



HCP No.1107 of 2022

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT MADRAS

DATED: 28.10.2022

Coram

**THE HONOURABLE MR. JUSTICE P.N.PRAKASH
and
THE HONOURABLE MR. JUSTICE RMT. TEEKAA RAMAN**

H.C.P.No.1107 of 2022

T.Sumathi
W/o.Thennarasu

... Petitioner

Vs.

- 1.Government of Tamil Nadu,
represented by its
Principal Secretary, Home, Prohibition
and Excise (XVI) Department,
Fort St.George, Chennai - 600 009.
- 2.The District Collector and District Magistrate,
Nagapattinam District,
Nagapattinam.
- 3.The Superintendent of Police,
Nagapattinam District,
Nagapattinam.
- 4.The Superintendent,
Central Prison,
Trichy.



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5. The Inspector of Police,
Thirukanakupuram Police Station,
Nagapattinam District.

... Respondents

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 in C.O.C.No.18 of 2022 dated 13.04.2022 passed by the second respondent under Tamil Nadu Act and quash the same and direct the respondents to produce the detenu Thennarasu s/o.Veerappan, aged about 53 years, now confined in District Jail, Nagapattinam, before this Court and set him at liberty.

For Petitioner : Mr.P.Paramasivadoss
For Respondents : Mr.R.Muniyapparaj
Additional Public Prosecutor

ORDER

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

The petitioner is the wife of the detenu, Thennarasu s/o.Veerappan, aged about 53 years. The detenu has been detained by the second respondent by his order in C.O.C.No.18 of 2022 dated 13.04.2022, 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.



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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.



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5. The Detention Order in question was passed on 13.04.2022. The petitioner made a representation dated 13.05.2022. The Government considered the matter and passed the order rejecting the petitioner's representation on 30.07.2022.

6. It is the contention of the petitioner that there was a delay of 67 days in considering the representation by the Hon'ble Minister for Home, P&E after the Deputy Secretary dealt with it, of which 21 days were Government holidays. Hence, there was inordinate delay of 46 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.



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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 46 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 C.O.C.No.18 of 2022 dated 13.04.2022, passed by the second respondent is set aside. The detenu, viz., Thennarasu s/o.Veerappan, aged



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about 53 years, is directed to be released forthwith unless his detention is required in connection with any other case.

[PNP, J.] [TKR, J.]
28.10.2022

Index: Yes/No

gm

To

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Fort St.George, Chennai - 600 009.
- 2.The District Collector and District Magistrate,
Nagapattinam District,
Nagapattinam.
- 3.The Superintendent of Police,
Nagapattinam District,
Nagapattinam.
- 4.The Superintendent,
Central Prison, Trichy.
- 5.The Inspector of Police,
Thirukanakupuram Police Station,
Nagapattinam 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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P.N.PRAKASH, J.
and
RMT. TEEKAA RAMAN, J.

gm

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