IN THE HIGH COURT OF KERALA AT ERNAKULAM

PRESENT

THE HONOURABLE MR. JUSTICE B.SUDHEENDRA KUMAR

THURSDAY, THE 03RD DAY OF DECEMBER 2020 / 12TH AGRAHAYANA, 1942

CRL.A.No.1273 OF 2007

AGAINST THE ORDER/JUDGMENT IN SC 509/2004 DATED 13-06-2007 OF ADDITIONAL DISTRICT COURT (ADHOC)-IV, TRIVANDRUM

AGAINST THE ORDER/JUDGMENT IN CP 213/2002 OF JUDICIAL MAGISTRATE OF FIRST CLASS -II,NEYYATTINKARA

APPELLANT/S/ACCUSED:

SUDHAKARAN, S/O. RAJAPPAN,
S.P.SADANAM, VENGAPOTTA,, KAZHOOR DESOM,
KANJIRAMKULAM VILLAGE, NEYYATTINKARA TALUK.

BY ADVS.
SRI.M.RAJAGOPALAN NAIR
SRI.G.BIJU

RESPONDENT/S/COMPLAINANT:

STATE OF KERALA
REP. BY PUBLIC PROSECUTOR, HIGH COURT OF KERALA,ERNAKULAM.

SMT. SREEJA .V, PP

THIS CRIMINAL APPEAL HAVING BEEN FINALLY HEARD ON 03.12.2020, THE COURT ON THE SAME DAY DELIVERED THE FOLLOWING:

JUDGMENT

The appellant was convicted and sentenced by the court below under Section 8(2) of the Abkari Act.

2. The prosecution allegation is that on 07.10.1998 at about 1 p.m., the appellant was found in possession of 2½ liters of arrack in contravention of the provisions of the Abkari Act.

3. Heard.

4. The learned Counsel for the appellant has argued that since no forwarding note was marked and proved in this case, the appellant is entitled to benefit of doubt.

5. It appears that no forwarding note was marked and proved in this case.

6. In Sasidharan v. State of Kerala [2007 (1) KLT 720], the Court observed thus:

> "Without the link evidence of actual sampling by the concerned clerk of the court by drawing sample from the can and sending the same in a sealed packet to the Chemical Examiner with a specimen seal sent separately for tamper proof despatch, the Prosecution cannot be held to have brought home the offence against the appellant".

7. In Ravi v. State of Kerala [2011 (3) KLT 353], the Division Bench of this Court held that the prosecution in a case under the Abkari Act could succeed only if it is shown that the contraband liquor which was allegedly seized from the accused ultimately

reached the hands of the chemical examiner by change of hands in a tamper-proof condition.

8. Since no forwarding note was marked and proved in this case, the prosecution could not establish the tamper-proof despatch of the sample to the laboratory. Therefore, there is no satisfactory link evidence to show that it was the same sample which was drawn from the contraband seized from the appellant which eventually reached the hands of the Chemical examiner by change of hands in a tamper-proof condition. Consequently, there is no link evidence to connect the appellant with the sample analysed in the laboratory. In the said circumstances, the appellant is entitled to benefit of doubt.

In the result, this Criminal Appeal stands allowed, setting aside the conviction and sentence passed by the court below and the appellant stands acquitted. The bail bond of the appellant stands discharged.

SD/-

B.SUDHEENDRA KUMAR

JUDGE

RK/03.12.2020