

आयकर अपीलिय अधीकरण, न्यायपीठ –“B” कोलकाता,
IN THE INCOME TAX APPELLATE TRIBUNAL “B” BENCH: KOLKATA
[Before Shri P. M .Jagtap, Vice-President (KZ) and Shri A. T. Varkey, JM]

I.T.A. No. 186/Kol/2021
Assessment Year: 2019-20

Harendra Nath Biswas (PAN: AEJPB 3060 J)	Vs.	DCIT, Circle-29, Kolkata
Appellant		Respondent

Date of Hearing (Virtual)	14.07.2021
Date of Pronouncement	16.07.2021
For the Appellant	Shri Bisweswar Ghosh, Advocate
For the Respondent	Smt. Ranu Biswas, Addl. CIT

ORDER

Per Shri A. T. Varkey, JM:

This is an appeal filed by the Assessee against the order of Ld. CIT(A)-National Faceless Appeal Centre (NFAC), Delhi dated 29.04.2021 for Assessment year 2019-20

2. The sole grounds of appeal raised by the assessee is against the Ld. CIT(A) in confirming the action of AO who disallowed/added back a sum of Rs. 1,10,62,263/- on account of delayed deposit of employees contribution to PF and ESI u/s 36(1)(va) read with Section 2(24)(x) of the Income Tax Act, 1961 (hereinafter referred to as the Act) despite the assessee contributing/depositing the same before the due date of filing of return of income u/s 139(1) of the Act.

3. Brief facts of the case is that the CPC while processing the return disallowed/added Rs. 1,10,62,263/- on the ground that employees contribution to employees provident fund (EPF) and ESI fund has been deposited beyond the due date applicable under the provision of ESI Act, 1948 and EPF Act by invoking the provision of Section 36(1)(va) of the Act. Aggrieved by this disallowance, the

assessee filed the appeal before the national Faceless Appeal Centre (NFAC), Delhi where the Ld. CIT(A) has taken note of the assessee's submission that no disallowance was warranted in respect of delayed deposit of employees contribution to EPF /ESI fund since the assessee has deposited the employees contribution in respect of both these Acts (EPF & ESI Act) before filing the return of income and relied on the various judicial decision including that of the jurisdictional Hon'ble High Court of Calcutta in the case of CIT vs. Vijayshree Ltd. in [2014] 43 taxman.com 396(Cal). However the Ld. CIT(A) did not accept the contentions of the assessee in this regard and by relying on the Explanation-5 below section 43B which was brought in by Finance Act, 2021 to deny the claim of assessee. Therefore, the assessee is before us by preferring this appeal.

4. We have heard both the parties and perused the record. First of all we do not countenance this action of the Ld. CIT(A) for the simple reason that the Explanation 5 was inserted by the Finance Act, 2021, with effect from 01.04.2021 and relevant assessment year before us is AY 2019-20. Therefore the law laid down by the Jurisdictional Hon'ble High Court will apply and since this Explanation-5 has not been made retrospectively. So we are inclined to follow the same and we reproduce the order of Hon'ble Calcutta High Court in the case of Vijayshree Ltd. supra wherein the Hon'ble Calcutta High Court has taken note of the Hon'ble Supreme Court decision in CIT vs. Alom Extrusion Ltd. reported in 390 ITR 306. The Hon'ble Calcutta High Court's decision in Vijayshree Ltd. supra is reproduced as under:

"This appeal is at the instance of the Revenue and is directed against an order dated 28th April, 2011 passed by the Income Tax Appellate Tribunal, "A" Bench, Kolkata in ITA No. 1091/Kol/2010 relating to assessment year 2006-07 by which the Tribunal dismissed the appeal preferred by the Revenue against the order of CIT(A).

The only issue involved in this appeal is as to whether the deletion of the addition by the AO on account of Employees 'Contribution to ESI and PF by invoking the provision of Section 36(1)(va) read with Section 2(24)(x) of the Act was correct or not.

It appears that the Tribunal below, in view of the decision of the Supreme Court in the case of Commissioner of Income Tax vs. Alom Extrusion Ltd., reported in 2009 Vol.390 ITR 306, held that the deletion was justified.

Being dissatisfied, the Revenue has come up with the present appeal.

After hearing Mr. Sinha, learned advocate, appearing on behalf of the appellant and after going through the decision of the Supreme Court in the case of Commissioner of Income Tax vs. Alom Extrusion Ltd., we find that the Supreme Court in the aforesaid case has held that the amendment to the second proviso to the Sec 43(B) of the Income Tax Act, as introduced by Finance Act, 2003, was curative in nature and is required to be applied retrospectively with effect from 1st April, 1988.

Such being the position, the deletion of the amount paid by the Employees' Contribution beyond due date was deductible by invoking the aforesaid amended provisions of Section 43(B) of the Act.

We, therefore, find that no substantial question of law is involved in this appeal and consequently, we dismiss this appeal.

Urgent xerox certified copy of this order, if applied for, be supplied to the parties subject to compliance with all requisite formalities."

In the light of the aforesaid discussion we do not accept the Ld. CIT(A)'s stand denying the claim of assessee since assessee delayed the employees contribution of EPF & ESI fund and as per the binding decision of the Hon'ble High Court in Vijayshree Ltd. (supra) u/s 36(1)(va) of the Act since assessee had deposited the employees contribution before filing of Return of Income. Therefore, the assessee succeeds and we allow the appeal of the assessee.

5. In the result, the appeal of the assessee is allowed.

Order is pronounced in the open court on 16th July, 2021

Sd/-
(P. M. Jagtap)
Vice-President

Sd/-
(A. T. Varkey)
Judicial Member

Dated: 16.07.2021

SB, Sr. PS

Copy of the order forwarded to:

1. Appellant- Harendra Nath Biswas, 6A, Rajani Bhattacharjee Lane, Kalighat, Kolkata-700026.
2. Respondent – DCIT, Circle-29, Kolkata
3. The CIT(A)- National Faceless Appeal Centre (NFAC), Delhi
4. CIT- , Kolkata
5. DR, Kolkata Benches, Kolkata (sent through e-mail)

True Copy

By Order

Senior Private Secretary/DDO
ITAT, Kolkata Benches, Kolkata
