



BEFORE THE MADURAI BENCH OF MADRAS HIGH COURT

DATED: 16.06.2022

Coram

The Honourable Mr. Justice **P.N.PRAKASH**
and
The Honourable Mrs. Justice **R.HEMALATHA**

H.C.P.[MD]No.1891 of 2021

Highcourt Raja

.. Petitioner

Vs.

1.State of Tamil Nadu,
Rep. by the Additional Chief Secretary to the Government,
Home, Prohibition and Excise Department,
Fort St. George,
Chennai - 600 009.

2.The Commissioner of Police,
Tirunelveli City,
Tirunelveli.

3.The Superintendent of Prison,
Central Prison,
Palayamkottai,
Tirunelveli.

.. Respondents

PRAYER: Petition filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India to issue a writ of Habeas Corpus, calling for the entire records connected with the detention order passed in No.61/BCDFGISSSV/2021 dated 28.10.2021 on the file of the second respondent herein and quash the same and direct the respondents to produce the detenu or body of the detenu namely Highcourt Raja aged about 46 years, S/o.Muthupandi, now detained at the Central Prison, Palayamkottai, before this Court and set him at liberty forthwith.

For Petitioner : Mr.N.Pragalathan

For Respondents : Mr.S.Ravi
Additional Public Prosecutor

ORDER

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

The petitioner is the detenu viz., Highcourt Raja, aged about 46 years, son of Muthupandi. The detenu has been detained by the second respondent by his order in No.61/BCDFGISSSV/2021 dated



28.10.2021, 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 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.

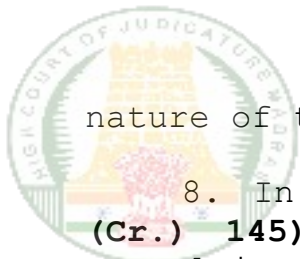
3. Though several grounds have been raised in the Habeas Corpus Petition, the learned counsel appearing for the petitioner would mainly focus his argument on the ground that there is gross violation of procedural safeguards, which would vitiate the detention. The learned counsel, by placing authorities, 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 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 28.10.2021. The petitioner made a representation on 07.12.2021. Thereafter, remarks were called for by the Government from the Detaining Authority on 15.12.2021. The remarks were duly received on 27.12.2021. Thereafter, the Government considered the matter and passed the order rejecting the petitioner's representation on 18.04.2022.

6. It is the contention of the petitioner that there was a delay of 11 days in submitting the remarks by the Detaining Authority, of which 4 days were Government Holiday and hence there was an inordinate delay of 7 days in submitting the remarks. It is the further contention of the petitioner that the remarks were received on 27.12.2021 and there was a delay of 110 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 39 days were Government Holidays, hence, there was inordinate delay of 71 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 7 days in submitting the remarks by the Detaining Authority and unexplained delay of 71 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. In the result, the Habeas Corpus Petition is allowed and the order of detention in No.61/BCDFGISSSV/2021 dated 28.10.2021, passed by the second respondent is set aside. The detenu, viz., Highcourt Raja, aged about 46 years, son of Muthupandi, is directed to be released forthwith unless his detention is required in connection with any other case.

Sd/-

Assistant Registrar (CS-II)

// True Copy //

/06/2022

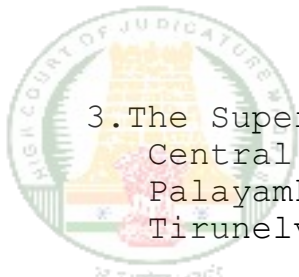
Sub Assistant Registrar(CS)

MR

To

1.The Additional Chief Secretary to the Government,
State of Tamil Nadu,
Home, Prohibition and Excise Department,
For St. George,
Chennai - 600 009.

2.The Commissioner of Police,
Tirunelveli City,
Tirunelveli.



3.The Superintendent of Prison,
Central Prison,
Palayamkottai,
Tirunelveli.

4.The Joint Secretary to Government,
Public (Law & Order),
Fort saint George, Chennai-600 009.

5.The Additional Public Prosecutor,
Madurai Bench of Madras High Court,
Madurai.

**H.C.P. [MD]No.1891 of 2021
16.06.2022**

RD(28.06.2022) 4P 6C