

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT MADRAS

DATED : 12.11.2018

CORAM:

THE HONOURABLE Mr. JUSTICE C.T.SELVAM
AND
THE HONOURABLE Mrs. JUSTICE S.RAMATHILAGAM

H.C.P.No.1930 of 2018

Punniyamoorthy ... Petitioner

-Vs-

1. The Secretary to the Government,
Home, Prohibition and Excise Department,
Fort St. George, Chennai - 600 009.
2. The District Collector and District Magistrate,
Erode District,
Erode. ... Respondents

PRAYER: Petition filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India, to issue a Writ of Habeas Corpus, calling for the records relating to the order of detention Cr.M.P. No.19/Goonda/2018/C1 dated, 24.08.2018 passed by the 2nd respondent and to quash the same and also to direct the detainee Muthuraj alias Muthu, S/o. Selvaraj, who is presently detained in the Central Prison, Coimbatore to be produced before this Hon`ble court and set at liberty.

For Petitioner : Mr.W.Camyles Gandhi

For Respondents : Mr.R.Prathap Kumar
Additional Public Prosecutor

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ORDER

[Order of the Court was made by C.T.SELVAM, J.]

The petitioner is the brother of the detainee herein, viz. Muthuraj alias Muthu, S/o. Selvaraj, aged 31 years. The detainee has been detained by the second respondent by his order in Cr.M.P. No.19/Goonda/2018/C1, dated 24.08.2018, holding her to

be a "GOONDA", as contemplated under Section 2(f) of Tamil Nadu Prevention of Dangerous Activities of Bootleggers, Cyber Law Offenders, Drug Offenders, Forest Offenders, Goondas, Immoral Traffic Offenders, Sand Offenders, Sexual Offenders, Slum Grabbers and Video Pirates Act, 1982 (Tamil Nadu Act 14 of 1982). The said order is under challenge in this Habeas Corpus Petition.

2. The detainee has come to adverse notice in the following cases:-

S.No.	Police Station & Crime No.	Section of Law
1.	Erode Taluk Police Station Crime No. 178/2018 Dated: 29.03.2018	392 IPC
2.	Erode Taluk Police Station Crime No. 210/2018 Dated: 18.04.2018	457, 380 IPC
3.	Erode North Police Station Crime No. 465/2018 Dated: 07.07.2018	392 IPC

The ground case has been registered against the detainee in Cr.No.466/2018 on the file of the Sub Inspector of Police , Erode North Police Station, for offence u/s 392, 506(ii) IPC. The detention order has been passed by second respondent in Cr.M.P. No.19/Goonda/2018/C1.

3. We have heard learned counsel for the petitioner and learned Additional Public Prosecutor appearing 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 appearing 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 detainee 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 24.08.2018. The petitioner made a representation, dated nil and the same was received on 08.10.2018. Thereafter, remarks were called for by the Government from the Detaining Authority on 12.10.2018. The remarks were duly received on 17.10.2018. Thereafter, the Government considered the matter and passed the order rejecting the petitioner's representation on 07.11.2018.

7. It is the contention of the petitioner that there was an inordinate delay of 10 days in submitting the remarks by the Detaining Authority, of which 2 days were Saturday and Sunday. Thereafter, there was yet another delay of 21 days in considering the representation, of which 8 days were Saturdays and Sundays and one (1) day falls on Government Holiday, hence there was yet another delay of 11 days in considering the representation.

8. In *Rekha vs. State of Tamil Nadu*, reported in 2011 (5) SCC 244, the Honourable 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 detainee.

9. In *Sumaiya vs. The Secretary to Government*, reported in 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 detainee would be sufficient to set aside the order of detention.

10. In *Tara Chand vs. State of Rajasthan and others*, reported in 1980 (2) SCC 321, the Honourable 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.

11. In the subject case, admittedly, there is an inordinate and unexplained delay of 8 days in submitting the remarks by the Detaining Authority and 11 days in considering the representation. The impugned detention order is, therefore, liable to be quashed.

12. In the result, the Habeas Corpus Petition is allowed and the order of detention in Cr.M.P. No.19/Goonda/2018/C1, dated 24.08.2018, passed by the second respondent is set aside. The detainee, namely Muthuraj alias Muthu, Son of Selvaraj, aged 31 years, is directed to be released forthwith unless her detention is required in connection with any other case.

Sd/-
Deputy Registrar

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Sub Assistant Registrar

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To:

1. The Secretary to the Government,
Home, Prohibition and Excise Department,
Fort St. George, Chennai - 600 009.
2. The District Collector and District Magistrate,
Erode District, Erode.
3. The Superintendent of Central Prison, Coimbatore.
4. The Joint Secretary,
Public (Law and order) Department,
Secretariat, Chennai - 600 009.
5. The Public Prosecutor,
High Court, Madras.

H.C.P.No.1930 of 2018

GMV (07/01/2019)

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