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IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT MADRAS

DATED: 13.06.2022

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The Honourable Mr. Justice S.VAIDYANATHAN
and
The Honourable Mr. Justice A.D.JAGADISH CHANDIRA

H.C.P.No.1818 of 2021

Panjavarnam ... Petitioner/Mother of detenue

Vs

1. The Additional Chief Secretary to Government, Home
Prohibition and Excise Department
Fort St.George, Chennai - 9.
2. The District Collector and District Magistrate,
Kallakurichi District,
Kallakurichi.
3. The Superintendent of Police,
Kallakurichi District.
4. The Superintendent,
Central Prisons,
Cuddalore.
5. The Inspector of Police,
Ulundurpet Police Station,
Kallakurichi District.

.. Respondents

Petition filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India to issue a writ of Habeas Corpus to call for the records relating to the detention order passed by the 2nd respondent pertaining to the order made in DO.No.C2/31/2021 dated 02.10.2021 in detain the detenue under 2(f) of Tamil Nadu Act 14 of 1982, as a Goonda and quash the same and direct the respondent to produce the detenue Rajkumar s/o.Sankarapandi aged about 23years who is detained at Central Prison, Cuddalore before this Court and set him at liberty.

For Petitioner : Mr.G.Nirmal Krishnan

For Respondents : Mr.E.Raj Thilak
Addl. Public Prosecutor



ORDER

S.VAIDYANATHAN, J.
and
A.D.JAGADISH CHANDIRA, J.

The petitioner is the son of the detenu Rajkumar aged 23years, S/o.Sankarapandi. The detenu has been detained by the second respondent by his order in DO.No.C2/31/2021 dated 02.10.2021, 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 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 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 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 02.10.2021. A representation was made on behalf of the petitioner on 12.11.2021. Thereafter, remarks were called for by the Government from the Detaining Authority on 16.11.2021. The remarks were duly received on 01.12.2021. Thereafter, the Government considered the matter and passed the order rejecting the representation on 08.12.2021.

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, 4 days were Government Holidays and hence there was an inordinate delay of 11 days in submitting the remarks. It is the further contention of the petitioner that the



remarks were received on 0.12.2021 and there was a delay of 7 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, 2 days were Government Holidays, hence, there was an inordinate delay of 5 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 11 days in submitting the remarks by the Detaining Authority and unexplained delay of 5 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.

11. In the result, the Habeas Corpus Petition is allowed and the order of detention in Memo in DO.No.C2/31/2021 dated 02.10.2021, passed by the second respondent is set aside. The detenu, viz., Rajkumar aged 23years, S/o.Sankarapandi, 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

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To

1. The Additional Chief Secretary to Government, Home Prohibition and Excise Department
Fort St.George, Chennai - 9.
2. The District Collector and District Magistrate,
Kallakurichi District,
Kallakurichi.
3. The Superintendent of Police,
Kallakurichi District.
4. The Superintendent,
Central Prisons,
Cuddalore.
5. The Inspector of Police,
Ulundurpet Police Station,
Kallakurichi District.
6. The Public Prosecutor,
High Court, Madras.
7. The Joint Secretary to Government,
Public (Law and Order),
Fort St.George, Chennai-9.

H.C.P.No.1818 of 2021

SVI (CO)
UMA (21/06/2022)