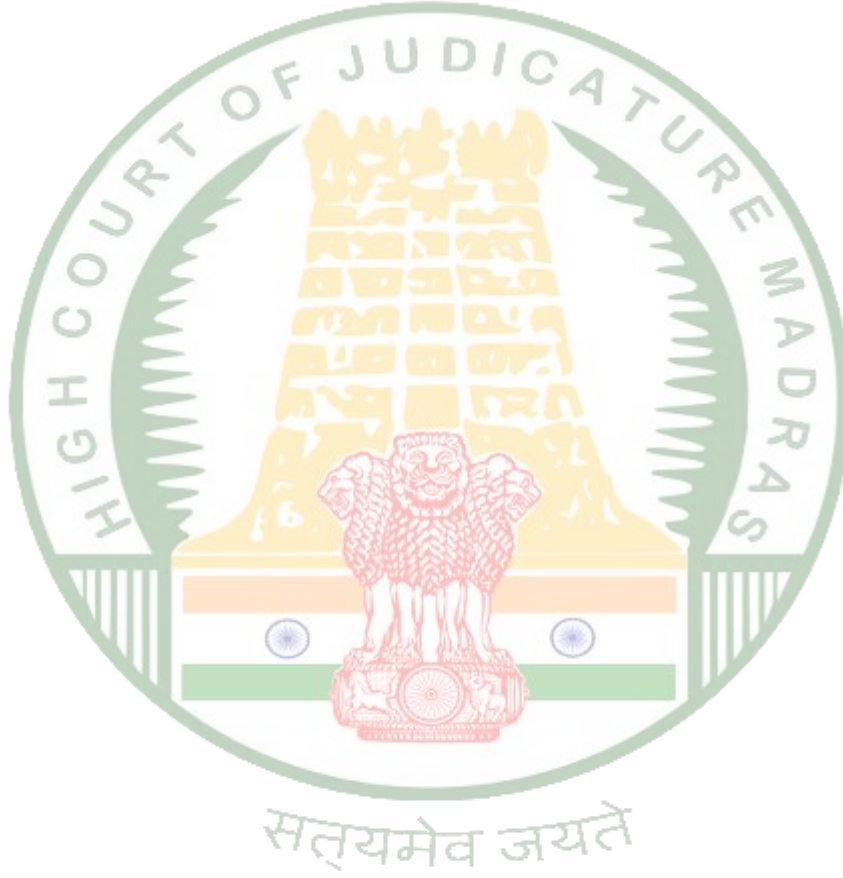
3.The Joint Secretary to Government,
Public, Law and Order Department,
Government of Tamil Nadu,
Secretariat, Chennai - 9.

4.The Superintendent,
Special Prison for Women,
Central Prison, Puzhal,
Chennai - 66.

5.The Public Prosecutor,
Madras High Court,
Madras.

H.C.P.No.1712 of 2017

GN(15/11/2017)



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