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IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT MADRAS

DATED : 09.11.2021

CORAM

THE HONOURABLE MR.JUSTICE P.N.PRAKASH
AND
THE HONOURABLE MRS.JUSTICE R.HEMALATHA

H.C.P.NO.936 OF 2021

K.Kodiyammal

... Petitioner

.Vs.

1. The Secretary to the Government,
Home, Prohibition and Excise Department,
Chennai - 600 009.
2. The Commissioner of Police,
Tiruppur City,
Tamil Nadu - 641 687.
3. The Superintendent of Prison,
Central Prison, Coimbatore ,
Coimbatore - 641 018.
4. The Inspector of Police,
Nallur Police Station,
Tiruppur City - 641 606.

... Respondents

PRAYER:-

Petition filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India to issue a writ of Habeas Corpus to direct the respondents to produce the body of the detenu Selvam, male, age 31 years, S/o.Rajaponnu, who is detained in the Central Prison, Coimbatore, before this Court and pass an order to call for the records of detention order passed by the second respondent dated 05.05.2021 in Memo C.No.21/D.O./IS/Tiruppur City/2021, against my brother Selvam, male, age 31 years, S/o.Rajaponnu, and set aside the same and set the detenu at liberty.

For Petitioner : Mr.R.Rafi Babu

For Respondents : Mr.R.Muniyapparaj,
Additional Public Prosecutor



ORDER

[Made by P.N.PRAKASH, J.]

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The petitioner is the sister of the detenu Selvam, S/o. Rajaponnu, aged 31 years. The detenu has been detained by the second respondent by his order in C.No.21/D.O./IS/Tiruppur City/2021 dated 05.05.2021, 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 strongly opposed the Habeas Corpus Petition by filing his counter. 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 05.05.2021. The petitioner made a representation on 08.05.2021. Thereafter, remarks were called for by the Government from the Detaining Authority on 13.05.2021. The remarks were duly received on 27.05.2021. Thereafter, the Government considered the matter and passed the order rejecting the petitioner's representation on 26.07.2021.

6. It is the contention of the petitioner that there was a delay of 14 days in submitting the remarks by the Detaining Authority, of which, 5 days were Government Holidays and hence there was an inordinate delay of 9 days in submitting the remarks. It is the further contention of the petitioner that the remarks were received on 27.05.2021 and there was a delay of 60 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, 19 days were Government Holidays, hence, there was an inordinate delay of 41 days in considering the representation.

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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 9 days in submitting the remarks by the Detaining Authority and unexplained delay of 41 days in considering the representation by the Hon'ble Minister for Home, Prohibition and Excise Department. The impugned detention order is, therefore, liable to be quashed.

In the result, the Habeas Corpus Petition is allowed and the order of detention in C.No.21/D.O./IS/Tiruppur City/2021 dated 05.05.2021, passed by the second respondent is set aside. The detenu, viz., Selvam, S/o. Rajaponnu, aged 31 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

nsd



To

1. The Secretary to the Government,
Home, Prohibition and Excise Department,
Chennai - 600 009.
2. The Commissioner of Police,
Tiruppur City,
Tamil Nadu - 641 687.
3. The Superintendent of Prison,
Central Prison, Coimbatore ,
Coimbatore - 641 018.
4. The Inspector of Police,
Nallur Police Station,
Tiruppur City - 641 606.
5. The Joint Secretary to Government of Tamil Nadu,
Public, Law and Order Department,
Secretariat, Chennai - 9.
6. The Public Prosecutor,
High Court, Madras.

H.C.P.NO.936 OF 2021

KSM(CO)
PBS/15/11/2021