

**BEFORE THE MADURAI BENCH OF MADRAS HIGH COURT****DATED: 18.04.2017****CORAM:****THE HONOURABLE MR.JUSTICE T.S.SIVAGNANAM
AND
THE HONOURABLE MR.JUSTICE P.VELMURUGAN****H.C.P (MD) No.1653 of 2016**

M.Jothi

: Petitioner

Vs.

1. The District Collector and District Magistrate,
Ramanathapuram District, Ramanathapuram.2. The Principal Secretary to Government,
State of Tamil Nadu,
Home, Prohibition and Excise Department,
Fort.St.George, Chennai - 600 009.3. The Superintendent,
Central Prison, Madurai.

: 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 of the first respondent in detention order in Cr.M.P.No.36/D.O/2016 dated 20.09.2016 in TPDA.No.5996 dated 21.09.2016 setting aside the order of detention and directing the respondents to produce the detenu by name, P.Mari @ Mareeswaran @ Pangumari, (32/2016) son of Muniasamy, before this Court now detained in the Central Prison, Madurai and setting him at liberty.

For Petitioner : Mr.A.Jeyaram

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 wife of the detenu P.Mari @ Mareeswaran @ Pangumari, aged about 32 years. The detenu has been detained by the second respondent by his order in Cr.M.P.No.36/D.O/2016 dated 20.09.2016 in TPDA.No.5996, dated 21.09.2016, 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.



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.

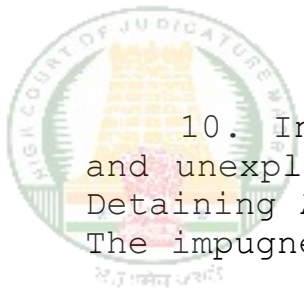
5. The Detention Order in question was passed on 20.09.2016. The petitioner made a representation dated 20.10.2016. Thereafter, remarks were called for by the Government from the Detaining Authority on 25.10.2016. The remarks were duly received on 01.11.2016. Thereafter, the Government considered the matter and passed the order rejecting the representation on 24.12.2016.

6. It is the contention of the petitioner that there was a delay of 6 days in submitting the remarks by the Detaining Authority and thereafter, there was again a delay of 33 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 6 days in submitting the remarks by the Detaining Authority and 33 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 Cr.M.P.No.36/D.O/2016 (GOONDA, dated 20.09.2016 in TPDA.No.5996, dated 21.09.2016, is quashed. The detenu, namely, P.Mari @ Mareeswaran @ Pangumari, 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(CO)

/True Copy/

Sub Assistant Registrar

To

1. The District Collector and District Magistrate,
Ramanathapuram District, Ramanathapuram.
2. The Principal Secretary to Government,
State of Tamil Nadu,
Home, Prohibition and Excise Department,
Fort.St.George, Chennai - 600 009.
3. The Superintendent,
Central Prison, Madurai.
4. The Additional Public Prosecutor,
Madurai Bench of Madras High Court,
Madurai.
5. The Joint Secretary to Government,
Public (Law & Order)
Fort St.George,
Chennai - 9

+1cc to Mr. A.Jeyaram , Advocate Sr.No.52388

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