



HCP(MD)No.386 of 2022

BEFORE THE MADURAI BENCH OF MADRAS HIGH COURT

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DATED: 23.09.2022

CORAM

THE HON'BLE MRS JUSTICE J. NISHA BANU
AND
THE HON'BLE MR JUSTICE N. ANAND VENKATESH

H.C.P.(MD)No.386 of 2022

Nanthagopal

.. Petitioner / detenu

Vs.

1.The Additional Secretary to Government,
Home, Prohibition and Excise Department,
Secretariat
Chennai-600 009.

2.The District Collector and District Magistrate
Ramanathapuram District
Ramanathapuram

3.The Superintendent of Prison
Central Prison,
Madurai District

.. Respondents

Petition filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India to issue a writ of Habeas Corpus to call for the records pertaining to the impugned detention order passed by the 2nd respondent made in his proceedings in SR No.03/Goonda/2022 dated 02.02.2022 in detaining the detenu under Section 2(f) of the Tamil Nadu Act 14 of 1982 as a Goonda and quash the same and direct the respondents to produce the detenu namely Nanthagopal



HCP(MD)No.386 of 2022

S/o.Balakumar, male aged about 23 years, who is detained at the central prison, Madurai District before this Court and set him at liberty.

For Petitioner : Mr.C.Jeganathan

For Respondents : Mr.A.Thiruvadikumar
Additional Public Prosecutor

ORDER

J. NISHA BANU,J.
and
N. ANAND VENKATESH,J.

The petitioner is the detenu viz., Nanthagopal aged about 23 years, S/o.Balakumar. The detenu has been detained by the second respondent by his order in SR No.03/Goonda/2022 dated 02.02.2022 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



HCP(MD)No.386 of 2022

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 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 18.02.2022. The petitioner made a representation dated 05.03.2022. Thereafter, remarks were called for by the Government from the Detaining Authority on 09.03.2022. The remarks were duly received on 23.03.2022. Thereafter, the Government



HCP(MD)No.386 of 2022

considered the matter and passed the order rejecting the petitioner's representation on 23.05.2022.

6. It is the contention of the petitioner that the remarks were received on 23.03.2022 and there was a delay of 58 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, 21 days were a Government Holiday and hence, there was inordinate delay of 37 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.

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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 37 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.

11. This Court directed the Investigating Officer to be present today. The learned Additional Public Prosecutor, on instructions, submitted that the investigation was completed and final report was filed before the Judicial Magistrate Court, Paramakudi and the same is yet to be taken on file. Hence, there shall be a direction to the Judicial Magistrate, Paramakudi, to immediately act upon the final report and proceed in accordance with law.



HCP(MD)No.386 of 2022

13. In the result, the Habeas Corpus Petition is allowed and the order of detention in SR No.03/Goonda/2022 dated 02.02.2022 passed by the second respondent is set aside. The detenu, viz., Koya @ Vignesh S/o.Selvaraj, aged about 27 years, is directed to be released forthwith unless his detention is required in connection with any other case.

(J.N.B.,J.) (N.A.V.,J.)
23.09.2022

Index : Yes/No

Internet : Yes

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To

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Home, Prohibition and Excise Department,
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- 2.The District Collector and District Magistrate
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- 3.The Superintendent of Prison
Central Prison,
Madurai District
- 4.The Additional Public Prosecutor,
Madurai Bench of Madras High Court,
Madurai.



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HCP(MD)No.386 of 2022

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and
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H.C.P.(MD)No.386 of 2022

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