



Crl.O.P.No.18674 of 2024

T.V.THAMILSELVI, J.

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The petitioners, who were arrested and remanded to judicial custody on 05.06.2024, seeking bail in STOR No.1 of 2024, on the file of the respondent police for the alleged offences punishable under Sections 35B, 36A, 36E, 41, 49A, 51, 56, 56-B, 56D of Tamil Nadu Forest Act, 1882 (Nos.5 of 1882), under Rule 3, 4 and 7 of Tamil Nadu Sandalwood Transit Rules, 1967 and under Rule 3(a) of Tamil Nadu Sandalwood Possession Rules, 1970.

2. Learned counsel appearing for the petitioners submitted that this is the second bail petition filed by the petitioner and the earlier petition was dismissed by this Court in Crl.OP.No.15640 of 2024 dated 03.07.2024. He also submitted that the petitioners are the Driver and Cleaner of the vehicle and they are no way connected with the alleged offence and has been suffering incarceration from 05.6.2024. He further submitted that the petitioners are ready to abide by any stringent conditions that may be imposed by this Court, hence, he prayed for bail.

3. Learned Government Advocate (Crl.Side) appearing for the respondent police submitted that the accused were illegally transporting Sandalwood pieces in 17 gunny bags, weighing 415.850 kilograms worth about Rs.1,44,300/-. Sandalwood root pieces (weighing 287.500kgs) worth about Rs.5,75,000/- in 11 gunny bags and Sandalwood chips (weighing 946.200 kgs)

T.V.THAMILSELVI, J.,



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worth about Rs.3,28,331/- in 58 gunny bags, in a vehicle bearing registration no.KL-10-DC-194. The total worth of sandal wood products is Rs.10,47,631/-.

However, he vehemently opposed for the grant of bail to the petitioner.

4. He further submitted that there are six accused in this case, the investigation is also at initial stage and also the petitioners, who are arrayed as A5 and A6, are the native of Kerala having 15 previous cases, similar in nature, therefore, if they are released on bail at this stage, there is every possibility of them absconding and not available for further investigation.

5. Taking into consideration the submissions made by the learned Government Advocate (Criminal Side) and taking note of the nature and gravity of the offence committed by the accused, this Court is not inclined to grant bail to the petitioners.

6. Accordingly, the Criminal Original Petition stands dismissed.

02.08.2024

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