

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT MADRAS

DATED: 27.08.2019

Coram

The Hon'ble Mr. Justice M.M.SUNDRESH
and
The Hon'ble Mr. Justice M. NIRMAL KUMAR

H.C.P. No. 1135 of 2019

Jansi Rani

... Petitioner

-vs-

1.The State Rep.

By its Secretary to the Government,
Home, Prohibition and Excise Department,
Fort St.George, Chennai - 600 009

2.The Commissioner of Police/Detaining Authority,
Coimbatore City,Coimbatore District.

... Respondents

Petition filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India, to issue a Writ of Habeas Corpus calling for the records leading to the detention of the petitioner's husband namely C.Gopinath @ Gopi, son of Chelladurai, aged 28 years, under Act 14/1982 vide detention order dated 28.05.2019 on the file of the second respondent made in proceedings in C.No.38/G/IS/2019, quash the same, consequently direct the respondents herein to produce the body and person C.Gopinath @ Gopi, son of Chelladurai, aged 28 years, who is lodged at Central Prison, Coimbatore, before this Court and set him at liberty.

For Petitioner : Mr.C.D.Sugumar

For Respondents : Ms.V.Saradha Devi
Government Advocate(Crl.Side)

ORDER

[Order of the Court was made by M.M.SUNDRESH, J.]

The petitioner is the wife of the detenu, C.Gopinath @ Gopi, son of Chelladurai, aged 28 years. The detenu has been detained by the second respondent by his order in C.No.38/G/IS/2019,

dated 28.05.2019 holding 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 appearing for the petitioner and the learned Government Advocate (Crl.Side) appearing 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 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.

4.The learned Government Advocate (Crl.Side) opposed the Habeas Corpus Petition. She 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 Government Advocate (Crl.Side), 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 28.05.2019. The petitioner made a representation dated 08.06.2019. Thereafter, remarks were called for by the Government from the Detaining Authority on 10.06.2019. The remarks were duly received on 17.06.2019. Thereafter, the Government considered the matter and passed the order rejecting the petitioner's representation on 05.07.2019.

6. It is the contention of the petitioner that the remarks were received on 17.06.2019 and there was a delay of 7 days in submitting the remarks of which 2 days were Government Holidays. It is the further contention of the learned counsel for the petitioner that there was a delay of 18 days in considering the representation by the Hon'ble Minister for Electricity, Prohibition and Excise Department after the Deputy Secretary dealt with it, of which 4 days were Government Holidays, hence, there was inordinate delay of 14 days in considering the representation. Thereafter, the Government considered the matter and passed the order rejecting the petitioner's representation on 05.07.2019.

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*, reported in 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 5 days in submitting the remarks and 14 days in considering the representation by the Hon'ble Minister for Electricity, Prohibition and Excise Department. The impugned detention order is, therefore, liable to be quashed.

11. In the result, the Habeas Corpus Petition is allowed and the order of detention in C.No.38/G/IS/2019, dated 28.05.2019, passed by the second respondent is set aside. The detenu, C.Gopinath @ Gopi, son of Chelladurai, aged 28 years, is directed to be released forthwith unless his detention is required in connection with any other case.

Sd/-

Assistant Registrar(CO)

//True Copy//

Sub Assistant Registrar

mmi/ssm
To

1.The Secretary,
Home, Prohibition and Excise Department,
Fort St.George, Chennai - 600 009

2.The Commissioner of Police/Detaining Authority,
Coimbatore City,Coimbatore District.

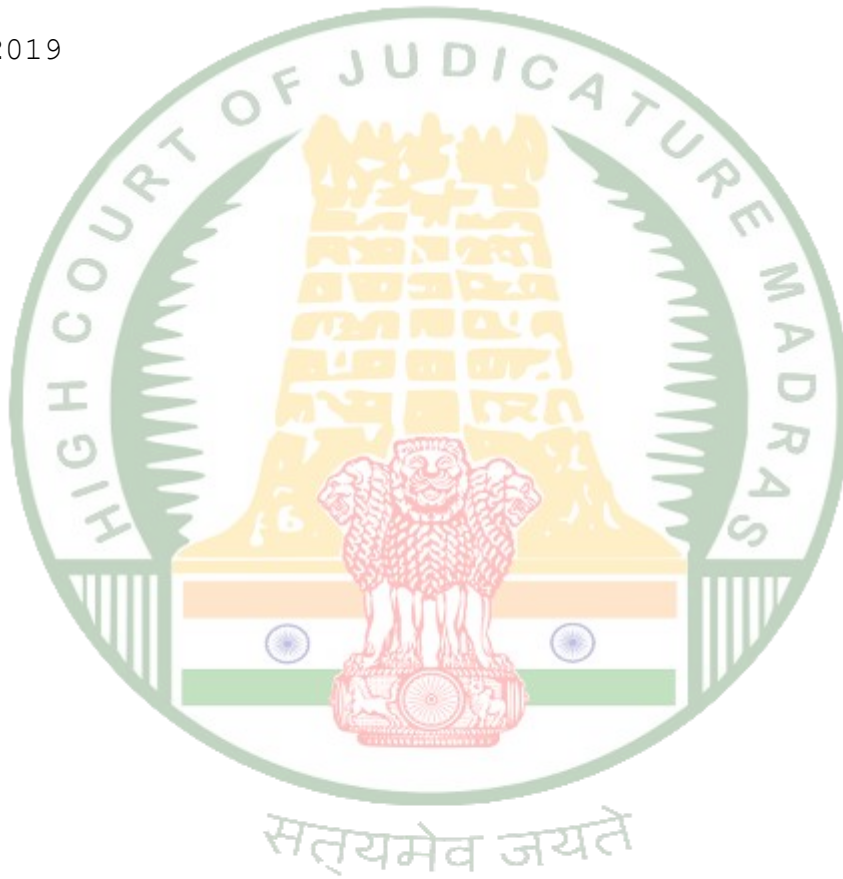
3.The Superintendent of Prison,
Central Prison,Coimbatore.

4.The Public Prosecutor,
High Court, Madras.

5. The Joint Secretary to Government,
Public (Law & Order),Fort St.George,Chennai-9.

H.C.P. No. 1135 of 2019

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