

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT MADRAS

DATED : 20.06.2022

CORAM

THE HONOURABLE MR.JUSTICE PARESH UPADHYAY
AND
THE HONOURABLE MR.JUSTICE A.D.JAGADISH CHANDIRA

H.C.P.NO.1257 OF 2021

M.Ganesan

...Petitioner

Vs

- 1.State of Tamil Nadu represented by
The Additional Chief Secretary to Government,
Home, Prohibition and Excise 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 Inspector of Police,
Voimedu Police Station,
Voimedu, Vedaranyam Taluk,
Nagapattinam District.
- 5.The Superintendent of Police,
Central Prison,
Thiruchirappalli,
Thiruchirappalli District.

...Respondents

Petition filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India to issue a writ of Habeas Corpus to calling upon the production of the records relating to the detention order dated 19.07.2021 made in detention order in C.O.C.No.25/2021 passed by the 2nd respondent herein, quash the same and direct the respondents to produce the body of the detenu Ramamoorthi, male, aged 31 years, son of Ganesan, who has been detained in the Central Prison at Thiruchirappalli, before this Court and set him at liberty.

For Petitioner : Mr.R.Muruga Bharathi

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

ORDER

PARESH UPADHYAY, J.
and
A.D.JAGADISH CHANDIRA, J.

The petitioner is the father of the detenu Ramamoorthi, male, aged 31 years, son of Ganesan. The detenu has been detained by the second respondent by his order in C.O.C.No.25/2021 dated 19.07.2021, holding him to be a "Sexual Offender", as contemplated under Section 2(ggg) 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 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 on behalf of the petitioner was not considered in 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 19.07.2021. A representation was made on behalf of the petitioner on 07.08.2021. Thereafter, remarks were called for by the Government from the Detaining Authority on 12.08.2021. The remarks were duly received on 27.08.2021. Thereafter, the Government considered the matter and passed the order rejecting the representation on 20.10.2021.

6. It is the contention of the petitioner that there was a delay of 15 days in submitting the remarks by the Detaining Authority, of which, 5 days were Government Holidays and hence there was an inordinate delay of 10 days in submitting the remarks. It is the further contention of the petitioner that the remarks were received on 27.08.2021 and there was a delay of 54 days in considering the representation by the Hon'ble Minister for Home, Prohibition and Excise Department after the Deputy Secretary dealt with it, of which, 21 days were Government Holidays, hence, there was an inordinate delay of 33 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 10 days in submitting the remarks by the Detaining Authority and unexplained delay of 33 days in considering the representation by the Hon'ble Minister for Home, Prohibition and Excise 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 C.O.C.No.25/2021 dated 19.07.2021, passed by the second respondent is set aside. The detenu, viz., Ramamoorthi, male, aged 31 years, son of Ganesan, 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

To

- 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,
Nagapattinam District,
Nagapattinam.
- 3.The Superintendent of Police,
Nagapattinam District,
Nagapattinam.
- 4.The Inspector of Police,
Voimedu Police Station,
Voimedu, Vedaranyam Taluk,
Nagapattinam District.
- 5.The Superintendent of Police,
Central Prison, Thiruchirappalli,
Thiruchirappalli 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.

H.C.P.No.1257 of 2021

EV(CO)
RVM(24/06/2022)