

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT MADRAS

DATED : 05.07.2022

CORAM :

THE HONOURABLE MR.JUSTICE S.VAIDYANATHAN
AND
THE HONOURABLE MR.JUSTICE A.D.JAGADISH CHANDIRA

H.C.P.NO.525 OF 2022

Vijayalakshmi

...Petitioner

Vs.

- 1.State of Tamil Nadu,
Rep. by the Secretary to Government,
Home, Prohibition and Excise Department,
Secretariat, Chennai - 600 009.
- 2.The Commissioner of Police,
The Greater Chennai,
Office of the Commissionerate,
Chennai - 600 007.
- 3.The Superintendent of Police,
Central Prison, Puzhal,
Chennai - 600 066.
- 4.The Inspector of Police,
Central Crime Branch, Team -12,
Bank Fraud Investigation Wing,
Office of the Commissionerate,
Chennai - 600 007.
- 5.The District Collector,
Chennai District, Chennai.

...Respondents

Petition filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India to issue a writ of Habeas Corpus to call for the entire records on the fourth respondent, initiated through the second respondent in BCDFGISSSV No.358/2021 dated 28.11.2021 and quash the same as illegal and thereby directing the respondents to produce the petitioner's husband Prithviraj, son of Mr.Dhatchanamoorthy, aged about 35 years, (Detenue No.TPDA.2930) now detained in Central Prison, Puzhal, Chennai, before this Court and set him at liberty.

For Petitioner : Mr. V.Jeyachandran

For Respondents : Mr. M.Babu Muthumeeran
Additional Public Prosecutor

ORDER

(Hearing was made through Hybrid mode)

S.VAIDYANATHAN, J.,
and
A.D.JAGADISH CHANDIRA, J.,

The petitioner is the wife of detenu Prithviraj, son of Dhatchanamoorthy, aged about 35 years. The detenu has been detained by the second respondent by his order in BCDFGISSSV No.358/2021 dated 28.11.2021, holding him to be a "Goonda", as contemplated under Section 2(f) 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 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 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 28.11.2021. The petitioner made a representation on 20.12.2021. Thereafter, remarks were called for by the Government from the Detaining Authority on 20.12.2021. The remarks were duly received on 24.12.2021. Thereafter, the Government considered the matter and passed the order rejecting the petitioner's representation on 18.04.2022.

6. It is the contention of the petitioner that there was a delay of 5 days in submitting the remarks. It is the further contention of the petitioner that the remarks were received on 24.12.2021 and there was an inordinate delay of 116 days in considering the representation by the Hon'ble Minister for Home, Prohibition and Excise (XIII) Department after the Deputy Secretary dealt with it, of which 41 days were Government Holidays, hence, there was inordinate delay of 75 days in considering the representation.

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 5 days in submitting the remarks by the Detaining Authority and unexplained delay of 75 days in considering the representation by the Hon'ble Minister for Home, Prohibition and Excise (XIII) 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 BCDFGISSSV No.358/2021 dated 28.11.2021, passed by the second respondent is set aside. The detenu, viz., Prithviraj, son of Mr.Dhatchanamoorthy, aged about 35 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

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To

- 1.The Secretary to Government,
Home, Prohibition and Excise Department,
Secretariat, Chennai - 600 009.
- 2.The Commissioner of Police,
The Greater Chennai,
Office of the Commissionerate,
Chennai - 600 007.
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Central Prison, Puzhal,
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Chennai - 600 007.
- 5.The District Collector,
Chennai District, Chennai.
- 6.The Public Prosecutor,
High Court, Madras.

+1cc to Mr.V.Jayachandran, Advocate Sr.No.42719

H.C.P.No.525 of 2022

NR(CO)
RVM(12/07/2022)