

ARUNA KUMAR VUNDAVALLI
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT
(LOK SABHA)



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30 May, 2008

Subject: Un-lawful export of prohibited antiques to foreign countries by M/s Kalanjali- reg.

Madam Ambika Soni ji,

In the year 1996 certain items being exported by M/s. Kalanjali were detained by the Customs Department and referred the matter Archaeological Survey of India, Hyderabad which found that the items under export are suspected antiques. ASI, Hyderabad referred the matter to ASI, Delhi for examination of the said items. The ASI, Delhi, declared the said items as Antiques. Accordingly, the Customs authorities proceeded against the Kalanjali.

Meanwhile, another consignment being exported by the Kalanjali was detained and on examination it was found that there were certain items, which were suspected to antiques. The matter was referred to Appeal Committee, which ruled against Kalanjali and declared the items to be antiques. Kalanjali filed writ petition challenging the order of the appeal committee. The High court disposed off the writ petition by directing the Director General of Archaeological Survey of India to consider the representation of Kalajali and pass orders.

The Director (Antiques), Archaeological Survey of India, New Delhi, by his order dated 12.10.2001 declared 5 items to be antiques. Kalanjali filed writ petition challenging the said order. The said writ petition was disposed off by the Hon'ble High Court of Delhi on 21.10.2001 with a direction that the respondents therein shall constitute an expert committee to examine the process and manufacture of the icons. The expert committee so constituted met the artisans, personally, saw the process of making of the icons and found that the said 5 objects not manufactured by artisans as claimed by Kalanjali were antiques.

Kalanjali, filed the present writ petition challenging the said expert committee report on the ground that it was not given an opportunity of hearing and obtained stay against the operation of the orders passed by the Director, Archaeological Survey of India, New Delhi pursuant to the expert committee report.

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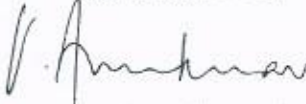
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The matter pertains to the year 1996. Kalanjali, as its usual practice is, challenges every adverse against it on the ground that no opportunity was given and that the authorities is biased. In the above writ petition one of the allegations is that one of the members of the expert committee is biased. By filing writ petitions at every stage Kalanjali is able to postpone the eventuality for the last 12 years.

Hence, I request you to order Government pleaders in Delhi High court to pursue the matter favourably and see that the mater is disposed off. I would also request you to issue necessary instructions to the concerned to ensure the Report of the Expert Committee be taken into consideration while dispose off the writ petition.

With regards,

Yours sincerely,


(V. Arun Kumar)

Smt. Ambika Soni,
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