



BEFORE THE MADURAI BENCH OF MADRAS HIGH COURT

DATED :06.10.2021

CORAM:

THE HONOURABLE MR.JUSTICE V. BHARATHIDASAN

and

THE HONOURABLE MRS.JUSTICE J.NISHA BANU

H.C.P. (MD) No.152 of 2021

WEB COPY

Thangaraj

... Petitioner/Detenu

-vs-

- 1.The Principal Secretary to Government,
State of Tamil Nadu,
Home, Prohibition and Excise Department,
Fort St.George, Chennai-600 009.
- 2.The District Magistrate and District Collector,
Office of the District Magistrate and District Collector,
Dindigul District.
- 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 Detention Order No.78/2020, dated 24.11.2020 and quash the same and direct the respondents to produce the body or person of the detenu by name Thangaraj, S/o.Pechiappan, aged about 25 years, now detained as 'Sexual Offender' at Madurai Central Prison before this court and set him at liberty.

For Petitioner :Mr.R.Alagumani

For Respondents :Mr.S.Ravi

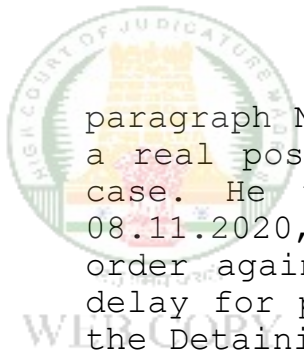
Additional Public Prosecutor

O R D E R

(Order of the Court was made by V. BHARATHIDASAN, J.)

This habeas corpus petition has been filed by the detenu, namely, Thangaraj, S/o.Pechiappan, aged about 25 years, challenging the detention order in No.78/2020 dated 24.11.2020, passed by the second respondent, branding him as "Sexual Offender" as contemplated under Section 2(ggg) of Tamil Nadu Act 14 of 1982.

2. Mr.R.Alagumani, learned counsel appearing for the petitioner, would submit that the detenu has not filed any bail petition in the ground case. However, the Detaining Authority, in



paragraph No.5 of the grounds of detention, has stated that there is a real possibility of the detenu coming out on bail in the ground case. He would further submit that the detenu was arrested on 08.11.2020, but the Detaining Authority has passed the detention order against the detenu after 16 days ie., on 24.11.2020 and the delay for passing the detention order was not properly explained by the Detaining Authority in the grounds of detention and booklet.

3. Mr.S.Ravi, learned Additional Public Prosecutor appearing for the State, on instructions, submitted that after satisfying with the materials placed by the Sponsoring Authority, the Detaining Authority has passed the detention order and there is no illegality or infirmity in the detention order. It is also stated that even if there is any delay in disposal of the representation, it has not caused any prejudice to the rights of the detenu and hence, prayed for dismissal of the habeas corpus petition.

4. Heard the learned counsel appearing on either side and perused the materials available on record.

5. Even though the learned counsel for the petitioner has raised several grounds, he has confined his arguments only to the delay in disposal of the petitioner's representation. It is submitted by the learned counsel for the petitioner that the procedural safeguards guaranteed under Articles 21 and 22 of the Constitution of India have not been followed in this case and there is unexplained and inordinate delay in disposal of the petitioner's representation, which would vitiate the impugned order of detention.

6. In the instant case, the proforma furnished by the learned Additional Public Prosecutor would indicate that as against the impugned detention order, the petitioner made a representation to the first respondent on 22.01.2021 and it was received on 29.01.2021. Remarks were called for on the same day ie., on 29.01.2021 and it was received on 05.02.2021. The Deputy Secretary dealt with the matter on 08.02.2021. The concerned Minister dealt with the matter on 12.04.2021 and the representation came to be rejected on 15.04.2021. It is seen that in between 08.02.2021 and 12.04.2021, there was a delay of 62 days, after excluding the Government Holidays of 20 days, there was a delay of 42 days in considering the petitioner's representation.

7. At this juncture, it is useful to refer the decision of the Honourable Apex Court in the case of ***Rajammal vs. State of Tamil Nadu and another***, reported in ***1999 (1) SCC 417***, wherein the Apex Court has observed and held that it is for the Authority concerned to explain the delay, if any, in disposal of the representation and if any delay was caused on account of nay indifference or lapse in considering the representation, such delay will adversely affect further detention of the prisoner.



8. In the case on hand, as stated supra, the delay of 42 days in considering the representation of the petitioner has not been properly explained by the respondents. Hence, in our considered view, the detention order is liable to be set aside solely on the ground of delay by following the decision of the Honourable Apex Court referred supra.

9. In fine, the Habeas Corpus Petition is allowed. The detention order in No.78/2020 dated 24.11.2020, passed by the second respondent, is set aside. Consequently, the detenu, Thangaraj, S/o.Pechiappan, aged about 25 years, who is now detained at Central Prison, Madurai, is directed to be released forthwith unless his presence or custody or detention is required in connection with any other case.

Sd/-

Assistant Registrar (Records)

// True Copy //

/ /2021

Sub Assistant Registrar(CS)

akv

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-600 009.
- 2.The District Magistrate and District Collector,
Office of the District Magistrate and District Collector,
Dindigul District.
- 3.The Superintendent of Prison,
Madurai Central Prison,
Madurai District.



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

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

ORDER MADE IN
H.C.P. (MD) No.152 of 2021
DATED : 06.10.2021

TP (CO)
GC/UV(09.11.2021) 4P 6C