



BEFORE THE MADURAI BENCH OF MADRAS HIGH COURT
DATED: 03.11.2017

CORAM:

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THE HONOURABLE MR.JUSTICE R.SUBBIAH
AND
THE HONOURABLE MR. JUSTICE A.D.JAGADISH CHANDIRA

H.C.P.(MD)No.1240 of 2017

Sajeela : Petitioner

Vs.

1.The Secretary to the Government
Department of Cooperation
Food and Consumer Protection Department
Secretariat, Chennai-9.

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

3.The Additional Secretary to Government of India,
Department of Consumer Affairs
Room No.270 Krishi Bhavan
New Delhi - 110 001.

4.The Superintendent of Prison
Palayamkottai,
Tirunelveli District

: Respondents

PRAYER: Petition is filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India praying for the issue of a Writ of Habeas Corpus, to call for the entire records connected with the detention order passed in H.S.(MD) Confdl. No.33/2017 dated 23.06.2017 on the file of the 2nd respondent herein and quash the same and direct the respondents to produce the detenu or body of the detenu namely Jaffer Khan, aged about 30 years, S/o.Nazar, now detained in Central Prison, Palayamkottai before this Court and set him at liberty forthwith.

For Petitioner : Mr.N.Pragalathan
For Respondents : Mr.C.Ramesh for R1 & R2, R4
Additional Public Prosecutor
No appearance for R3

ORDER

[Order of the Court was made by R.SUBBIAH, J]

<https://hcservices.courts.gov.in/hcservices>
The petitioner is the wife of the detenu viz., Jaffer Khan, S/o.Nazar, aged about 30 years. The detenu has been detained, as per the order of the second respondent, dated 23.06.2017, under



Section 3(1) r/w Section 3(2)(a) of the Prevention of Black Marketing and Maintenance of Supplies of Essential Commodities Act, 1980, branding him as "Black Marketeer". Challenging the same, she has come up with this Habeas Corpus Petition.

2. We have heard the learned counsel for the petitioner and the learned Additional Public Prosecutor for the respondents. 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.

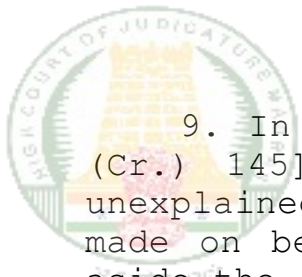
4. The learned Additional Public Prosecutor would, however, oppose this Habeas Corpus Petition. He would submit that though there was delay in considering the representation, on that score, the impugned detention order need not be interfered with, as on account of the said delay, no prejudice has been 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 23.06.2017. As against the same, the petitioner made a representation on 21.08.2017. The remarks were called for by the Government from the Detaining Authority on 29.08.2017. The remarks were received on 15.09.2017. Thereafter, the Government considered the issue and passed the order rejecting the representation on 23.09.2017. It is the contention of the petitioner that there was a delay of 12 days in submitting the remarks by the Detaining Authority.

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 relaxed 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/detenuue would be sufficient to set aside the detention order.

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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 12 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 proceedings in H.S.(MD) Confdl. No.33/2017 dated 23.06.2017, is quashed. The detenu, namely Jaffer Khan, S/o.Nazar, aged about 30 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 (CS-II)

/True Copy/

Sub Assistant Registrar

To

- 1.The Secretary to the Government
Department of Cooperation
Food and Consumer Protection Department
Secretariat, Chennai-9.
- 2.The District Collector & District Magistrate
Thoothukudi District, Thoothukudi.
- 3.The Additional Secretary to Government of India,
Department of Consumer Affairs,
Room No.270, Krishi Bhavan,
New Delhi-110 001.
- 4.The Superintendent of Prison
Palayamkottai,
Tirunelveli District



5.The Joint Secretary to Government,
Public (Law & Order),
Fort st.,George, Chennai-9.

6.The Additional Public Prosecutor,
Madurai Bench of Madras High Court,
Madurai.

Order made in
H.C.P.(MD)No.1240 of 2017
Dated: 03.11.2017

RR
JM/JC/SAR 1/13.12.2017/4P/7C