

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT MADRAS

DATED: 11.03.2022

Coram

The Honourable Mr. Justice **P.N.PRAKASH**
and
The Honourable Mr. Justice **A.A.NAKKIRAN**

H.C.P.No.1776 of 2021

Valarmathi

.. Petitioner

Vs.

- 1.The Secretary to Government,
Government of Tamil Nadu (Home),
Prohibition and Excise Department,
Fort St.George,
Chennai.
- 2.The District Collector and District Magistrate,
Vellore District, Vellore.
- 3.The Superintendent of Police,
Vellore District, Vellore.
- 4.The Superintendent,
Special Prison For Women,
Vellore, Vellore District.
- 5.The Inspector of Police,
Vellore Prohibition Enforcement Wing,
Vellore, Vellore District.

.. Respondents

Petition filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India to issue a writ of Habeas Corpus call for the records relating to the impugned order C3/D.O.No.61/2021 dated 04.09.2021 on the file of the 2nd respondent herein and set aside the same as illegal and direct the respondents to produce viz., Rosi, wife of Murukesan, aged about 55 years, now confined at the Special Prison for Women, Vellore, Vellore District, before this Court and set her at liberty.

For Petitioner : Mr.G.Vinodhkumar

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

ORDER

[Made by *P.N.PRAKASH, J.*]

The petitioner is the daughter of the detenue Rosi, wife of Murukesan, aged about 55 years. The detenue has been detained by the second respondent by his order in C3/D.O.No.61/2021 dated 04.09.2021, holding her 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.

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 strongly opposed the Habeas Corpus Petition by filing his counter. 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 detainee 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 04.09.2021. The petitioner made a representation on 21.10.2021. Thereafter, remarks were called for by the Government from the Detaining Authority on 26.10.2021. The remarks were duly received on 17.11.2021. Thereafter, the Government considered the matter and passed the order rejecting the petitioner's representation on 30.11.2021.

6. It is the contention of the petitioner that there was a delay of 22 days in submitting the remarks by the Detaining Authority, of which, 7 days were Government Holidays and hence there was an inordinate delay of 15 days in submitting the remarks. It is the further contention of the petitioner that the remarks were received on 17.11.2021 and there was a delay of 13 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, 4 days were Government Holidays, hence, there was an inordinate delay of 9 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 detainee.

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 detainee 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 15 days in submitting the remarks by the Detaining Authority and unexplained delay of 9 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 C3/D.O.No.61/2021 dated 04.09.2021, passed by the second respondent is set aside. The detenue, viz., Rosi, wife of Murukesan, aged about 55 years, is directed to be released forthwith unless her detention is required in connection with any other case.

(P.N.P.,J.) (A.A.N.,J.)
11.03.2022

Index: Yes/No
nsd

To

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- 3.The Superintendent of Police,
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Special Prison For Women,
Vellore, Vellore District.
- 5.The Inspector of Police,
Vellore Prohibition Enforcement Wing,
Vellore, 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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P.N.PRAKASH,J.
and
A.A.NAKKIRAN,J.

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