



WEB COPY

H.C.P.(MD) No.1004 of 2019

BEFORE THE MADURAI BENCH OF MADRAS HIGH COURT

DATED : 24.06.2020

CORAM:

THE HONOURABLE MR.JUSTICE P.N.PRAKASH

and

THE HONOURABLE MR.JUSTICE B.PUGALENDHI

H.C.P. (MD) No.1004 of 2019

Manickanathan

... Petitioner/Detenu

-vs-

- 1.The Additional Chief Secretary to Government
Home, Prohibition and Excise Department
Secretary, Chennai-600 009
- 2.The District Collector and District Magistrate
Office of the District Collector and District Magistrate
Ramanathapuram District, Ramanathapuram
- 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, calling for the entire records, connected with the detention order of the Respondent No.2 in TN.P.D.A.B.C.D.F.G.I.S.S.S.V.No.15/Goonda/2019, dated 18.09.2019 and quash the same and direct the respondents to produce the body or person of the detenu by name Manickanathan, son of Muniyasamy, aged about 29 years, now detained as Goonda 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

O R D E R

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

The petitioner is the detenu viz., Manickanathan, son of Muniyasamy, aged about 29 years. The detenu has been detained, as per the order of the second respondent, dated 18.09.2019, under Section 2(f) of the Tamil Nadu Act 14 of 1982, branding him as "Goonda". Challenging the same, the petitioner 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 18.09.2019. As against the same, the petitioner made a representation on 25.09.2019. The remarks were received on 14.10.2019. Thereafter, the Government considered the issue and passed the order rejecting the representation on 29.10.2019. It is the contention of the petitioner that there was delay of nine 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 ***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/detenu would be sufficient to set aside the detention order.



10. 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.

11. 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 nine working days. Under normal circumstances, the delay of nine days has never been considered by this Court. However, on account of "Covid -19" and in order to decongest the prison, the delay of nine days has been considered by this Court and therefore, the impugned detention order is liable to be quashed.

12. In the result, the Habeas Corpus Petition shall stand allowed and the Detention Order, passed by the second respondent, in his proceedings in TN.P.D.A.B.C.D.F.G.I.S.S.V.No.15/Goonda/2019 dated 18.09.2019, is quashed. The detenu, namely, Manickanathan, son of Muniyasamy, aged about 29 years, is ordered to be set at liberty forthwith, if his detention is not required in connection with any other case.

Sd/-

Assistant Registrar

// True Copy //

/ /2020

Sub Assistant Registrar(CS)

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.

krk



To:

- 1.The Additional Chief Secretary to Government,
Home, Prohibition and Excise Department,
Secretary, Chennai-600 009.
- 2.The District Collector and District Magistrate,
Office of the District Collector and District Magistrate,
Ramanathapuram District, Ramanathapuram.
- 3.The Superintendent of Prison,
Madurai Central Prison,
Madurai District.
- 4.The Additional Public Prosecutor,
Madurai Bench of Madras High Court,
Madurai.

H.C.P. (MD) No.1004 of 2019
24.06.2020

CS (01.07.2020) 4P 5C