

## **No ante mortem injuries on the body of fisherman, High Court Bench told**

The Madurai Bench of the Madras High Court was on Friday informed that the body of the Pudukkottai fisherman who died at sea following a collision with a Sri Lankan naval vessel had no ante mortem injuries.

Justice G.R. Swaminathan was told that the re-post mortem was conducted on the body of Raj Kiran pursuant to the court's direction.

**However, advocate Henri Tiphagne representing the petitioner, R. Brundha, wife of Raj Kiran, submitted that the body of the fisherman was left unstitched after the first autopsy that was conducted at Jaffna Medical College Hospital in Sri Lanka.**

The body was covered in an old bedsheet. It was placed in a plastic cover and then placed in the coffin. The body was in a distorted condition. The Standard International Protocol and Procedures were not followed, he said.

Taking note of the submission, the court suo motu impleaded the Consulate General of India, Jaffna, and the Ministry of External Affairs and adjourned the hearing in the case. The court was hearing the petition filed by Brundha, the wife of Raj Kiran. She sought a probe into the death of her husband.

On October 18, Raj Kiran, along with S. Suganthan and A. Xavier, ventured into the sea in a boat owned by Suresh Kumar. They were intercepted by a Sri Lankan naval vessel and were told they had crossed the International Maritime Boundary Line and were in Sri Lankan waters.

The fishermen tried to escape from the authorities. It was said that the Sri Lankan vessel collided with the boat accidentally and Raj Kiran fell into the sea and drowned. However, Brundha said a few fishermen who were only two nautical miles away on other boats said that Raj Kiran was shot by the Sri Lankan authorities.

The body of Raj Kiran was recovered and a postmortem was conducted at the Jaffna Medical College Hospital in Sri Lanka. Later, the body was handed over to the Indian authorities. The body was brought to Kottaipattinam port by the Indian authorities and handed over to the family members.

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