



H.C.P.(MD)No.906 of 2025

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BEFORE THE MADURAI BENCH OF MADRAS HIGH COURT

DATED : 04/02/2026

CORAM:

THE HONOURABLE MR JUSTICE G.K. ILANTHIRAIYAN

AND

THE HONOURABLE MS.JUSTICE R. POORNIMA

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Shanthi : Petitioner/Detenu

-VS-

- 1.The State of Tamil Nadu rep. By,
The Additional Chief Secretary to Government,
Home, Prohibition and Excise Department,
Secretariat, Chennai-600 009.
- 2.The District Collector and District Magistrate,
Office of the District Collector and District Magistrate,
Theni District.
- 3.The Superintendent of Prison,
Special Prison for Women,
Madurai.

: Respondents

PRAYER: Petition filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India praying to issue a Writ of Habeas Corpus, calling for the entire records, connected with the detention order of the respondent No.2 in Detention Order No.31/2025, dated 02/07/2025 and quash the same and direct the



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respondents to produce the detenu by name Shanthi, Wife of Senthilkumar, aged about 42 years, now detained as "Drug Offender", at Special Prison for Women, Madurai before this Court and set her at liberty forthwith and pass such further or other orders.

For Petitioner : Dr.R.Alagumani

For Respondents : Mr.T.Senthil Kumar
Additional Public Prosecutor

ORDER

(Order of the Court was made by **G.K. ILANTHIRAIYAN,J.**)

The petitioner has been detained by the second respondent in his proceedings in Detention Order No.31/2025, dated 02/07/2025 holding her to be a "Drug Offender", as contemplated under Section 2(e) of 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.



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3.The learned counsel appearing for the petitioner submitted that the petitioner was not served with legible copy of page nos. 7,8,9,48,49, 56 and 57 of the booklet, therefore the petitioner is deprived of her valuable right to make an effective representation to reconsider the order of detention.

4.On a perusal of the counter affidavit and also the submission made the learned Additional Public Prosecutor appearing for the respondents, it is revealed that the petitioner was not served with legible copy of the page nos.8,9,48,49,56 and 57 of the booklet, therefore, the petitioner could not able to make an effective representation to reconsider the order of detention. Hence, on this sole ground, the present impugned detention order is also liable to be set aside.

5.In this context, it is useful to refer to the Judgment of the Honourable Supreme Court in the case of *Powanammal vs. State of Tamil Nadu*, reported in (1999) 2 SCC 413, wherein the Apex Court,



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after discussing the safeguards embodied in Article 22(5) of the Constitution of India, observed that the detenu should be afforded an opportunity of making a 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. The relevant portion of the said decision is extracted hereunder:

"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 detenu, would vitiate her further detention.

...

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



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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 nonsupply 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."



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6.We find that the above cited *Powanammal*'s case applies in all force to the case on hand as we find that non-furnishing of legible copy of the page nos.7,8,48,49,56 and 57 of the booklet has impaired her constitutional right to make an effective representation against the impugned preventive detention order. To be noted, this constitutional right is ingrained in the form of a safeguard in Clause (5) of Article 22 of the Constitution of India. We, therefore, have no hesitation in quashing the impugned detention order.

7.In the result, the Habeas Corpus Petition is **allowed** and the order of detention passed in Detention Order No.31/2025, dated 02/07/2025 passed by the second respondent is set aside. The petitioner/detenu, viz., Shanthi, W/o.Senthil Kumar, aged about 42 years, is directed to be released forthwith unless her detention is required in connection with any other case.

[G.K.I., J.] [R.P., J.]
04.02.2026

Index: Yes/No
Internet: Yes/No
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Special Prison for Women,
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- 4.The Additional Public Prosecutor,
Madurai Bench of Madras High Court,
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