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H.C.P.No.927 of 2023

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT MADRAS

DATED : 11.09.2023

CORAM

THE HONOURABLE MR.JUSTICE M.SUNDAR
and

THE HONOURABLE MR.JUSTICE R.SAKTHIVEL

H.C.P.No.927 of 2023

Kathija
W/o.Siraj

.. Petitioner/Mother of detenu

Vs.

1.The Secretary to Government,
Home, Prohibition and Excise Department
Fort St. George,
Chennai – 600 009.

2.The Commissioner of Police,
Avadi City.

3.The Superintendent of Police,
Central Prison, Puzhal,
Chennai.

4.The Inspector of Police (Law & Order),
M-5 Ennore Police Station.

.. Respondents

Petition filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India praying for issuance of a writ order or direction in the nature of WRIT OF HABEAS CORPUS, call for the records in connection with the order of detention passed by the 2nd respondent dated 20.04.2023 in



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No.105/BCDFGISSSV/2023 against the petitioner's son Mohammed Mujith, Male aged about 23 years, Son of Siraj, who is confined at Central Prison, Puzhal, Chennai and set aside the same and direct the respondents to produce the detenu before this Court and set him at liberty.

For Petitioner : Mr.A.Venkateswara Babu

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 the detenu assailing a 'preventive detention order dated 20.04.2023 bearing reference No.105/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, fourth 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



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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] on the premise that the detenu is a 'Goonda' within the meaning of Section 2(f) of Act 14 of 1982.

3. There is one adverse case and one ground case. The ground case which constitutes substantial part of substratum of the impugned preventive detention order is Crime No.96 of 2023 on the file of M-5 Ennore Police Station for alleged offences under Sections 341, 294(b), 336, 392, 397 and 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.A.Venkateswara Babu, learned counsel on record for petitioner and Mr.E.Raj Thilak, learned State Additional Public Prosecutor for all respondents are before us.



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5. Learned counsel for petitioner predicated his campaign against the impugned preventive detention order on the ground that the subjective satisfaction arrived at by the Detaining Authority qua imminent possibility of detenu being enlarged 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-5 Ennore Police Station, Crime Nos.94/2023 and 96/2023, since in similar case bail is granted by the court after a lapse of time. ...'

7. Thereafter, learned counsel placed before us the grounds booklet as served on the detenu and drew our attention to page Nos.138 to 141 thereat which contain **Aravind case** bail order (similar case) made in English by the learned Sessions Judge and what according to the Detaining Authority is Tamil translation version of the same i.e., **Aravind** case bail order. A perusal



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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 calendar years in paragraph (6) but in the Tamil translation, the same is missing.

8. Learned Prosecutor in response to the above argument submitted that only mentioning of the calendar years of pending cases with specificity is missing, the same is clerical error but otherwise the translation is largely correct.

9. We carefully considered the rival submissions. We are of the view that it is not merely a case of improper translation but it is also a case of giving orders with different contents in English and Tamil version. This means that detenu's 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, 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. To be noted, such a right of a detenu is a constitutional right being a constitutional safeguard ingrained in Article 22(5) of the Constitution and infraction of such a safeguard vitiates the impugned preventive detention order rendering



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it liable for dislodgement in a habeas legal drill. The net sequitur is, the impugned preventive detention order is vitiated and the same deserves to be dislodged.

12. Before concluding, we also remind ourselves that preventive detention is not a punishment and HCP is a high prerogative writ.

13. Ergo, the sequitur is, captioned HCP is allowed. Impugned preventive detention order dated 20.04.2023 bearing reference 105/BCDFGISSSV/2023 made by the second respondent is set aside and the detenu Thiru.Mohammed Mujith, aged 23 years, Son of Thiru.Siraj, 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.)

11.09.2023

Index : Yes

Neutral Citation : Yes

Speaking order

rsi

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



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

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To

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Fort St. George,
Chennai – 600 009.
- 2.The Commissioner of Police,
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High Court, Madras.

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