



BEFORE THE MADURAI BENCH OF MADRAS HIGH COURT

DATED : 23.03.2022

CORAM:

THE HONOURABLE MR.JUSTICE R.SUBRAMANIAN

and

THE HONOURABLE MR.JUSTICE N.SATHISH KUMAR

H.C.P.(MD) No.1354 of 2021

Prasanna

... Petitioner/ detenu

Vs.

- 1.The Additional Chief Secretary to Government,
Home Prohibition and Excise Department,
Secretariat,
Chennai - 600 009.
- 2.The District Collector and District Magistrate,
Office of the District Collector and District Magistrate,
Theni District, Theni.
- 3.The Superintendent of Police,
Madurai Central Prison,
Madurai.

... Respondents

PRAYER: Petition filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India, to issue a Writ of Habeas Corpus, calling for the records pertaining to the impugned detention order passed by the second respondent vide proceedings in Detention Order No.30/2021 dated 26.08.2021, quash the same and produce the person or body of the detenu by name Prasanna, Son of Balagurusamy, aged about 40 years, now detained as 'Drug Offender' at Madurai Central Prison before this Honourable Court and set him at liberty forthwith.

For Petitioner : Mr.R.Alagumani
For Respondents : Mr.A.Thiruvadi Kumar,
Additional Public Prosecutor.

O R D E R

R.SUBRAMANIAN, J.

AND

N.SATHISH KUMAR, J.

The Petitioner is the detenu, namely, Prasanna, Son of Balagurusamy, aged about 40 years. The detenu has been detained by the second respondent by his order in Detention Order No.30/2021 dated 26.08.2021 holding him to be a "Drug Offender", as contemplated under Section 2(e) 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 for the petitioner and the learned Additional Public Prosecutor appearing for the respondents. We have also perused the records produced by the Detaining Authority.

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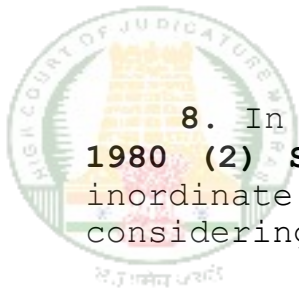
3. Though several grounds have been raised in the Habeas Corpus Petition, the learned counsel appearing for the petitioner would mainly focus his argument on the ground that there is gross violation of procedural safeguards, which would vitiate the detention. The learned counsel, by placing authorities, submitted that the representations made by the petitioner were not considered on time and there was an inordinate and unexplained delay with regard to the same.

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 26.08.2021. The petitioner made a representation, dated 04.09.2021 and the same was received on 24.09.2021. Thereafter, remarks were called for by the Government from the Detaining Authority on 24.09.2021 and the remarks were received on 12.10.2021, in which, there is a delay of 12 days after excluding the Government Holidays of 6 days. The Deputy Secretary has dealt with the representation on 12.10.2021 and thereafter, the Minister for Electricity, P & E has dealt with the representation on 29.10.2021, in which, there is a delay of 10 days after excluding the Government Holidays of 7 days. Ultimately, the representation was rejected on 29.10.2021. Thus there is a delay of 22 days in considering the representation which remains unexplained.

6. In **Rekha vs. State of Tamil Nadu**, reported in **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.

7. In **Sumaiya vs. The Secretary to Government**, reported in **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.



8. 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.

9. In the subject case, admittedly, there is an unexplained delay of 22 days in considering the representation. The impugned detention order is, therefore, liable to be quashed.

10. In the result, the Habeas Corpus Petition is allowed and the order of detention in Detention Order No.30/2021 dated 26.08.2021, passed by the second respondent is set aside. The detenu, namely, Prasanna, Son of Balagurusamy, aged about 40 years, is directed to be released forthwith unless his detention is required in connection with any other case.

Sd/-

Assistant Registrar (CS-I)

// True Copy //

/ /2022

Sub Assistant Registrar(CS)

pm

To

- 1.The Additional Chief Secretary to Government,
Home Prohibition and Excise Department,
Secretariat,
Chennai - 600 009.
- 2.The District Collector and District Magistrate,
Office of the District Collector and District Magistrate,
Theni District, Theni.
- 3.The Superintendent of Police,
Madurai Central Prison, Madurai.
- 4.The Joint Secretary to Government,
Public (Law and Order),
Fort. St.George, Chennai-9
- 5.The Additional Public Prosecutor,
Madurai Bench of Madras High Court, Madurai.

ORDER MADE IN

H.C.P (MD) .No. 1354 of 2021

23.03.2022