



HCP(MD)No.168 of 2023

BEFORE THE MADURAI BENCH OF MADRAS HIGH COURT

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DATED: 18.07.2023

CORAM

**THE HON'BLE MR JUSTICE M.S.RAMESH
AND
THE HON'BLE MR JUSTICE M.NIRMAL KUMAR**

H.C.P.(MD)No.168 of 2023

Manikandan

.. Petitioner/Detenu

Vs.

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

2.The District Collector and District Magistrate,
Office of the District Collector and District Magistrate,
Tenkasi District,
Tenkasi.

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

.. 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 of Respondent No.2 in M.H.S.Confdl.No.94/2022, dated 29.10.2022, quash the same and direct the respondents to produce the body



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or person of the detenu by name, Manikandan, aged about 24 years, son of Ananjakutti, now detained at Central Prison, Palayamkottai, before this Court and set him at liberty forthwith.

For Petitioner : Mr.R.Alagumani

For Respondents : Mr.A.Thiruvadikumar
Additional Public Prosecutor

ORDER

(Order of the Court was made by M.S.RAMESH, J.)

The petitioner/detenu viz., Manikandan, aged about 24 years, S/o.Ananjakutti, has been detained by the second respondent by his order in M.H.S.Confdl.No.94/2022, dated 29.10.2022, holding him to be a "Drug Offender", as contemplated under Section 2(e) of the 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



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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 affidavit. 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. In this case, the Detention Order in question was passed on 29.10.2022. The petitioner/detenu made a representation dated 12.11.2022 and the same was received on 15.11.2022. The remarks were called for by the Government from the Detaining Authority and the same were duly received. Thereafter, the Government considered the matter and passed the



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order rejecting the petitioner's representation on 05.12.2022 and the same has been served on the detenu on 10.12.2022. It is the contention of the petitioner that there was delay of 16 days in considering the representation of the petitioner.

6. 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.

7. 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.

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.



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9. In the subject case, admittedly, there is an inordinate and unexplained delay of 16 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.

10. In the result, the Habeas Corpus Petition is allowed and the order of detention in M.H.S.Confdl.No.94/2022, dated 29.10.2022, passed by the second respondent is set aside. The detenu, viz., Manikandan, aged about 24 years, S/o.Ananjakutti, is directed to be released forthwith unless his detention is required in connection with any other case.

NCC : Yes / No
Index : Yes / No
smn2/yuva

(M.S.R., J.) (M.N.K., J.)
18.07.2023

To

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Madurai Bench of Madras High Court,
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