



WEB COPY

BEFORE THE MADURAI BENCH OF MADRAS HIGH COURT

DATED: 12.04.2017

CORAM:

THE HONOURABLE MR.JUSTICE T.S.SIVAGNANAM

AND

THE HONOURABLE MR.JUSTICE P.VELMURUGAN

H.C.P(MD)No.1520 of 2016

Raja @ Michael Raja

... Petitioner

Vs.

1.The Secretary to Government,
State of Tamil Nadu,
Home, Prohibition and Excise Department,
Fort St.George, Chennai-600009.

2.The District Collector and District Magistrate,
Office of the District Collector and District Magistrate,
Kanniyakumari District at Nagercoil.

3.The Superintendent of Prison,
Palayamkottai Central Prison,
Tirunelveli District.

... Respondents

PRAYER: Habeas Corpus Petition is filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India praying for issuance of a Writ of Habeas Corpus to call for the entire records, connected with the detention order of the respondent No.2 in P.D.No. 72/2016 dated 26.10.2016 and quash the same and direct the respondents to produce the body or person of the detenu by name Raja @ Michael Raja, son of Selvaraj, aged about 32 years, now detained at Madurai Central Prison before this Court and set him at liberty.

For Petitioner : Mr.R.Alagumani

For Respondents : Mr.C.Ramesh
Additional Public Prosecutor

O R D E R

[Order of the Court was made by T.S.SIVAGNANAM,J.]

The petitioner is the detenu, aged about 32 years. He has been detained by the second respondent by his order in P.D.No.72/2016 dated 26.10.2016 holding him 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 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.

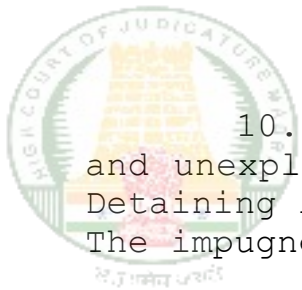
5. The Detention Order in question was passed on 26.10.2016. The petitioner made a representation dated 08.11.2016. Thereafter, remarks were called for by the Government from the Detaining Authority on 11.11.2016. The remarks were duly received on 14.12.2016. Thereafter, the Government considered the matter and passed the order rejecting the representation on 20.01.2017.

6. It is the contention of the petitioner that there was a delay of 22 days in submitting the remarks by the Detaining Authority and thereafter, there was again a delay of 24 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 22 days in submitting the remarks by the Detaining Authority and 24 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 second respondent, in his proceedings in P.D.No.72/2016 dated 26.10.2016 is quashed. The detenu, namely, Raja @ Michael Raja, 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(Writs)

/True Copy/

Sub Assistant Registrar

To

- 1.The Secretary to Government of Tamil Nadu,
Home, Prohibition and Excise Department,
Fort St.George, Chennai-600009.
- 2.The District Collector and District Magistrate,
Office of the District Collector and District Magistrate,
Kanniyakumari District at Nagercoil.
- 3.The Superintendent of Prison,
Palayamkottai Central Prison,
Tirunelveli District.
- 4.The Joint Secretary to Government of Tamil Nadu,
Public (L & O), Fort Saint George, Chennai-9.
- 5.The Additional Public Prosecutor,
Madurai Bench of Madras High Court,
Madurai.

Akv

AE/JC/SAR4/26.04.2017/3P/6C

H.C.P (MD) No.1520 of 2016
12.04.2017