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H.C.P.No.188 of 2023

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT MADRAS

DATED : 10.07.2023

CORAM

THE HONOURABLE MR.JUSTICE **M.SUNDAR**
and
THE HONOURABLE MR.JUSTICE **R.SAKTHIVEL**

H.C.P.No.188 of 2023

R.Meena

.. Petitioner

Vs

1. The Secretary to Government,
Home, Prohibition and Excise Department,
Secretariat, Fort St. George, Chennai -9.
2. The Commissioner of Police,
Office of the Commissioner of Police, Avadi.
- 3.The Superintendent of Prison,
Central Prison, Puzhal, Chennai.
- 4.The Inspector of Police,
M-2 Madhavaram Milk Colony Police Station,
Chennai.

.. Respondents

Petition filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India praying for issuance of a writ of habeas corpus to call for the records pertaining to the order of detention passed by the second respondent in his proceedings in BCDFGISSSV No.03/2023 dated 06.01.2023 and quash the same as illegal and produce the detenu namely Krishnakumar, S/o.Rajendran, aged 24 years, now he is confined in

Page Nos.1/9



H.C.P.No.188 of 2023

Central Prison, Puzhal II, Chennai, before this Court and set him at liberty.

For Petitioner : Mr.S.Lokesh
For Respondents : Mr.E.Raj Thilak
Additional Public Prosecutor

ORDER

[Order of the Court was made by **M.SUNDAR, J.,**]

When the captioned 'Habeas Corpus Petition' (hereinafter 'HCP' for the sake of convenience and clarity) was listed in the Admission Board on 09.02.2023, this Court made the following order:

'Captioned Habeas Corpus Petition has been filed in this Court on 01.02.2023 inter alia assailing a 'detention order dated 06.01.2023 bearing No.03/BCDFGISSSV/2023' (hereinafter 'impugned detention order' for the sake of brevity and clarity) made by 'second respondent' [hereinafter 'Detaining Authority' for the sake of convenience and clarity]. To be noted, fourth respondent is the Sponsoring Authority.

2. Mother of the detenu is the petitioner.

3. Mr.S.Lokesh, learned counsel on record for habeas corpus petitioner is before us. Learned counsel for petitioner submits that ground case qua the detenu is for alleged offences under Sections 341, 294(b), 336, 427, 392, 397 and 506(ii) IPC in Crime No.554 of 2022 on the file of M-2 Madhavaram Milk Colony Police Station.



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H.C.P.No.188 of 2023

4. *The aforementioned detention order has been made on the premise that the detenu is a 'Goonda' under Section 2(f) of 'The Tamil Nadu Prevention of Dangerous Activities of Bootleggers, Cyber law offenders, Drug-offenders, Forest-offenders, Goondas, Immoral traffic offenders, Sand-offenders, Sexual-offenders, Slum-grabbers and Video Pirates Act, 1982 (Tamil Nadu Act No.14 of 1982)' [hereinafter 'Act 14 of 1982' for the sake of convenience and clarity].*

5. *The impugned detention order has been assailed inter alia on the ground that some of the pages in the booklet furnished to the detenu are not legible which prevented the detenu from making an effective representation.*

6. *Prima facie case made out for admission. Admit. Issue Rule nisi returnable by four weeks.*

7. *Mr.R.Muniyapparaj, learned Additional Public Prosecutor, State of Tamil Nadu accepts notice for all respondents. List the captioned Habeas Corpus Petition accordingly. '*

2. The aforementioned order made in the 09.02.2023 Admission listing shall be read as an integral part and parcel of this order which means that the short forms, short references and abbreviations used in the order in the Admission listing shall be used in the instant order also.



H.C.P.No.188 of 2023

WEB COPY

3. There are three adverse cases. The ground case which constitutes substantial part of substratum of the impugned preventive detention order is Crime No.554 of 2022 on the file of M-2 Madhavaram Police Station for the alleged offences under Sections 341, 294(b), 336, 427, 392, 397 and 506(ii) of IPC. Owing to the nature of the challenge to the impugned detention order, it is not necessary to delve into the factual matrix or be detained further by facts.

4. Mr.S.Lokesh, learned counsel on record for petitioner and Mr.E.Raj Thilak, learned State Additional Public Prosecutor for all respondents are before us.

5. As would be evident from the Admission Board order dated 09.02.2023, at the time of admission, learned counsel for HCP petitioner projected the point that some of the pages in the booklet furnished to the detenu are not legible, but in the Final Hearing Board today, learned counsel for petitioner pivoted his campaign against the impugned detention order on the incorrect/improper translation point.

Page Nos.4/9



H.C.P.No.188 of 2023

Learned counsel drew our attention to the similar case bail order relied on by the detaining authority in Aravind's case vide CrI.M.P.No.1759 of 2018 dated 01.02.2018 on the file of the Principal Sessions Judge, Chennai, at pages 115 and 116 of the grounds booklet and submitted that the bail order has not been fully translated. We had the benefit of perusing the grounds booklet served on the detenu and we have no reason to disagree with the learned counsel for petitioner. English version of bail order dated 01.02.2018 says '*Major portion of investigation might have been completed by this time. The murder case pending against the petitioner is of the year 2012 and another case of the year 2014...*' whereas the Tamil version says 'இவர் மீது ஏற்கனவே கொலை வழக்கு மற்றும் கொலை முயற்சி வழக்கு உள்ளது and it also says விசாரணை முழுமையாக முடிவு பெற்றுள்ளதால்...'

6. We are informed that the literacy level of the detenu is 10th standard and he is a school drop out. We are also informed that the detenu is conversant only with Tamil.

7. In this view of the matter, we find that flaw in the translation is very serious and it certainly affects the rights of the detenu to make



H.C.P.No.188 of 2023

an effective representation which are rights and constitutional safeguard enshrined in Article 22(5) of the Constitution of India. We remind ourselves of *Powanammal* case which also on facts arose out of the preventive detention case. In *Powanammal* case in similar circumstances i.e., similar fact situation, Honourable Supreme Court addressed to itself the issue of providing a detenu with translated copies in a language in which the detenu is conversant with and answered the same interalia by saying that it is imperative and not providing translated copy in a language which the detenu is conversant with vitiates preventive detention. *Powanammal* case i.e., **Powanammal Vs. State of Tamil Nadu** is reported in **(1999) 2 SCC 413** and the relevant paragraphs wherein the question which the Honourable Supreme Court addressed to itself and the manner in which the question was answered are paragraphs 6 and 16 which read as follows:

'6. The short question that falls for our consideration is whether failure to supply the Tamil version of the order of remand passed in English, a language not known to the detenue, would vitiate her further detention.

16. For the above reasons, in our view, the non-supply of the Tamil version of the English document, on the facts



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H.C.P.No.188 of 2023

and in the circumstances, renders her continued detention illegal. We, therefore, direct that the detenue be set free forthwith unless she is required to be detained in any other case. The appeal is accordingly allowed. '

8. Applying *Powanammal* principle, we have no hesitation in saying that the impugned detention order in the case on hand deserves to be dislodged.

9. Ergo, the sequitur is, captioned HCP is allowed. Impugned preventive detention order dated 06.01.2023 bearing reference No.03/BCDFGISSSV/2023 made by the second respondent is set aside and the detenu Thiru.Krishnakumar, aged 24 years, Son of Thiru.Rajendran, is directed to be set at liberty forthwith, if not required in connection with any other case / cases. There shall be no order as to costs.

(M.S.,J.) (R.S.V.,J.)
10.07.2023

Index : Yes

Neutral Citation : Yes

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P.S: Registry to forthwith communicate this order to Jail authorities in Central Prison, Puzhal, Chennai.

Page Nos.7/9



H.C.P.No.188 of 2023

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5. The Public Prosecutor
High Court, Madras.



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**M.SUNDAR, J.,
and
R.SAKTHIVEL, J.,**

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H.C.P.No.188 of 2023

10.07.2023

Page Nos.9/9