



Role of Semicolon (;) Interpreting Legislations

- A semi colon when used shows each subject matter is separate and distinct from what follows each semi colon;
- Semicolon is a punctuation mark indicating a greater degree of separation than the comma and it is being used to separate parts of a sentence;
- When expressions are separated by semicolon followed by 'or', they are distinct and carry separate meaning.
- Ordinarily when two clauses are separated by semi colon, they should be read disjunctively.

- It is said ' semi-colon' is an important and interesting mark to use. It is stronger than a comma, which is used more for a pause; but the semi colon does not imply a complete break like the full stop. It only makes a partial break and is at the same time a link between sentences appearing on the subject. It often implies that what follows at least partially explains and amplifies the sentence that comes before it. It is often used instead of a comma when it is followed by "and" or "or" or "but". (Vepa P. Sarathi book Interpretation of Statutes)

Few Case Laws interpreting The Semi Colon was used as an aid in construing meaning

- Hotel Asoka vs The Commercial Tax Officer, Kerala Highcourt 2008 (1) KLJ 419
- Jayant Varma Vs. Union of India 2018 90 taxmann.com 283
- Sunil Srivastava Vs. Union of India <https://www.casemine.com/judgement/in/56098a57e4b0149711383005>

- Aksasha Monga Vs. Hon'ble Highcourt of Delhi
<https://www.casemine.com/judgement/in/56090f73e4b014971117efc1>
- Balkrishna Das Malpani and Others Vs. Perfect Pottery Company Ltd
<https://www.casemine.com/judgement/in/56097860e4b014971133a7a3>
- Vincent Mathew Vs. LIC of India
<https://www.casemine.com/judgement/in/583e998fbc4168371fe3273b>

Instances where general rule regarding semicolon was ignored and intention was given prominence in interpreting legislative provisions

- Bhatt Industries and Others Vs. The Divisional Forest Officer
<https://www.casemine.com/judgement/in/5608eaa7e4b0149711116af1>
- KT Raveendranath Trustee Vs. State of Kerala
<https://www.casemine.com/judgement/in/56ea9c88607dba38b6e4a9a3>