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BEFORE THE MADURAI BENCH OF MADRAS HIGH COURT
DATED: 23.05.2017

CORAM:

THE HONOURABLE MR.JUSTICE M.V.MURALIDARAN
AND

THE HONOURABLE MR.JUSTICE C.V.KARTHIKEYAN

H.C.P (MD) No.279 of 2017

S.Muthuvel

: Petitioner

Vs.

State represented by

1.The Secretary to Government,
Ministry of Consumer affairs,
Food & Public Distribution System,
(Department of Consumer affairs),
Government of India,
Room No.270, Krishi Bhavan,
New Delhi - 110001.

2.The Secretary to Government,
Government of Tamilnadu,
Co-operative, Food and Consumer Protection Department,
2nd Floor, Namakkal Kavingar Maligai,
St. George Fort, Chennai - 600 009.

3. The District Collector and District Magistrate,
Dindigul District, Dindigul.

4.The Superintendent of Prison,
Central Prison, Madurai.

: Respondents

PRAYER: Petition filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India praying to issue a Writ of Habeas Corpus, to call for the entire records, connected with the detention order in D.O.No.12/2017 dated 19.02.2017 on the file of the third respondent and quash the same and direct the respondents to produce the detenu, by name, P.Sakthivel aged about 32 years son of Pachammal detained in Central Prison, Madurai before this Court and set him at liberty forthwith.

For Petitioner

: Mr.T.Dakshnamurthy

For Respondents

: Mr.C.Mayilvahana Rajendran

Additional Public Prosecutor

O R D E R

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

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The petitioner is wife of the detenu - by name, P.Sakthivel son of Pachammal. The detenu has been detained by the



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third respondent by his order in D.O.No.12/2017 dated 19.02.2017, holding him to be a "Black Marketeer", as contemplated under the Prevention of Black Marketing and Maintenance of Supplies of Essential Commodities Act, 1980 (Central Act No.7 of 1980). 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 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 19.02.2017. The petitioner made a representation dated 22.02.2017. Thereafter, remarks were called for by the Government from the Detaining Authority on 01.03.2017. The remarks were duly received on 21.03.2017. Thereafter, the Government considered the matter and passed the order rejecting the representation on 28.03.2017.

6. It is the contention of the petitioner that there was a delay of 14 days in submitting the remarks by the Detaining Authority and thereafter, there was again a delay of 6 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.

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10. In the subject case, admittedly, there is an inordinate and unexplained delay of 14 days in submitting the remarks by the Detaining Authority and 6 days in considering the representation. The impugned detention order is, therefore, liable to be quashed.

11. In the result, the Detention Order, passed by the third respondent, in his proceedings in D.O.No.12/2017 dated 19.02.2017, is quashed. The detenu, namely, P.Sakthivel aged about 32 years son of Pachammal, 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(P&A)

/True copy/

Sub Assistant Registrar

To

1.The Secretary to Government, Ministry of Consumer affairs, Food & Public Distribution System, (Department of Consumer affairs), Government of India, Room No.270, Krishi Bhavan, New Delhi- 110001.

2.The Secretary to Government, Government of Tamilnadu, Co-operative, Food and Consumer Protection Department, 2nd Floor, Namakkal Kavingar Maligai, St.George Fort, Chennai-600 009.

3.The District Collector and District Magistrate, Dindigul District, Dindigul.

4.The Joint Secretary to Government, (Public Law and Order) Fort St.George, Chennai-9.

5.The Superintendent of Prison, Central Prison, Madurai.

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

H.C.P (MD) No.279 of 2017

Dated:23.05.2017

CM

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