



WEB COPY



Order dated : 18.10.2022

HCP No.1048 of 2022

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT MADRAS

DATED: 18.10.2022

Coram

THE HONOURABLE MR. JUSTICE P.N.PRAKASH

and

THE HONOURABLE MR. JUSTICE RMT. TEEKAA RAMAN

H.C.P.No.1048 of 2022

M.Nagaraj
S/o.Masilamany

... Petitioner

Vs.

1.The Additional Chief Secretary to Government,
Home, Prohibition and Excise Department,
Fort St.George, Chennai – 600 009.

2.The District Collector and District Magistrate,
Vellore District, Vellore – 9.

3.The Superintendent of Police,
Vellore District.

4.The Superintendent,
Central Prison, Vellore.

5.The Inspector of Police,
Vellore Prohibition Enforcement Wing,
Vellore District.

... Respondents



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HCP No.1048 of 2022

Writ Petition filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India to issue a Writ of Habeas Corpus calling for the records relating to the detention order passed by the second respondent pertaining to the order made in C3/D.O.No.35/2022 dated 12.04.2022 detaining the detenu under 2(b) of Tamil Nadu Act 14 of 1982, as a Bootlegger and quash the same and direct the respondent to produce the detenu Perumal s/o.Nadarajan, aged about 28 years, who is detained at Central Prison, Vellore, before this Court and set him at liberty.

For Petitioner : Mr.G.Nirmal Krishnan

For Respondents : Mr.R.Muniyapparaj
Additional Public Prosecutor

ORDER

[Made by ***RMT. TEEKAA RAMAN, J.***]

The petitioner is the brother-in-law of the detenu, Perumal s/o.Nadarajan, aged about 28 years. The detenu has been detained by the second respondent by his order in C3/D.O.No.35/2022 dated 12.04.2022, 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.



Order dated : 18.10.2022

HCP No.1048 of 2022

2. We have heard learned counsel for the petitioner and learned Additional Public Prosecutor 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. Learned Additional Public Prosecutor 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 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.



Order dated : 18.10.2022

HCP No.1048 of 2022

5. The Detention Order in question was passed on 12.04.2022. The petitioner made a representation dated 07.06.2022. The Government considered the matter and passed the order rejecting the petitioner's representation on 01.08.2022.

6. It is the contention of the petitioner that there was a delay of 46 days in considering the representation by the Hon'ble Minister for Home, P&E after the Deputy Secretary dealt with it, of which 15 days were Government holidays. Hence, there was inordinate delay of 31 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.



Order dated : 18.10.2022

HCP No.1048 of 2022

WEB COPY

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 31 days in considering the representation by the Hon'ble Minister for Home, P&E. 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 C3/D.O.No.35/2022 dated 12.04.2022, passed by the second respondent is set aside. The detenu, *viz.*, Perumal s/o.Nadarajan, aged about



Order dated : 18.10.2022

HCP No.1048 of 2022

28 years, is directed to be released forthwith unless his detention is required in connection with any other case.

[PNP, J.] [TKR, J.]
18.10.2022

Index: Yes/No
gm

To

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Home, Prohibition and Excise Department,
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- 2.The District Collector and District Magistrate,
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- 3.The Superintendent of Police,
Vellore District.
- 4.The Superintendent,
Central Prison, Vellore.
- 5.The Inspector of Police,
Vellore Prohibition Enforcement Wing,
Vellore District.
- 6.The Joint Secretary to Government of Tamil Nadu,
Public, Law and Order Department,
Secretariat, Chennai – 9.
- 7.The Public Prosecutor,
High Court, Madras.



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