

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT MADRAS

DATED 25.04.2022

CORAM

THE HONOURABLE Mr.JUSTICE P.N.PRAKASH
AND
THE HONOURABLE Mr.JUSTICE A.A.NAKKIRAN

H.C.P.No.1793 of 2021

M.Bhavani

...Petitioner

Vs.

1.The Secretary
The Government of Tamil Nadu
Prohibition & Excise Department
Fort St. George, Chennai-9

2.The District Collector and District Magistrate
Kancheepuram District
Kancheepuram

3.The Superintendent of Police
Kancheepuram District

4.The Superintendent
Central Prison
Puzhal, Chennai 600 066

5.The Inspector of Police
D-5 Salavakkam Police Station
Kancheepuram District

...Respondents

Petition filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India, praying to issue a WRIT OF HABEAS CORPUS calling for the records relating to the detention order passed by the 2nd respondent in detention order BCDFGISSSV No.52/2021 dated 20.09.2021 and quash the same and direct the respondent to produce the body of the petitioner's husband viz., Muthu, aged 56 years, S/o.Dhamodharan, now detained at Central Prison, Puzhal, before this Court and set him at liberty.

For Petitioner : Mr.A.P.Loganathan

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

O R D E R

[Order of the Court was made by P.N.PRAKASH, J.]

The petitioner is the wife of the detenu viz., Muthu, aged 56 years, S/o.Dhamodharan. The detenu has been detained by the 2nd respondent by his order dated 20.09.2021 in BCDFGISSSV No.52/2021, 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 filed his counter affidavit and 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.

5. The Detention Order in question was passed on 20.09.2021. The petitioner made a representation dated "nil". Thereafter, remarks were called for by the Government from the Detaining Authority on 07.10.2021. The remarks were duly received on 23.11.2021. Thereafter, the Government considered the matter and passed the order rejecting the petitioner's representation on 02.12.2021.

6. It is the contention of the petitioner that there was a delay of 46 days in submitting the remarks by the Detaining Authority, of which 17 days were Government Holidays and hence, there was an inordinate delay of 29 days in submitting the remarks. It is the further contention of the petitioner that the remarks were received on 23.11.2021 and there was a delay of 3

days in considering the representation by the Hon'ble Minister for Electricity, Prohibition and Excise Department after the Deputy Secretary dealt with it, of which there was no Government Holiday, hence, there was a delay of 3 days in considering the representation.

7. In *Rekha Vs. State of Tamil Nadu* [2011 (5) SCC 244], the Hon'ble 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 Hon'ble 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 29 days in submitting the remarks by the Detaining Authority and a delay of 3 days in considering the representation by the Hon'ble Minister for Electricity, 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 BCDFGISSSV No.52/2021 dated 20.09.2021, passed by the 2nd respondent is set aside. The detenu viz., Muthu, aged 56 years, S/o.Dhamodharan, is directed to be released forthwith unless his detention is required in connection with any other case.

-s/d-

Assistant Registrar(CS-I)

True Copy

Sub-Assistant Registrar

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To

1.The Secretary to Government
Prohibition & Excise Department
Fort St. George, Chennai-9

2.The Joint Secretary to Government
Public, Law and Order Department
Secretariat, Chennai-9

3.The District Collector and District Magistrate
Kancheepuram District
Kancheepuram

4.The Superintendent of Police
Kancheepuram District

5.The Superintendent
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Puzhal, Chennai 600 066

6.The Inspector of Police
D-5 Salavakkam Police Station
Kancheepuram District

7.The Public Prosecutor
High Court,
Madras.

+1cc to Mr.A.P.Loganathan, Advocate, S.R.No.29182 (03/06/2022)

H.C.P.No.1793 of 2021

GMR (CO)
RN (26/04/2022)