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HCP.No.431 of 2024

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT MADRAS

DATED : 05.06.2024

CORAM :

THE HONOURABLE MR. JUSTICE M.S. RAMESH
AND
THE HONOURABLE MR. JUSTICE SUNDER MOHAN

H.C.P.No.431 of 2024

Rajeswari

... Petitioner

Vs.

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

2.The Commissioner of Police,
Salem City.

3.The Superintendent of Police,
Central Prison Salem.

4.The Inspector of Police,
Shevapet Police Station,
Salem.

... Respondents

PRAYER: Petition filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India to issue a Writ of Habeas Corpus, calling for the records in C.M.P.No.119/Drug Offender/Salem City/2023 dated 22.12.2023 on the file of the Commissioner of Police, Salem City, the second respondent



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herein and quash the same as illegal and direct the respondents to produce the detenu namely Logeswaran, aged about 33 years, S/o.Subramani, confined at Central Prison, Salem, before this Court and set him at liberty.

For Petitioner : Mr.S.Prabhakar

For Respondents : Mr.E.Raj Thilak,
Additional Public Prosecutor
assisted by Mr.C. Aravind

ORDER

M.S.RAMESH, J.
AND
SUNDER MOHAN, J.

The petitioner herein, who is the wife of the detenu Logeswaran, aged about 33 years, S/o.Subramani, has come forward with this petition challenging the detention order passed by the second respondent dated 22.12.2023 slapped on her husband, branding him as "Drug Offender" 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 14 of 1982].



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2. Heard the learned counsel for the petitioner, as well as the learned Additional Public Prosecutor appearing for the respondents.

3. Though several grounds have been raised in this Habeas Corpus Petition, the learned counsel for the petitioner stated that the detention order is liable to be quashed on the ground that the detenu was furnished with illegible copy of the remand order. Hence, it is submitted that the detenu was deprived of making effective representation.

4. On a perusal of the Booklet, it is seen that some portions in the remand order are not properly translated and the said document is illegible. This furnishing of illegible copy of the vital document would deprive the detenu of making effective representation to the authorities against the order of detention.

5. In this context, it is useful to refer to the judgment of the Hon'ble Supreme Court in the case of '*Powanammal Vs. State of Tamil Nadu*' reported in '*(1999) 2 SCC 413*'. The Hon'ble Supreme Court, after discussing the safeguards embodied in Article 22[5] of the Constitution,



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observed that the detenu should be afforded an opportunity of making representation effectively against the Detention Order and that, the failure to supply every material in the language which can be understood by the detenu, is imperative. In the said context, the Hon'ble Supreme Court has held in Paragraphs 9 and 16 {as in SCC journal} as follows:

“9. However, this Court has maintained a distinction between a document which has been relied upon by the detaining authority in the grounds of detention and a document which finds a mere reference in the grounds of detention. Whereas the non-supply of a copy of the document relied upon in the grounds of detention has been held to be fatal to continued detention, the detenu need not show that any prejudice is caused to him. This is because the non-supply of such a document would amount to denial of the right of being communicated the grounds and of being afforded the opportunity of making an effective representation against the order. But it would not be so where the document merely finds a reference in the order of detention or among the grounds thereof. In such a case, the detenu's complaint of non-supply of document has to be supported by prejudice caused to him in making an effective representation. What applies to a document would equally apply to furnishing a translated copy of the document in the language known to and understood by the detenu, should the document be in a different language.



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..... *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.”*

6. In view of the ratio laid down by the Hon'ble Supreme Court and in view of the aforesaid facts, this Court is of the view that the detention order is liable to be quashed.

7. Accordingly, the detention order passed by the second respondent on 22.12.2023 in C.M.P.No.119/Drug Offender/Salem City/2023, is hereby set aside and the Habeas Corpus Petition is allowed. The detenu viz., Logeswaran, aged about 33 years, S/o.Subramani, is directed to be set at liberty forthwith, unless his confinement is required in connection with any other case.

[M.S.R., J]

[S.M., J]

05.06.2024

Index: Yes/No

Speaking/Non-speaking order

Neutral Citation: Yes/No



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M.S.RAMESH, J.
and
SUNDER MOHAN, J.

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To

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2.The Commissioner of Police,
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3.The Superintendent of Police,
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5.The Public Prosecutor,
High Court, Madras.

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