

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT MADRAS

DATED : 24/2/2020

C O R A M

THE HONOURABLE MR.JUSTICE R.SUBBIAH
and
THE HONOURABLE MR.JUSTICE TMT.TEEKAA RAMAN

H.C.P.No.2433 of 2019

A. Saradhammal ... Petitioner

Vs

1. Government of Tamil Nadu
rep. By its Secretary to Government
Department of Home, Prohibition and Excise
Chepauk
Chennai 600 005.
2. The District Collector and District Magistrate
District Collector Office
Sathuvachari
Vellore. ... Respondents

Petition filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India praying to issue a Writ of Habeas Corpus to call for the records relating to the Detention Order made in Memo No.C3/D.O.No.117/2019 dated 22/10/2019, served with detenu on 23/10/2019 and set aside the same and direct the respondents to produce the body of the detenu Thiru Naresh Kumar @ Naresh, aged 35 years, S/o. Akkeem, No.5/6 Labour School Street, Karai, Ranipet, Walaja Taluk, Vellore District before this Court and set him at liberty forthwith.

For Petitioner : Mr.A.Suresh Sakthi Murugan
For Respondents: Mr.R.Prathap Kumar
Additional Public Prosecutor

O R D E R

[Order of this Court was made by R.SUBBIAH, J]

Petitioner is the mother of the detenu viz., Naresh Kumar @ Naresh, S/o.Akkeem, aged 35, who has been branded as a 'Goonda' under the Tamil Nadu Act 14 of 1982 and detained under order of second respondent passed in C3/D.O.No.117/2019 dated 22/10/2019.

2. The detenu came to adverse notice in the following cases:

Sl. No.	Police Station and Crime No.	Section of law
1.	Sipcot Police Station, Crime No.232/2017	379, 430 IPC r/w. Section 21 (1), Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957
2.	Sipcot Police Station Crime No.286/2017	379, 430 IPC r/w. Section 21 (1) Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957
3.	Sipcot Police Station Crime No.290/2017	379, 430 IPC r/w. Section 21 (1) Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957
4.	Sipcot Police Station Crime No.361/2017	379, 430 IPC r/w. Section 21 (1) Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957
5.	Sipcot Police Station Crime No.26/2018	379 and 430 IPC
6.	Ranipet Police Station Crime No.235/2018	294 (b), 353, 379, 430 and 506 (i) IPC
7.	Ranipet Police Station Crime No.414/2018	379, 430, 341, 353, 307, 506 (ii) IPC r/w. Section 21 (1) Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957
8.	Thiruvalam Police Station Crime No.28/2019	341, 294 (b), 323 and 506 (ii) IPC

The alleged ground case has been registered against the detenu in Crime No.619 of 2019 on the file of Ranipet Police Station for offences under Sections 143, 294 (b), 353, 307, 506 (ii) IPC, r/w. Section 3 (1) of Tamil Nadu Property (Prevention of Damage & Loss) Act, 1992. Aggrieved by the order of detention, the present Habeas Corpus Petition has been filed.

3. Heard learned counsel for petitioner and learned Additional Public Prosecutor appearing for respondents. Perused the materials on record.

4. Though several grounds have been raised in the Habeas Corpus Petition, 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. In support of his contention, learned counsel for the petitioner relied on the judgment of the Hon'ble Apex Court in Rajammal Vs. State of Tamil Nadu {(1991) 1 SCC 417}.

5. Learned Additional Public Prosecutor would submit that though there was a delay in considering the representation, on that score alone, the impugned detention order cannot be quashed. According to 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.

6. The Detention Order, in question, was passed on 22/10/2019. The petitioner submitted the representation dated 31/10/2019 and the same was received on 4/11/2019. Thereafter, remarks were called for by the Government from the Detaining Authority on 5/11/2019. The remarks were duly received on 21/11/2019. Thereafter, the Government considered the matter and passed the order rejecting the petitioner's representation on 29/11/2019.

7. It is the contention of the petitioner that there was an inordinate delay of 14 days, of which four were Government holidays, in submitting the remarks by the Detaining Authority. Thereafter, there was yet another delay of 3 days, of which two were Government holidays in considering the representation.

8. In the judgment of the Hon'ble Supreme Court in Rajammal's case (cited supra), it has been held as follows:-

'It is a constitutional obligation of the Government to consider the representation forwarded by the detenu without any delay. Though no period is prescribed by Article 22 of the Constitution for the decision to be taken on the representation, the words "as soon as may be " in clause (5) of Article 22 convey the message that the representation should be considered and disposed of at the earliest.'

9. As per the dictum laid down by the Supreme Court in above cited Rajammal's case, number of days of delay is immaterial and what is to be considered is whether the delay caused has been properly explained by the authorities concerned. Here, 11 days delay has not been properly explained at all.

10. Further, in a recent decision in Ummu Sabeena vs. State of Kerala [2011 STPL (Web) 999 SC], the Supreme Court has held that the history of personal liberty, as is well known, is a history of insistence on procedural safeguards. The expression 'as soon as may be', in Article 22(5) of the Constitution of India clearly shows the concern of the makers of the Constitution that the representation, made on behalf of the detenu, should be considered and disposed of with a sense of urgency and without any avoidable delay.

11. In the light of the above fact and law, we have no hesitation in quashing the order of detention on the ground of delay on the part of the Government in disposing of the representation of the detenu.

12. Accordingly, the Habeas Corpus Petition is allowed and the detention order passed by the second respondent against the detenu viz., Nareshkumar @ Naresh, aged 35, in C.3/D.O.No.117/2019 dated 22/10/2019, is set aside. The above named detenu is ordered to be set at liberty forthwith, unless his custody is required in connection with any other case.

Sd/-
Assistant Registrar(AD I)

//True Copy//

सत्यमेव जयते
Sub Assistant Registrar

mvs.

To

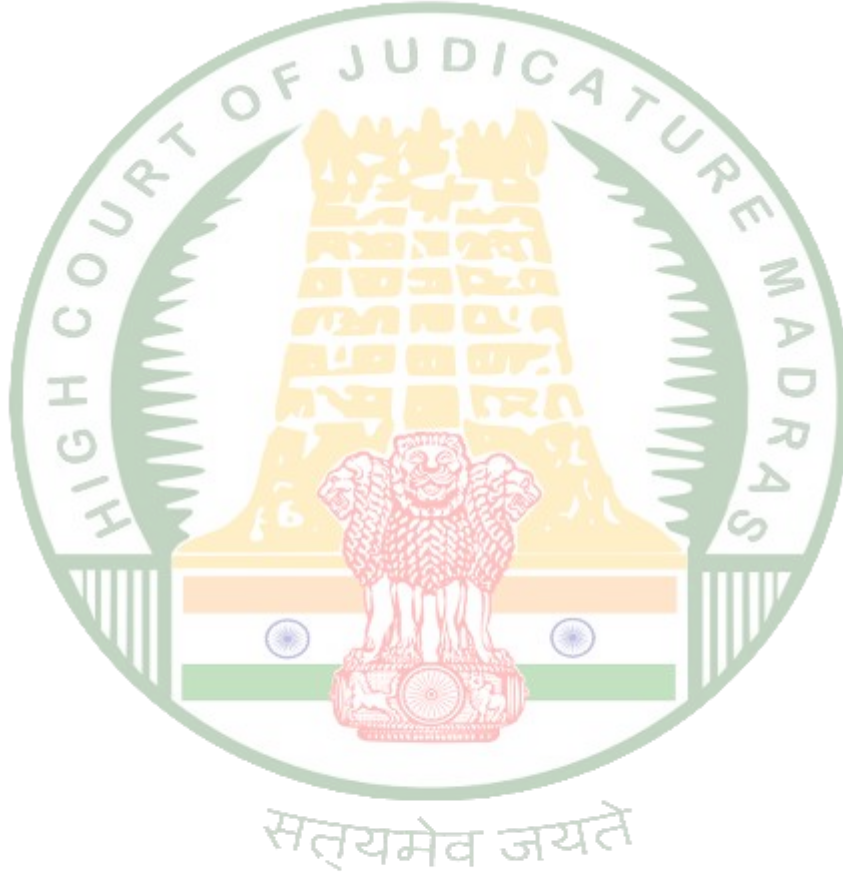
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2. The District Collector and District Magistrate
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Sathuvachari
Vellore.

3. The Superintendent, Central prison, Vellore

4. The Joint Secretary to Government,
Public (Law and order) Fort. St. George, Chennai 9.

5. The Public Prosecutor,
High Court, Madras.

+1cc to Mr. A. Suresh Sakthi Murugan , Advocate SR.No. 15438
H.C.P.No. 2433 of 2019
A.SK(28/07/2020)



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