

Re-postmortem of fisherman: TN govt's response sought

The petitioner R Brunda, wife of the deceased fisherman Rajkiran (28) of Kottaipattinam in Pudukkottai, alleged that her husband did not die due to drowning as claimed by the Sri Lankan authorities.



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(Representational Image)

By Express News Service

MADURAI: The Madurai Bench of Madras High Court on Monday sought the State's response on a plea seeking re-postmortem examination of body of a Pudukkottai fisherman who died last month after his boat was allegedly hit by a Lankan vessel.

The petitioner R Brunda, wife of the deceased fisherman Rajkiran (28) of Kottaipattinam in Pudukkottai, alleged that her husband did not die due to drowning as claimed by the Sri Lankan authorities. "According to our family members, who were eye-witnesses to the incident, the Lankan authorities opened fire at Rajkiran and he sustained bullet injuries.

Moreover, the body was handed over by the Lankan government in a sealed coffin. The local authorities did not let us take the coffin to our home to pay last respects. It was buried hastily without even allowing us to see his face,” she further claimed.

She stated that a photo of Rajkiran’s body, which was released earlier after protests by fishermen, indicated injuries that could not have occurred due to drowning. “His face looked like it was injured using weapons. He had signs of bullet injuries as well,” she added.

Also pointing out that the family members were not furnished with a report of the autopsy reportedly done by the Lankan authorities at Jaffna on October 22, Brunda requested direction to exhume her husband’s body and conduct a re-postmortem examination. She also wanted registration of an FIR and a fair probe into his death.

When Justice GR Swaminathan heard the plea on Monday, the Additional Public Prosecutor informed that the Coastal Security Guard have registered an FIR in connection with the incident and the same has been transferred to the Kottaipattinam police.

As far as the allegations made by the petitioner that they were not allowed to see the deceased’s face, he said no such complaints were made by the deceased family members in the peace committee meeting held by the authorities. Regarding the request for re-postmortem examination, he sought time to get response from the Tahsildar concerned.

Hearing today

The judge observed that it is necessary to ascertain whether there are any bullet injuries on the body of Rajkiran and adjourned the hearing to Tuesday for the officials’ response