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BEFORE THE MADURAI BENCH OF MADRAS HIGH COURT
DATED: **12.06.2017**

CORAM:

THE HONOURABLE MR.JUSTICE T.S.SIVAGNANAM
AND

THE HONOURABLE MR.JUSTICE P.VELMURUGAN

H.C.P(MD)No.1635 of 2016

Lakshmanan

: Petitioner

Vs.

- 1.The Principal 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,
Pudukottai District, Pudukottai.
 - 3.The Superintendent of Prison,
Trichy Central Prison,
Trichy District.
- : Respondents

PRAYER: Petition filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India praying to issue a Writ of Habeas Corpus, calling for the entire records, connected with the detention order of the respondent No.2 in D.O.No. 25 of 2016, dated 16.11.2016 and quash the same and direct the respondents to produce the body or person of the detenu by name Lakshmanan, Son of Kathamuthu, aged about 39 years, now detained at Trichy Central Prison before this Court and set him at liberty forthwith.

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 learned Additional Public Prosecutor submitted that though the counter affidavit has not been filed, the proforma has been available and he is agreed to make his submissions based on the said proforma.

2.The petitioner is the detenu, aged about 39 years. The detenu has been detained by the second respondent by his order in Detention Order in D.O.No. 25 of 2016 dated 16.11.2016, holding him to be a "Goonda", as contemplated under Section 2(f) of Tamil Nadu Habitual Offenders Act, 1982. The said order is under challenge in this Habeas Corpus Petition.



3. 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.

4. 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.

5. 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.

6. The Detention Order in question was passed on 16.11.2016. The petitioner made a representation dated 21.11.2016. Thereafter, remarks were called for by the Government from the Detaining Authority on 25.11.2016. The remarks were duly received on 02.01.2017. Thereafter, the Government considered the matter and passed the order rejecting the representation on 30.01.2017.

7. It is the contention of the petitioner that there was a delay of 24 days in submitting the remarks by the Detaining Authority and thereafter, there was again a delay of 7 days in considering the representation.

8. 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.

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 would be sufficient to set aside the order of detention.

10. In **Tara Chand Vs. State of Rajasthan and others**, [1980 (2) SCC 321], the Hon'ble Supreme Court has held that any unexplained delay on the part of the Government in considering the representation renders the very detention illegal.



11. In the subject case, admittedly, there is an inordinate and unexplained delay of 24 days in submitting the remarks by the Detaining Authority and 7 days in considering the representation. The impugned detention order is, therefore, liable to be quashed.

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12. In the result, the Detention Order, passed by the second respondent, in his proceedings in Detention Order in D.O.No. 25 of 2016 dated 16.11.2016, is quashed. The detenu, namely, Laksmanan, is ordered to be set at liberty forthwith, if he is not required for detention in connection with any other case.

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

Sd/-

Assistant Registrar(RTI)

/ True Copy /

Sub Assistant Registrar(C.S.)

To

1. The Principal 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,
Pudukottai District, Pudukottai.
3. The Superintendent of Prison,
Trichy Central Prison,
Trichy District.
4. The Joint Secretary to Government, Public (Law & Order),
Fort St. George, Chennai-600009.
5. The Additional Public Prosecutor,
Madurai Bench of Madras High Court,
Madurai.

tsg/ssl

MAS/KP/SAR 4/21.06.2017/3P/6C

ORDER MADE IN
H.C.P (MD) No.1635 of 2016
Dated: **12.06.2017**