

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT MADRAS

Dated : 10.10.2017

Coram

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

H.C.P.No.683 of 2017

Meena

... Petitioner

Vs.

State Represented by

1. District Collector and District Magistrate
Dharmapuri District
Dharmapuri.
2. The Secretary to the Government
Home, Prohibition and Excise Department
Secretariat, Chennai - 600 009.
3. The Inspector of Police
Kambainallur Police Station
Dharmapuri District
Cr.No.42/2017.

... Respondents

PRAYER: Petition filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India, to issue a Writ of Habeas Corpus, directing the respondents to call for the records in S.C.No.11/2017 dated 08.04.2017 passed by the District Collector and District Magistrate, Dharmapuri District, Dharmapuri, quash the same and to produce the body of the detained person Perumal, Son of Subramani, aged 35 years before this Court who is now detained at Central Prison, Salem, in pursuance of the aforesaid order under Act 14/82 branding the detained person as Sexual Offender and set his at liberty.

For Petitioner : Mr.V.Rajamohan

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 wife of the detenu, namely, Perumal, Son of Subramani, male, aged about 35 years. The detenu has been detained by the first respondent by his order in S.C.No.11 of 2017 dated 08.04.2017, holding him to be a "Sexual Offender", as contemplated under 2(ggg) 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 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 08.04.2017. The petitioner made a representation dated 19.04.2017 and the same was received on 21.04.2017. Thereafter, remarks were called for by the Government from the Detaining Authority on 21.04.2017. The remarks were duly received on 04.05.2017. Thereafter, the Government considered the matter and passed the order rejecting the petitioner's representation 21.06.2017.

6. It is the contention of the petitioner that there was a delay of 13 days in submitting the remarks by the Detaining Authority, of which 4 days were Government Holidays and hence there was an inordinate delay of 9 days in submitting the remarks. Thereafter, another delay of 48 days in considering the representation, of which 14 days were Government Holidays and hence, there was an inordinate delay of 34 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 9 days in submitting the remarks by the Detaining Authority and 34 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 S.C.No.11 of 2017 dated 08.04.2017, passed by the first respondent is set aside. The detenu, namely, Perumal, Son of Subramani, male, aged about 35 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.

Sd/-

Assistant Registrar(CS IV)

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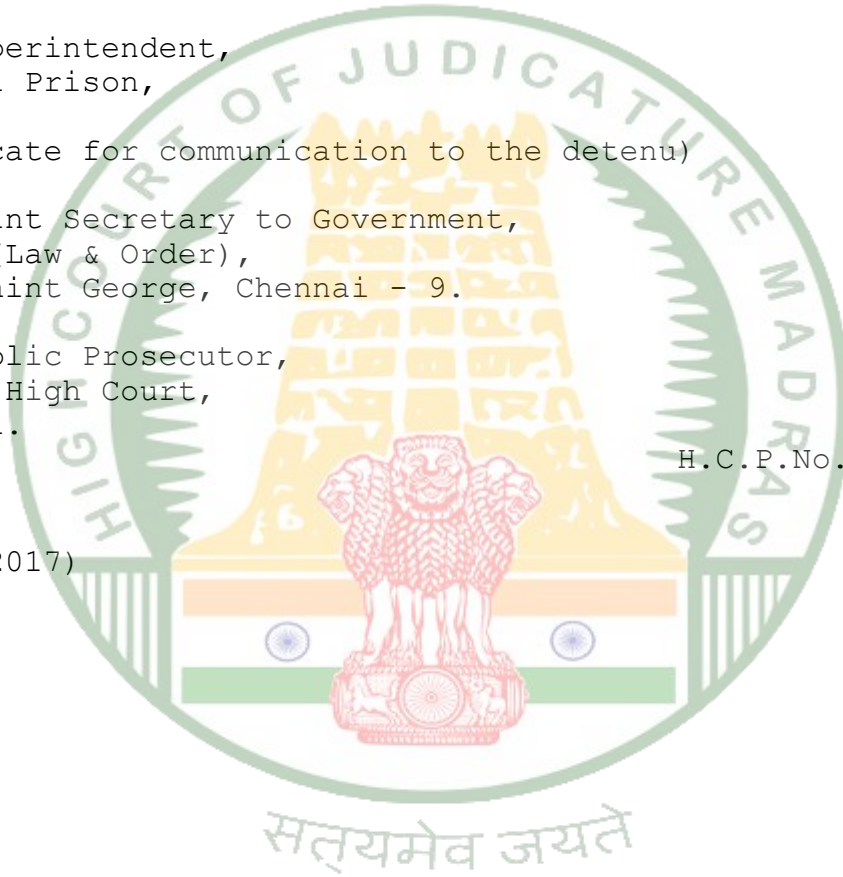
To

1. The District Collector and District Magistrate
Dharmapuri District
Dharmapuri.

2. The Secretary to the Government,
Home, Prohibition and Excise Department
Secretariat, Chennai - 600 009.
3. The Joint Secretary to Government,
Home, Prohibition and Excise Department
Secretariat, Chennai - 600 009.
4. The Inspector of Police
Kambainallur Police Station
Dharmapuri District
Cr.No.42/2017.
5. The Superintendent,
Central Prison,
Salem.
(In duplicate for communication to the detenu)
6. The Joint Secretary to Government,
Public(Law & Order),
Fort Saint George, Chennai - 9.
7. The Public Prosecutor,
Madras High Court,
Chennai.

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