

IN THE HIGH COURT OF GUJARAT AT AHMEDABAD

SPECIAL CIVIL APPLICATION No 2228 of 2000

For Approval and Signature:

Hon'ble MR.JUSTICE A.L.DAVE

- =====
1. Whether Reporters of Local Papers may be allowed : NO
to see the judgements?
 2. To be referred to the Reporter or not? : NO
 3. Whether Their Lordships wish to see the fair copy : NO
of the judgement?
 4. Whether this case involves a substantial question : NO
of law as to the interpretation of the Constitution
of India, 1950 of any Order made thereunder?
 5. Whether it is to be circulated to the Civil Judge? : NO

GULABBHAI KRISHNABHAI CHHARA

Versus

DISTRICT MAGISTRATE

Appearance:

MS DR KACHHAVAH for Petitioner

MR KT DAVE, AGP for Respondent No. 1, 2, 3

CORAM : MR.JUSTICE A.L.DAVE

Date of decision: 10/05/2000

ORAL JUDGEMENT

#. The petitioner - Gulabbhai Krishnabhai Chhara, has been detained under the provisions of the Gujarat Prevention of Anti-Social Activities Act, 1985 ("PASA Act" for short) by virtue of an order passed by District Magistrate, Ahmedabad, in exercise of powers under

Section 3(1) of the PASA Act, dated January 20, 2000.

#. The grounds of detention indicate that the detaining authority took into consideration 4 offences registered against the petitioner. The detaining authority also took into consideration the statements of three anonymous witnesses and came to conclusion that the petitioner is a "bootlegger", that his activities are detrimental to public order, that fear expressed by the witnesses qua the petitioner was genuine and therefore, powers under section 9(2) of the PASA Act were exercised by the detaining authority by not disclosing identity of these witnesses.

#. The petitioner has challenged this order of detention on various counts. However, learned advocate for the petitioner has restricted his arguments to the fact that the subjective satisfaction recorded by the detaining authority for the need for exercise of powers under Section 9(2) of the PASA Act, cannot be considered as genuine. In order to substantiate this submission, learned counsel submitted that the statements of three anonymous witnesses were recorded on January 5, 2000 which were verified by the Dy.S.P. on January 5, 2000 and by Sub Divisional Magistrate on January 18, 2000 and January 20, 2000 and the order of detention is passed on January 20, 2000. Learned counsel submitted, therefore, that there was no time for the detaining authority to give consideration to the aspect of correctness and genuineness of the facts stated by the witnesses and the fear expressed by the witnesses, respectively, in their statements. The exercise of powers under Section 9(2) of the PASA Act is improper and has resulted into denial of right of making an effective representation as contemplated under Article 22 (5) of the Constitution. It is submitted that the detaining authority has relied upon the verification made by the Sub Divisional Magistrate but he himself has not verified the same. Learned counsel for the petitioner, therefore, submitted that the petition may be allowed.

#. Mr. K.T. Dave, learned AGP has opposed this petition.

#. So far as the statements of anonymous witnesses are concerned, it may be noted that the detaining authority has observed that the fear expressed by the witnesses in the statements are correct and genuine. Barring these statements, there appears nothing to indicate an exercise having been undertaken by the detaining authority for verifying correctness and genuineness of the statements

and the fear expressed by the witnesses. The detaining authority has to take into consideration the background, the antecedents, the character, etc. of the detainee while considering the need for exercise of powers under Section 9(2) of the PASA Act. The authority has to scale the right of the detainee of making an effective representation on the one hand and the public interest on the other and has to strike a balance between the two. The detaining authority has not filed any affidavit nor is there any contemporaneous material to indicate undertaking of such exercise by the detaining authority and, therefore, the exercise of powers under section 9(2) of the PASA Act can be taken to have vitiated. No reliance, therefore, can be placed on these statements for sustaining the order of detention. There is improper exercise of powers under section 9(2) of the PASA Act, as there is no material to indicate the exercise as stated above (*BAI AMINA v. State of Gujarat & others*, 1981 GLR 1186 and *Kalidas Chandubhai Kahar v. State of Gujarat & ors.*, 1993 (2) GLR 1659).

#. So far as the registered offences are concerned, it may be noted that the representations dated 22nd February, 2000 were made to the detaining authority as well as the government. Both were received by both the parties on 23rd February, 2000. The government rejected the representation on 25th February 2000 and the detaining authority forwarded the representation to the government on 25th February, 2000. That representation was received by the government on 28th February, 2000 and was rejected on 2nd March, 2000. In the representation addressed to the detaining authority, certain documents more particularly reports of Chemical Analyser were sought and the same have not been supplied to the detainee undisputedly. This has affected the right of the detainee of making an effective representation. It has been contended by learned AGP that the report of Chemical Analyzer in respect of CR No. 518/99 was not available as the case was pending investigation and therefore, it may not be taken to have affected the right of the detainee of making an effective representation on account of non-supply of documents. In this regard, it may be noted that the ground that prohibition case registered vide CR No. 518/99 suffers from another defect also namely non-supply of legible documents. Page 45 in the compilation i.e. the copy of bail application given to the detainee along with the grounds of detention is not legible. This would affect the right of the detainee of making an effective representation guaranteed under the Constitution of India. Under the circumstances, the

continued detention is rendered bad on account of non-supply of documents as well as non-supply of legible relevant documents. The petition therefore, deserves to be allowed.

#. In view of the above discussion, the reliance placed on by the detaining authority on the statements of anonymous witnesses and the registered offences cannot be upheld. The order of detention as well as the continued detention both are rendered bad in law. The petition, therefore, deserves to be allowed.

#. In view of the above discussion, the petition is allowed. The impugned order of detention dated January 20, 2000 is hereby quashed. The detenue - Gulabbhai Krishnabhai Chhara, is ordered to be set at liberty forthwith, if not required in any other matter. Rule is made absolute with no orders as to costs.

[A.L.DAVE, J.]

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