



WEB COPY

BEFORE THE MADURAI BENCH OF MADRAS HIGH COURT
DATED: 16.05.2017

CORAM:

THE HONOURABLE MR.JUSTICE M.V.MURALIDARAN
AND

THE HONOURABLE MR.JUSTICE C.V.KARTHIKEYAN
H.C.P (MD) No.137 of 2017

Stephen Pushparaj

: Petitioner

Vs.

1.The State of Tamil Nadu,

Rep. By the Principal Secretary to Government,
Home, Prohibition and Excise Department,
Chennai - 9.

2.The District Collector and District Magistrate,
Office of the District Collector and District Magistrate,
Thoothukudi District, Thoothukudi.

3.The Superintendent of Prison,
Central Prison,
Palayamkottai,
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 records relating to the impugned order of detention made in H.S. (M)Confdl. No.59/2016 dated 27.12.2016 on the file of the District Collector and District Magistrate, Thoothukudi, Thoothukudi District, the second respondent herein branding the detenu by name Stephen Pushparaj, aged about 39 years, S/o.John Jebasingh as 'Drug Offender', who is now confined in Central/Prison, Palayamkottai and quash the impugned order of detention and set him at liberty by producing him before this Court.

For Petitioner

: Mr.A.Thiruvadi Kumar

For Respondents

: Mr.C.Ramesh

Additional Public Prosecutor.

O R D E R

[Order of the Court was made by M.V.MURALIDARAN, J.]

The petitioner is the detenu - Stephen Pushparaj, aged about 39 years. The detenu has been detained by the second respondent by his order in H.S.(M)Confdl.No.59/2016 dated 27.12.2016, holding him to be a "Drug Offender", as contemplated under Section 2(e) of Tamil Nadu Act 14 of 1982. The said order is under challenge in this Habeas Corpus Petition.

<https://hcservices.ecourts.gov.in/hcservices/>

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 produced by the Detaining Authority.

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 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.

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.

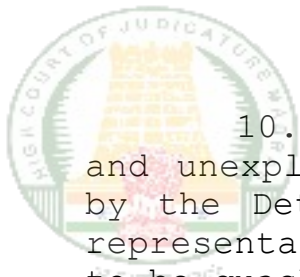
5. The Detention Order in question was passed on 27.12.2016. The petitioner made a representation dated 13.01.2017. Thereafter, remarks were called for by the Government from the Detaining Authority on 13.01.2017. The remarks were duly received on 13.02.2017. Thereafter, the Government considered the matter and passed the order rejecting the representation on 13.03.2017.

6. It is the contention of the petitioner that there was a delay of nineteen days in submitting the remarks by the Detaining Authority and thereafter, there was again a delay of eighteen days in considering the representation.

7. In **Rekha Vs. State of Tamil Nadu**, [2011 (5) SCC 244], the Hon'ble 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**, [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**, [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 very detention illegal.



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

WEB COPY

11. In the result, the Detention Order, passed by the second respondent, in his proceedings in H.S.(M)Confdl. No.59/2016 dated 27.12.2016, is quashed. The detenu, namely, Stephen Pushparaj, aged about 39 years, S/o.John Jebasingh, is ordered to be set at liberty forthwith, if he is not required for detention in connection with any other case.

12. In the upshot, we allow the Habeas Corpus Petition.

Sd/-

Assistant Registrar(RTI)

/True Copy/

Sub Assistant Registrar

To

- 1.The Principal Secretary to Government,
Home, Prohibition and Excise Department,
Chennai - 9.
- 2.The District Collector and District Magistrate,
Office of the District Collector and District Magistrate,
Thoothukudi District, Thoothukudi.
- 3.The Superintendent of Prison,
Central Prison,
Palayamkottai,
Tirunelveli District.
- 4.The Joint Secretary to Government,
Public (Law & Order) Department,
Fort St.George, Chennai-9.
- 5.The Additional Public Prosecutor,
Madurai Bench of Madras High Court,
Madurai.

+1cc to M/s. A.THIRUVADI KUMAR Advocate in SR. No.56640
PS/SSL
JS/JC/SAR.3/31.05.2017/3P-7C

ORDER MADE IN
H.C.P (MD) No.137 of 2017
Dated:16.05.2017