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H.C.P.No.2559 of 2023

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT MADRAS

Dated : 28.02.2024

CORAM :

THE HONOURABLE MR. JUSTICE M.S.RAMESH

AND

THE HONOURABLE MR. JUSTICE SUNDER MOHAN

H.C.P.No.2559 of 2023

Jaffer Ali

... Petitioner/Friend of the Detenu
Vs.

1. The State of Tamil Nadu,
Rep. by Secretary
Home, Prohibition and Excise Department,
Fort St. George, Chennai 9.
 2. The Commissioner of Police,
Greater Chennai
Office of the Commissioner of Police (Goondas Section)
Vepery, Chennai 600 077.
 3. The Superintendent of Prison,
Central Prison,
Puzhal, Chennai District.
 4. The Inspector of Police,
F-1, Chindatripet Police Station,
Chennai District.
- ... Respondents



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Petition filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India, praying to issue Writ of Habeas Corpus, calling for the records relating to the Detention Order vide No.501/BCDFGISSSV/2023 dated 25.10.2023, passed by the second respondent and quash the same and direct the respondents herein to produce the petitioner's friend namely Mouli, S/o.Venkatesan, aged 26 years (who is presently under going detention in the Central Prison, Puzhal, Chennai), before this Hon'ble Court and set him at liberty.

For petitioner : Mr.R. Parthiban
For Respondents : Mr.E. Raj Thilak
Additional Public Prosecutor
Assisted by Mr.Aravind,C.

ORDER

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

The petitioner, friend of the detenu Mouli, aged 26 years, S/o.Venkatesan,, has come forward with this petition challenging the detention order passed by the 2nd respondent dated 25.10.2023 slapped on his friend, branding him as "Goonda" as contemplated under Section 2(f) of the Tamil Nadu Act 14 of 1982.

2.Heard the learned counsel for the petitioner and the learned Additional Public Prosecutor appearing for the respondents.



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3. Though several grounds are raised in the petition, the learned counsel for the petitioner submitted that the order of Detention passed by the Detaining Authority is vitiated, as the copies of the Seizure Mahazar and Arrest Card found in the Booklet furnished to the detenu are not legible. It is therefore stated that the detenu is deprived of his valuable right to make effective representation.

4. On a perusal of the Booklet furnished by the Detaining Authority, this Court finds that Page Nos. 12 and 17 of the Booklet pertaining to Seizure Mahazar and Arrest Card respectively, which are relied upon by the Detaining Authority, are not clear and are illegible. It is in the said circumstances, this Court finds that serious prejudice is caused to the detenu on account of furnishing of illegible copies of vital documents, due to which the detenu is deprived of his valuable right to make effective representation against the Detention Order and that therefore, the Detention Order passed by the Detaining Authority is vitiated.



5. In this context, it is useful to refer to the judgment of the Hon'ble Supreme Court in ***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, 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.

.....

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 reasons, this Court is of the view that the detention order is liable to be quashed.



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7. Accordingly, the detention order is liable to be quashed. In the result, the Habeas Corpus Petition is allowed and the order of detention in No.501/BCDFGISSSV/2023, dated 25.10.2023, passed by the second respondent is set aside. The detenu, namely, Mouli, aged 26 years, S/o.Venkatesan, is directed to be released forthwith unless his detention is required in connection with any other case.

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

28.02.2024

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Index : Yes / No

Neutral Citation : Yes / No



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5. The Public Prosecutor,
High Court, Madras.
6. The Joint Secretary,
Law and Order Department,
Secretariat, Chennai.



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