

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT MADRAS

DATED: 10.12.2020

CORAM

THE HONOURABLE MR. JUSTICE M.M. SUNDRESH
AND
THE HONOURABLE MR. JUSTICE D. KRISHNAKUMAR

H.C.P. No. 1290 of 2020

Kasthuri

...Petitioner

Vs.

1. State of Tamil Nadu,
rep. by its Addl. Chief Secretary to Government,
Home, Prohibition and Excise Department,
Secretariat, Chennai - 9.
2. The Commissioner of Police,
Greater Chennai, Vepery,
Chennai - 7.
3. The Inspector of Police (L & O),
P-1, Pulianthope Police Station,
Chennai.
4. The Superintendent,
Central Prison, Puzhal, Chennai. ..Respondents

Prayer: Petition under Article 226 of the Constitution of India praying for issue of a Writ of Habeas Corpus to call for the records of the detention made in Memo No. 188/BCDFGISSSV/2020 dated 16.03.2020 passed by the Commissioner of Police, Greater Chennai, Vepery, Chennai -7, the 2nd respondent herein and set aside the same and direct the respondents to produce the detenu before this Hon'ble Court and set the detenu Thiru. Seena @ Srinivasan, S/o. Velu, aged 24 years now confined in Central Prison, Puzhal II, Chennai and set him at liberty.

For Petitioner :: Mr.R. Balakrishnan

For Respondents:: Mr.R. Prathap Kumar,
Addl. Public Prosecutor

O R D E R

(Order of the Court was made by M.M. SUNDRESH, J.)

The petitioner is the grandmother of the detenu, namely, Thiru. Seena @ Srinivasan, S/o. Velu, aged 24 years . The detenu has been detained by the second respondent by his order in Memo No. 188/BCDFGISSSV/2020 dated 16.03.2020 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 appearing for the petitioner and the learned Additional Public Prosecutor 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 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 16.03.2020. The petitioner made a representation on 16.07.2020. Thereafter, remarks were called for by the Government from the Detaining Authority on 21.07.2020. The remarks were duly received on 29.07.2020. Thereafter, the Government considered the matter and passed the order rejecting the petitioner's representation on 13.08.2020.

6. It is the contention of the petitioner that there was a delay of 7 days in submitting the remarks by the Detaining Authority, of which 2 days were Government Holidays and hence there was an inordinate delay of 5 days in submitting the remarks, which has led to belated disposal of the representation of the petitioner.

7. In *Rekha vs. State of Tamil Nadu* (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 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 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.

10. In the subject case, admittedly, there is an inordinate and unexplained delay of 5 days in submitting the remarks by the Detaining Authority and thereby caused delay in considering the representation of the petitioner in time. 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 Memo No. 188/BCDFGISSSV/2020 dated 16.03.2020 passed by the second respondent is set aside. The detenu, namely, Thiru. Seena @ Srinivasan, S/o. Velu, aged 22 years is directed to be released forthwith unless his detention is required in connection with any other case.

Sd/-

Assistant Registrar(CS VII)

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Sub Assistant Registrar

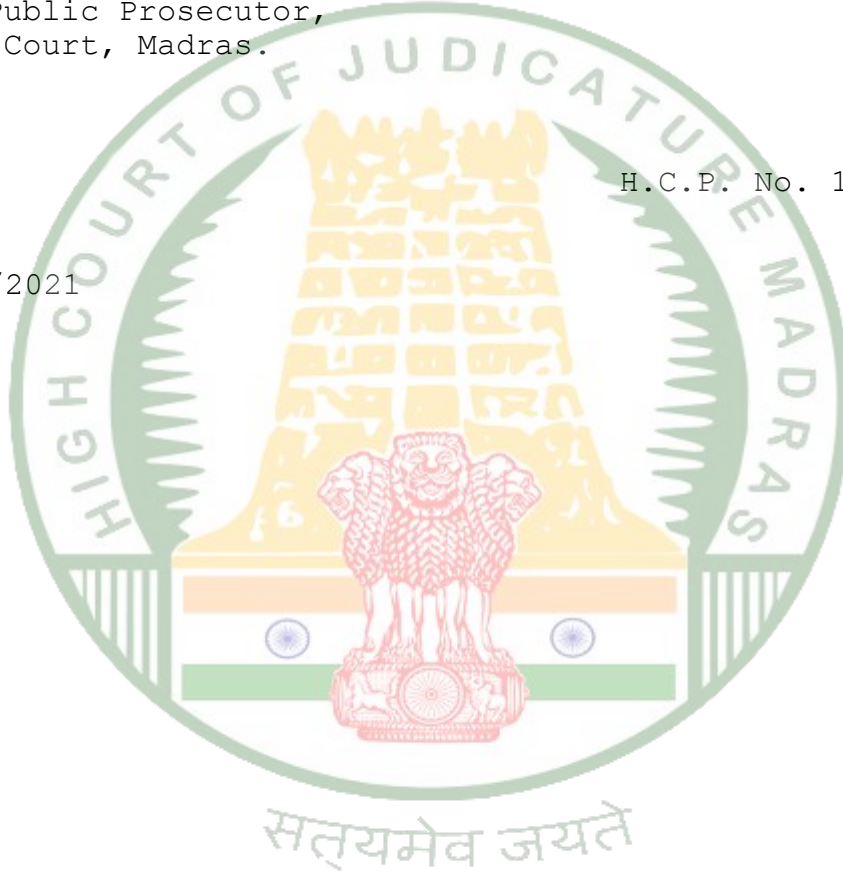
To

1. The Addl. Chief Secretary to Government,
Home, Prohibition and Excise Department,
Secretariat, Chennai - 9.
2. The Joint Secretary to Government,
Public(Law & Order),
Secretariat, Chennai - 9.

3. The Commissioner of Police,
Greater Chennai, Vepery,
Chennai - 7.
4. The Inspector of Police (L & O),
P-1, Pulianthope Police Station,
Chennai.
5. The Superintendent,
Central Prison, Puzhal, Chennai.
6. The Public Prosecutor,
High Court, Madras.

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