



WEB COPY

BEFORE THE MADURAI BENCH OF MADRAS HIGH COURT

DATED: 23.06.2020

CORAM:

**THE HONOURABLE MR.JUSTICE P.N.PRAKASH
AND
THE HONOURABLE MR. JUSTICE B.PUGALENDHI**

H.C.P. (MD)No.976 of 2019

Surya

: Petitioner/Detenu

Vs.

1.The Principal Secretary to Government
State of Tamil Nadu,
Home, Prohibition and Excise Department
Fort St. George, Chennai-9.

2.The District Collector and District Magistrate
Office of the District Collector and District Magistrate
Theni District, Theni.

3.The Superintendent of Prison
Madurai Central Prison,
Madurai District.

: Respondents

PRAYER: Petition is filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India praying for the issue of a Writ of Habeas Corpus, to call for the entire records connected with the detention order of the respondent No.2 in Detention Order NO.12/2019 dated 17.09.2019 and quash the same and direct the respondents to produce the body or person of the detenu by name, Surya, son of Sekar, aged about 28 years now detained as 'Drug Offender' at Madurai Central Prison before this Court and set him at liberty forthwith.

For Petitioner : Mr.R.Alagumani
For Respondents : Mr.R.Anandharaj
Additional Public Prosecutor

ORDER

(Order of the Court was made by B.PUGALENDHI, J)

The petitioner is the detenu viz., Surya, S/o.Sekar, aged about 28 years. The detenu has been detained, as per the order of the second respondent, dated 17.09.2019, under Section 2(e) of the Tamil Nadu Act 14 of 1982, branding him as "Drug Offender". Challenging the same, the petititioner is before this Court in this Habeas Corpus
Petition



2. We have heard the learned counsel for the petitioner and the learned Additional Public Prosecutor for the respondents. We have also perused the records carefully.

3. Though several grounds have been raised in the Habeas Corpus Petition, the learned counsel for the petitioner would mainly focus his argument on the ground that there is violation of procedural safeguards, which are guaranteed under Articles 21 and 22 of the Constitution of India. The learned counsel would submit that the representation made by the petitioner was not considered on time and there was an inordinate and unexplained delay. The learned counsel has relied on few Judgments of the Hon'ble Supreme Court. Based on the same, the learned counsel would plead for setting aside the detention order.

4. The learned Additional Public Prosecutor would, however, oppose this Habeas Corpus Petition. He would submit that though there was delay in considering the representation, on that score, the impugned detention order need not be interfered with, as on account of the said delay, 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. We have considered the above submissions.

6. In this case, the Detention Order was passed on 17.09.2019. As against the same, the petitioner made a representation on 21.09.2019. The remarks were called for by the Government from the Detaining Authority on 24.10.2019. The remarks were received on 06.11.2019. Thereafter, the Government considered the issue and passed the order rejecting the representation on 27.11.2019. It is the contention of the petitioner that there was delay of 14 days in considering the representation.

7. Now, the question is as to whether on that score, the impugned order can be quashed.

8. In **Rekha Vs. State of Tamil Nadu**, [2011 (5) SCC 244], the Hon'ble Supreme Court has held that the right to life and liberty of a person is protected, under Article 21 of the Constitution of India. The Hon'ble Supreme Court has further 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 of the detenu.

9. In **Tara Chand Vs. State of Rajasthan and others**, [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 detention illegal. This dictum has been followed in several Judgments consistently by the Hon'ble Supreme Court as well as this Court.

10. Applying the said dictum laid down by the Hon'ble Supreme Court, if we look into the facts of the present case, undoubtedly, there is an inordinate and unexplained delay of 14 working days and therefore, the impugned detention order is liable to be quashed.

11. In the result, this Habeas Corpus Petition is allowed and the impugned Detention Order, passed by the second respondent, in his proceedings in Detention Order D.O.No.12/2019 dated 17.09.2019 is quashed. The detenu, namely Surya, S/o.Sekar, aged about 28 years, is ordered to be set at liberty forthwith, if he is not required for detention in connection with any other case.

Sd/-

Assistant Registrar (AD-II)

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Sub Assistant Registrar(CS)

RR

Note :

In view of the present lock down owing to COVID-19 pandemic, a web copy of the order may be utilized for official purposes, but, ensuring that the copy of the order that is presented is the correct copy, shall be the responsibility of the advocate / litigant concerned.

To

- 1.The Principal Secretary to Government
State of Tamil Nadu,
Home, Prohibition and Excise Department
Fort St. George, Chennai-9.
- 2.The District Collector and District Magistrate
Office of the District Collector and District Magistrate
Theni District, Theni.
- 3.The Superintendent of Prison
Madurai Central Prison,
Madurai District.



4.The Joint Secretary to Government,
Public(Law & Order),
Fort Saint George,
Chennai.

5.The Additional Public Prosecutor,
Madurai Bench of Madras High Court,
Madurai.

Order made in
H.C.P. (MD) No. 976 of 2019

Dated: 23.06.2020

NR (07.07.2020) 4P 6C