

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT MADRAS

DATE : 28.06.2018

CORAM

THE HONOURABLE DR. JUSTICE S.VIMALA
AND
THE HONOURABLE MRS. JUSTICE S.RAMATHILAGAM

H.C.P.No.348 of 2018

T.Viji

.. Petitioner

- Vs -

The State represented by its

1. The Secretary to Government (Home),
Prohibition and Excise Department,
Government of Tamilnadu,
Fort St. George,
Chennai - 600 009.

2. The District Collector
and District Magistrate,
Villupuram District,
Villupuram.

... Respondents

Petition filed for the issuance of a writ of habeas corpus calling for the records pertaining to the order of detention dated 13.02.2018 passed by the 2nd respondent in No.C2/4578/2018 and quash the same and produce the detenu, Thigil alias Jagadeesan, aged about 35 years, S/o.Jayapal Pillai, detaining at Central Prison, Cuddalore, before this Court and set him at liberty.

For Petitioner : Dr.Manoharan

For Respondents: Mr. R.Prathap Kumar, APP

ORDER

(DELIVERED BY DR. S.VIMALA, J.)

The second respondent, District Collector and District Magistrate, Villupuram District, clamped an order of detention on 13.02.2018 as against Thigil alias Jagadeesan, S/o. Jayapal Pillai, as the said authority arrived at the subjective satisfaction that the said detenu is a 'Bootlegger' and he has to be detained under Section 3 (1) of Tamil Nadu Act 14 of 1982 with a view to preventing him from acting prejudicial to the interest of public health and public order.

2. Challenging the order of detention, the wife of the detenu has come forward with the present habeas corpus petition.

3. Heard Dr.Manoharan, learned counsel appearing for the petitioner and Mr.R.Prathap Kumar, learned Addl. Public Prosecutor appearing for the respondents.

4. It is contended that there is a delay in considering the representation and this has rendered the detention illegal. Learned Addl. Public Prosecutor appearing for the respondents conceded that there is only a delay of 20 days and it in no way vitiates the order of detention. Though such a contention is advanced, however, no explanation has been adduced by the respondents explaining the delay.

5. In Rashid Kapadia v. Medha Gadgil, (2012 (11) SCC 745), the Supreme Court had occasion to consider the effect of delay in considering the representation and in that context held as under :-

"13.It is well settled that the right of a person, who is preventively detained, to make a representation and have it considered by the authority concerned as expeditiously as possible, is a constitutional right under Article 22(5). Any unreasonable and unexplainable delay in considering the representation is held to be fatal to the continued detention of the detenu. The proposition is too well settled in a long line of decisions of this Court. We do not think it necessary to examine the authorities on this aspect, except to take note of a couple of judgments where the principle is discussed in detail. They are: Mohinuddin v. District Magistrate, Beed [(1987) 4 SCC 58 : 1987 SCC (Cri) 674] and Harshala Santosh Patil v. State of Maharashtra [(2006) 12 SCC 211 : (2007) 1 SCC (Cri) 680]."

6. In view of the above proposition, the delay in considering the representation submitted by the petitioner, which has not been explained properly has vitiated the order of detention. The delay is fatal to the order of detention and this has rendered the detention illegal.

7. On this short ground, the order of detention is quashed. The habeas corpus petition is allowed. The detenu, Thigil alias Jagadeesan, S/o. Jayapal Pillai, is ordered to be set at liberty forthwith, unless his custody is otherwise required in any other case.

Sd/-
Assistant Registrar(CS IX)

//True copy//

Sub Assistant Registrar

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To

1. The Secretary to Government (Home),
Prohibition and Excise Department,
Government of Tamilnadu,
Fort St. George,
Chennai -600 009.
2. The District Collector and District Magistrate,
Villupuram District,
Villupuram.
3. The Superintendent of Police,
Central Prison, Cuddalore.
4. The Joint Secretary to Government,
Public (Law and Order),
Fort St.George, Chennai-9.
5. The Public Prosecutor,
High Court, Madras.

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GP(CO)
GN(27/07/2018)