

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT MADRAS

DATED 09.04.2021

CORAM

THE HONOURABLE Mr.JUSTICE P.N.PRAKASH
AND
THE HONOURABLE Mr.JUSTICE KRISHNAN RAMASAMY

H.C.P.No.2004 of 2020

Hemavathi

... Petitioner

Vs.

1.The Secretary to Government
Home, Prohibition Excise Department
Secretariat, Fort St. George
Chennai-9

2.The District Collector and District Magistrate
Villupuram District, Villupuram

3.The Superintendent of Police
O/o.The Superintendent of Police
Villupuram, Villupuram District

4.The Superintendent of Central Prison
Central Prison - Cuddalore, Cuddalore District

5.State rep. by its
The Inspector of Police
Roshanai Police Station
Villupuram District

... Respondents

Petition filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India, praying to issue a WRIT OF HABEAS CORPUS to call for the entire records relating to the petitioner's husband detention under Tamil Nadu Act 14 of 1982 vide detention order dated 11.10.2020 on the file of the 2nd respondent herein made in proceedings Memo Rc.No.C2/22819/2020, quash the same as illegal and consequently direct the respondents herein to produce the petitioner's husband namely Gidangalan @ Saranraj, S/o.Raj, aged about 30 years, before this Hon'ble Court and set the petitioner's husband at liberty from detention, now the petitioner's husband is detained at Central Prison, Cuddalore.

For Petitioner : Mr.R.Sasikumar

For Respondents : Mr.L.Charles Premkumar
Government Advocate (Crl. Side)

O R D E R

[Order of the Court was made by KRISHNAN RAMASAMY, J.]

The petitioner is the wife of the detenu viz. Gidangalan @ Saranraj, S/o.Raj, aged about 30 years. The detenu has been detained by the 2nd respondent by his order in Rc.No.C2/22819/2020 dated 11.10.2020 holding him to be a "Bootlegger", as contemplated under Section 2(b) 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 Government Advocate (Crl. Side) 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 Government Advocate (Crl. Side) filed his counter affidavit and strongly 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 Government Advocate (Crl. Side), 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 11.10.2020. The petitioner made a representation on 27.10.2020. Thereafter, remarks were called for by the Government from the

Detaining Authority on 28.10.2020. The remarks were duly received on 04.12.2020. Thereafter, the Government considered the matter and passed the order rejecting the petitioner's representation on 11.01.2021.

6. It is the contention of the petitioner that there was a delay of 37 days in submitting the remarks by the Detaining Authority, of which 11 days were Government Holidays and hence, there was an inordinate delay of 26 days in submitting the remarks. It is the further contention of the petitioner that the remarks were received on 04.12.2020 and there was a delay of 33 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 11 days were Government Holidays, hence, there was a delay of 22 days in considering the representation.

7. In *Rekha Vs. State of Tamil Nadu* [2011 (5) SCC 244], the Hon'ble 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* [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 very detention illegal.

10. In the subject case, admittedly, there is an inordinate and unexplained delay of 26 days in submitting the remarks by the Detaining Authority and unexplained delay of 22 days in considering the representation by the Hon'ble Minister for Electricity, 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 Rc.No.C2/22819/2020 dated 11.10.2020, passed by the 2nd respondent is set aside. The detenu viz. Gidangalan @ Saranraj, S/o.Raj, aged about 30 years, is directed to be released forthwith unless his detention is required in connection with any other case.

Sd/-
Assistant Registrar(CS III)

//True Copy//

Sub Assistant Registrar

gya
To

- 1.The Secretary to Government,
Home, Prohibition Excise Department,
Secretariat, Fort St. George,
Chennai-9
- 2.The Joint Secretary to Government,
Public, Law and Order Department,
Secretariat, Chennai-9.
- 3.The District Collector and District Magistrate,
Villupuram District,
Villupuram.
- 4.The Superintendent of Police,
O/o.The Superintendent of Police,
Villupuram, Villupuram District.
- 5.The Superintendent of Central Prison,
Central Prison - Cuddalore,
Cuddalore District.
- 6.The Inspector of Police,
Roshanai Police Station,
Villupuram District.
- 7.The Public Prosecutor,
High Court, Madras.

H.C.P.No.2004 of 2020

sr-II[co]
srg 17/04/2021