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BEFORE THE MADURAI BENCH OF MADRAS HIGH COURT

DATED :25.10.2021

CORAM:

THE HONOURABLE MR.JUSTICE V. BHARATHIDASAN

and

THE HONOURABLE MRS.JUSTICE S.ANANTHI

H.C.P. (MD) No.536 of 2021

Sundari

... Petitioner/Wife of the Detenu

-vs-

1.The Additional Chief Secretary to Government,
Home, Prohibition and Excise Department,
State of Tamil Nadu,
Fort St. George,
Chennai-600 009.

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

3.The Superintendent of Prison,
Palayamkottai Central Prison,
Tirunelveli 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 H.S.(M) Confdl.No.35 of 2021 dated 02.03.2021 and quash the same and direct the respondents to produce the detenu or body of the detenu by name Muthu Mariappan, S/o.Velsamy, aged about 37 years, now detained in Palayamkottai Central Prison before this court and set him at liberty.

For Petitioner :Mr.R.Vinoth Bharathi

For Respondents :Mr.S.Ravi

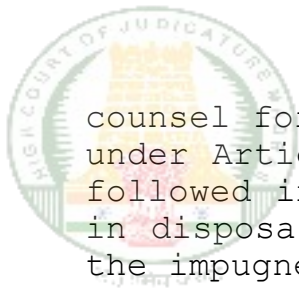
Additional Public Prosecutor

O R D E R

(Order of the Court was made by S.ANANTHI, J.)

This habeas corpus petition has been filed by the wife of the detenu namely, Muthu Mariappan, S/o.Velsamy, aged about 37 years, challenging the detention order in H.S.(M) Confdl.No.35 of 2021 dated 02.03.2021 passed by the second respondent, branding him as "Goonda" as contemplated under Section 2(f) of Tamil Nadu Act 14 of 1982.

2. Mr.R.Vinoth Bharathi, learned counsel for the petitioner, would argue that even though 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.

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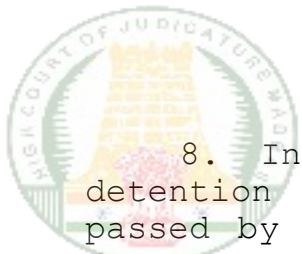
3. Mr.S.Ravi, learned Additional Public Prosecutor, while reiterating the counter affidavit filed by the second respondent, submitted that after satisfying with the materials placed by the Sponsoring Authority, the Detaining Authority has passed the detention order and there is no illegality or infirmity 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 both sides and perused the materials available on record.

5. In the instant case, the proforma has been furnished by the learned Additional Public Prosecutor. The proforma would indicate that as against the impugned detention order, the petitioner made a representation to the first respondent dated 16.03.2021 and it was received on 22.03.2021. Remarks were called for on 22.03.2021 and it was received on 29.03.2021. The Deputy Secretary dealt with the matter on 29.03.2021. 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 22.03.2021 and 29.03.2021, there was a delay of 6 days, after excluding the Government Holidays of 2 days, there was a delay of 4 days in the I part and in between 29.03.2021 and 12.04.2021, there was a delay of 13 days, after excluding the Government Holidays of 5 days, there was a delay of 8 days in the II Part and totally there was a delay of 9 days in considering the petitioner's representation.

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

7. In the case on hand, as stated supra, the delay of 9 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.



8. In fine, the Habeas Corpus Petition is allowed. The detention order in H.S.(M) Confdl.No.35 of 2021 dated 02.03.2021 passed by the second respondent, is set aside. Consequently, the detenu, Muthu Mariappan, S/o.Velsamy, aged about 37 years, who is now detained at Central Prison, Palayamkottai, is directed to be released forthwith unless his presence or custody or detention is required in connection with any other case.

Sd/-

Assistant Registrar (CS-III)

// True Copy //

/ /2021

Sub Assistant Registrar(CS)

cm/jbr

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 Additional Chief Secretary to Government,
Home, Prohibition and Excise Department,
State of Tamil Nadu,
Fort St. George, Chennai-600 009.
- 2.The District Collector and District Magistrate,
Thoothukudi District, Thoothukudi.
- 3.The Superintendent of Prison,
Palayamkottai Central Prison,
Tirunelveli 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.

H.C.P. (MD) No.536 of 2021

DATED : 25.10.2021

SRK(CO)

GC/JGB(01.11.2021) 3P 6C