



BEFORE THE MADURAI BENCH OF MADRAS HIGH COURT

DATED : 10.03.2021

CORAM:

THE HONOURABLE MR.JUSTICE K.KALYANASUNDARAM
and
THE HONOURABLE MR.JUSTICE G.ILANGO VAN

H.C.P. (MD) No.1099 of 2020

Eswari

... Petitioner/Detenu

-vs-

1.State of Tamilnadu,
Rep. by the Additional Chief Secretary to Government,
Home, Prohibition and Excise Department,
Secretariat,
Chennai-600 009.

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

3.The Superintendent of Prison,
Special Prison for Women,
Madurai.

....Respondents

PRAYER : Petition filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India, to issue a writ of habeas corpus calling for the entire records connected with the detention order passed in Detention order No.64/2020 dated 04.11.2020 on the file of the 2nd respondent herein and quash the same and direct the respondents to produce the detenu or body of the detenu namely Eswari, aged about 52 years, S/o.Chinnadurai, now detained at the Special Prison for Women, Madurai, before this Court and set her at liberty forthwith.

For Petitioner : Mr.N.Pragalathan

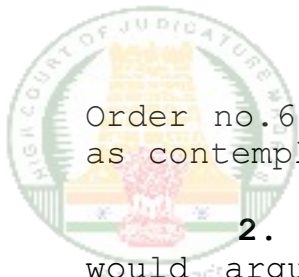
For Respondents : Mr.R.Anandharaj
Additional Public Prosecutor

O R D E R

(Order of the Court was made by K.KALYANASUNDARAM, J.)

This habeas corpus petition has been filed by the detenu, namely, Eswari, wife of Chinnadurai, aged about 52 years, against the detention order passed by the second respondent, in Detention

<https://hcservices.courts.gov.in/>



Order no.64/2020, dated 04.11.2020, branding her as "Drug Offender" as contemplated under Section 2(e) of Tamil Nadu Act, 14 of 1982.

2. Mr.N.Pragalathan, 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.

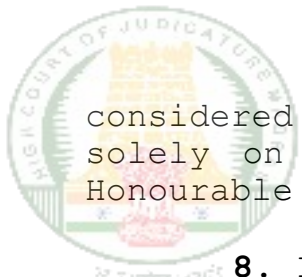
3. Mr.R.Anandharaj, learned Additional Public Prosecutor, on instructions, submitted that after satisfying with the materials placed by the Sponsoring Authority, the Detaining Authority has passed the detention order and there is no illegality or infirmity in the detention order. It is also stated that 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 both sides and perused the materials available on record.

5. 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 25.11.2020 and it was received on 03.12.2020. Remarks were called for on 03.12.2020 and it was received on 08.12.2020. The Deputy Secretary dealt with the matter on 14.12.2020. The concerned Minister dealt with the matter on 11.01.2021 and the representation came to be rejected on 11.01.2021. It is seen that in between 14.12.2020 and 11.01.2021, there was a delay of 27 days, after excluding the Government Holidays of 8 days, there was a delay of 19 days in considering the petitioner's representation.

6. 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.

7. In the case on hand, as stated supra, the delay of 19 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 order of detention passed by the second respondent, in Detention Order No.64/2020, dated 04.11.2020, is set aside. Consequently, the detenu, namely, Eswari, wife of Chinnadurai, aged about 52 years, who is now detained at Special Prison for Women, Madurai is directed to be released forthwith unless her presence or custody or detention is required in connection with any other case.

Sd/-

Assistant Registrar (CS-II)

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/ /2021

Sub Assistant Registrar(CS)

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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,
Secretariat,
Chennai-600 009.
- 2.The District Collector and District Magistrate,
Theni District,
Theni.
- 3.The Superintendent of Prison,
Special Prison for Women,
Madurai.
- 4.The Joint Secretary to Government,
Public (Law & Order) Fort St. George,
Chennai-9



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

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H.C.P. (MD) No.1099 of 2020
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VB (19.03.2021) 4P 6C