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H.C.P.No.757 of 2023

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT MADRAS

DATED : 08.09.2023

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

H.C.P.No.757 of 2023

Devi

.. Petitioner

Vs

1.The State of Tamil Nadu

Rep. By its Additional Chief Secretary to Government,
Home, Department of Prohibition and Excise,
Secretariat, Fort St.George, Chennai -9.

2.The Commissioner of Police,

Avadi City Police, Commissioner Office,
Avadi, Chennai – 600 054.

3.The Inspector of Police,

M2 Madhavaram Milk Colony Police Station,
Chennai.

4.The Superintendent of Prison,

Central Prison – II, Puzhal, 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 in No.97/BCDFGISSSV/2023 dated 12.04.2023 on the file of the second respondent herein and set aside the same as illegal and produce the detenu Sundarraaj @ David, son of Suresh, aged 22 years, now

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

For Petitioner : Mr.Ilayaraja Kandasamy
For Respondents : Mr.E.Raj Thilak
Additional Public Prosecutor

ORDER

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

Captioned 'Habeas Corpus Petition' ['HCP' for the sake of brevity] has been filed by mother of detenu assailing a 'preventive detention order dated 12.04.2023 bearing reference No.97/BCDFGISSSV/2023' [hereinafter 'impugned preventive detention order' for the sake of convenience and brevity] made by 'second respondent' (hereinafter 'detaining authority' for the sake of convenience). To be noted, third respondent is the sponsoring authority.

2. Impugned preventive detention order has been made under '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)'



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[hereinafter 'Act 14 of 1982' for the sake of convenience and clarity]
on the premise that the detenu is a 'Goonda' within the meaning of
Section 2(f) of Act 14 of 1982.

3. There are seven adverse cases. The ground case which constitutes substantial part of substratum of the impugned preventive detention order is Crime No.118 of 2023 on the file of M-2 Madhavaram Milk Colony Police Station for alleged offences under Sections 341, 294(b), 336, 427, 392, 397, 506(ii) of 'The Indian Penal Code (45 of 1860)' [hereinafter 'IPC' for the sake of convenience and clarity]. Owing to the nature of the challenge to the impugned preventive detention order, it is not necessary to delve into the factual matrix or be detained further by facts.

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

5. Learned counsel for petitioner predicated his campaign against the impugned preventive detention order on the ground that



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the subjective satisfaction arrived at by the detaining authority qua imminent possibility of detenu being released on bail is impaired.

6. Elaborating on the aforementioned point on subjective satisfaction, learned counsel for petitioner drew our attention to a portion of paragraph 4 of the impugned preventive detention order which reads as follows:

'4...In a similar case registered at under section 294(b), 341, 323, 397, 336, 427 and 506(ii) IPC, in J-4 Kotturpuram Police Station Crime No.43/2018, the bail was granted by the Court of Principal Sessions Judge at Chennai in Crl.M.P.No.1759/2018. Hence, I infer that it is very likely of his coming out on bail in M-2 Madhavaram Milk Colony Police Station Crime Nos.114/2023 and 117/2023 and there is a real possibility of his coming out on bail in M-2 Madhavaram Milk Colony Police Station Crime No.118/2023 case by filing bail application before the appropriate court, since in similarly placed cases bails are granted by courts after a lapse of time...'



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7. Thereafter, learned counsel placed before us the grounds booklet as served on the detenu and drew our attention to page Nos.135 to 138 thereat wherein *Aravind's case* bail order (similar case) made in English by the learned Sessions Judge and what according to the Detaining Authority's Tamil translation version were furnished to the detenu. On a perusal of the bail order in English and the Tamil translated version brings to light that the bail order in English refers to pending cases against the petitioner with specificity as regards years in paragraph 6 but in the Tamil translation the same is missing.

8. Learned Prosecutor in response to the above arguments submitted that only the mentioning of the years of pending cases with specificity is missing but otherwise the translation is largely correct.

9. We carefully considered the rival submissions. We find from the confession statement of the detenu at page Nos.88 to 90 of the grounds booklet that the literacy level of the detenu is only 9th Standard in School. Therefore, it is not merely a case of improper translation it is also a case of giving orders with different contents in



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English and Tamil version which can baffle a person whose literacy level is only 9th Standard in School. This means that when a detenu is baffled, his right to make an effective representation against the impugned preventive detention order gets impaired.

10. We also remind ourselves of Powanammal case i.e., ***Powanammal Vs. State of Tamil Nadu***, wherein Hon'ble Supreme Court addressed to itself this translation point in a similar fact situation. The question which the Hon'ble Supreme Court addressed to itself is captured in paragraph 6 and the manner in which a Hon'ble Bench of the Supreme Court answered this question is captured in paragraph 16. To be noted, ***Powanammal*** case is reported in **(1999) 2 SCC 413** and paragraphs 6 and 16 {as in SCC journal} 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 and in the circumstances, renders her continued detention illegal. We,



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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. '

11. Therefore, this is a case of improper translation as well as providing documents with different contents in two different languages impairing the detenu's right to make an effective representation. The net sequitur is the impugned preventive detention order is vitiated and the same deserves to be dislodged.

12. Ergo, the sequitur is, captioned HCP is allowed. Impugned preventive detention order dated 12.04.2023 bearing reference No.97/BCDFGISSSV/2023 made by the second respondent is set aside and the detenu Thiru.Sundarraaj @ David, aged 22 years, Son of Thiru.Suresh, 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.)
08.09.2023

Index : Yes
Neutral Citation : Yes
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P.S: Registry to forthwith communicate this order to Jail authorities in Central Prison II, Puzhal, Chennai.

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To

- 1.The Additional Chief Secretary to Government,
Home, Department of Prohibition and Excise,
Secretariat, Fort St.George,
Chennai -9.
- 2.The Commissioner of Police,
Avadi City Police, Commissioner Office,
Avadi, Chennai – 600 054.
- 3.The Inspector of Police,
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- 4.The Superintendent of Prison,
Central Prison – II, Puzhal, Chennai.
- 5.The Public Prosecutor,
High Court, Madras.



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

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