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A search has taken place. In the statement 0.185recorded during search and later in the presence of his Chartered Accountant assessee admitted that gifts received were not genuine. In furtherance to such statement, assessee declared undisclosed income in the block return. It is after a lapse of 2 years in the assessment proceedings, assessee retracted from the statement. The matter reached the High Court of Delhi, when the Tribunal deleted the addition. On these facts in the context of evidentiary value of such statements with reference to "Books of Account" and "oral evidence", and the meaning of the words "Found" and "Evidenced" have come up for consideration. Further there being a conflict and Divergence in the judicial decisions of Delhi & Kerala High Courts, the matter was referred to a larger bench, by Delhi High Court in the decision of CIT v. M. S. Aggarwal [2018] 406 ITR 609 (Delhi) (HC)/[2018] 93 taxmann.com 247 (Delhi). Elaborate the findings of Delhi High Court in the said decision, since they are of relevance and impact in the context of "Admission" and "retraction", by an assessee.

CHAPTER 14

RULE OF EVIDENCE - SEARCH, SURVEY, ASSESSMENT

Q.186 What is the scope of evidence under the Income-tax Act? Does the scope of evidence differ from the Indian Evidence Act, 1872?

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- Q.233 Survey operations were carried under section 133A of the Income-tax Act, in the case of an assessee. The books of account revealed that there were bogus invoices in respect of purchases recorded. Payments have been made against such invoices to the respective entities. After completion of assessment, is there any provision for imposition of penalty, in such cases?
- Q.234 Penal provisions relating to concealment of income and or furnishing inaccurate particulars of income existing on statute from more than 5 decades stood settled to a considerable extent by judicial propositions of Courts including Apex Court; over a period of time. Such being the case, what was the object, behind introducing the provisions of section 270A and section 270AA, by Finance Act, 2016 with effect from 01.04.2017?
- Q.235 An assessment pursuant to survey has been completed with various additions. Such assessment consisted additions relating to underreporting of income and misreporting of income. Penalty proceedings have been initiated u/s 270A of the Act? How to deal such situation, keeping in view the provisions of section 270AA of the Act?

PAGE In the case of survey, the amended provi-230 0.236sions of reassessment enable the Assessing Officer, to reopen the assessment upto 3 years. In a case there were additions in all the 3 assessment years. Whether the provision restricts preferring appeal in one of the assessment years, if an application for grant of immunity has been preferred in the other two assessment years? There was a survey action u/s 133A of Q.237 231 Income-tax Act, 1961, just before the close of financial year post amendment of penal provisions. In the return of the income submitted for the relevant financial year, assessee included the amount disclosed during the survey proceedings. Assessing Officer accepted the returned income and completed the assessment under section 143(3). Penalty proceedings have been initiated under section 270A of Income-tax Act. 1961. Is the Assessing Officer Justified in the initiation of penalty proceedings u/s 270A? 0.238Survey action, revealed, that as per the books 232 of account, journal entries were passed for squaring up of the transactions between the sister concerns. The adjustment of entries neither reflected any receipt of loan nor payment of loan. Whether Assessing Officer can impose penalty invoking the provisions of section 271E of the Income-tax Act, 1961? In the survey action, examination of books 233 Q.239 of account revealed that purchase of raw materials recorded was bogus. Further investigation established that the expenditure shown as payments towards such purchases are bogus. Assessee accepted and admitted such payments as income in the return

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Q.304 During a marriage function, the Income tax Authority visited the function and collected the information and evidences from the various contractors in respect of the expenditure incurred for various ceremonies and events. They also recorded the statement of the contractors.

The assessee objected to the presence of Income-tax Authority at the function. Can Assessing Officer use such information collected during the function for the purpose of proceedings under the Income-tax Act? Is it proper on the part of Income-tax Authority to visit during the marriage function and also to take statements etc., of various persons?

Q.305 Can officer do the video recording of function?

0.306

The Income-tax Authority conducted the survey on 'XYZ Company'. I.T. Authority wanted to verify the books of account of the said company. However, books of account were not available at the business premises. On being asked about the books, the partner of the firm stated that the books of account etc., are lying with the tax consultant for preparation of return of income. The I.T. Authority wanted to survey the premises of the tax consultant.

Can Income-tax Authority conduct survey at premises, which is not a business premises of the assessee but that of the tax consultant? Assuming that the survey is conducted at the premises of the tax consultant, can I.T. Authority inspect the books of the tax consultant and/or his other clients?

Q.307 A survey under section 133A of Income-tax Act, has been conducted at the business and residential premise of assessee. Investments

and cash were found in survey Action, which were not disclosed in the return of income filed u/s 139 of Income-tax Act, 1961. Notice u/s 148 has been issued for reassessment proceedings, pursuant to the notice issued u/s 148. The proceedings were dropped on the ground of expiry of prescribed period of completion of assessment, in terms of section 153(2) of Income-tax Act, 1961 *i.e.*, limitation. Fresh proceedings were initiated once again by issuing notice u/s 148 of Income-tax Act. Such initiation of proceedings has been challenged, by filing writ petition, as to the validity of such notice? What can be the out come of the writ filed?

- **Q.308** If a Survey Action is to be converted into search action, what should be the sufficient and adequate reasons?
- **Q.309** Whether a notice as governed by the amended provision from 01.04.2021, can be issued, if no such notice could have been issued under the earlier provisions of section 148 in respect of assessment years before the amended provisions?
- **Q.310** In the survey action of a third person, pursuant to a search action against an assessee a statement has been recorded during survey proceedings. As per the statement recorded during survey, bogus nature of transactions of the searched assessee in the nature of accommodation entries have been revealed. A notice u/s 148 has been issued for reopening of the assessment of searched person based on the statement recorded during survey of third person. Whether such notice issued u/s 148 is valid?

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Income-tax Act, 1961, in the case of an

There was a survey action u/s 133A of the 291

Q.315

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assessee who is in construction business. In the statement recorded from the partner of assessee firm, unaccounted income has been admitted. The partner agreed that tax shall be paid subject to the registration of sale deeds. The return of income of the vear of survey has been filed following the project completion method, which in consequence resulted in admitting only a portion of the admitted unaccounted income. In the assessment proceedings, it was contended by the firm that it offered the resultant admitted income in later years as and when sale deeds were executed. Assessing Officer rejected the contention and added the entire unaccounted income admitted in the statement recorded from the partner in the assessment year of survey action. Is the action of the Assessing Officer, in adding the entire admitted income in the year of survey action is justified?

- **Q.316** The status of an assessee in proceedings under section 133A, from whom a statement has been recorded u/s 133A(3)(iii) cannot be equated to the status of an accused in a criminal Case Discuss.
- Q.317 Summons were issued to an assessed u/s 294 131, informing that survey action u/s 133A has to be carried. The summons so issued was vague and it did not mention the documents required. The summons though indicated survey operation; the procedure was converted into search action. Whether such action was proper?

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CHAPTER 20

SURVEY PROVISIONS U/S. 133A OF I.T. ACT, 1961 INTERLINK WITH OTHER PROVISIONS OF THE INCOME-TAX ACT, 1961- SPECIFIC ISSUES OF RELEVANCE

- **Q.318** During survey action, material was impounded. In the statements recorded, confessional statement has been made.
- Q.319 A survey was conducted. Statement was recorded on oath. On a request by the assessee for the copies of statements, income tax authority informed

 (a) that investigation not yet completed (b) statements recorded are yet to be used and (c) copies of statements as and when proposed to be used in evidence, shall be furnished. Can the investigation process be interdicted by exercising writ jurisdiction under Article 226 of the Constitution of India?
- A survey was conducted under section Q.320133A of I.T. Act. During the survey, it transpired that there was a difference between the sum of receipts on the booking of the flats, as shown in the balance sheet filed along with the return of income and trial balance that was obtained from the assessee during survey, in respect of an already completed assessment, where such issue has already been answered in earlier proceedings. Assessing Officer recorded the reasons, required u/s. 147 and issued notice to the assessee to file return and initiated reassessment. Whether it is correct to cover such matter, under Explanation 1 to section 147 of Act?
- **Q.321** During survey proceedings, at the business 302 premises of a manufacturing concern, stocksin-trade were computed based on estimate

using the input/output ratio. Report of the research laboratory mentioned that quantum of wastage is variable. There was no material to prove that assessee sold such production, outside the books of account. Relying on such estimate used for arriving at stocks, is it justified on the part of Assessing Officer:

- (i) To reject the books of account invoking section 145(3) of Income-tax Act, 1961
- (ii) To proceed with best judgment assessment
- Q.322 A survey was conducted under section 133A of Income-tax Act, 1961, at the business premises of an assessee. No statement was recorded from the assessee during survey. Assessee when confronted voluntarily submitted a letter to the investigation officer, surrendering unaccounted income, stating that the income would be in accordance with the documents computers and records that were impounded. Assessee retracted from the admission after two years without any satisfactory explanation. Equally there was also failure to include the income in the return of income filed.
- Q.323 During the course of survey, statement was recorded. There was nothing to show that any material supportive of the statement recorded was either found or was noticed in the records. Assessing Officer made total addition in the assessment of assessee without corroborating by any material either found during the course of survey or subsequently brought on record? The Income Tax Appellate Tribunal directed the division of income between the assessee and sister concern. Is the tribunal justified?

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- A survey was conducted on an assessee 0.324 carrying on as a dealer in pharmaceuticals. Assessee voluntarily admitted income. This is because proper books of account and records were not maintained and only purchases and sales details were maintained in the computer. Thereafter while submitting the return, commission expenditure was recorded and claimed to have been paid in cash, and not duly supported by any receipts or vouchers from the recipient. Legitimacy of expenses was questioned by the assessing officer particularly when no such expenditure was there in earlier years and addition was made denying the claim of expenditure. Is the assessing officer justified? Whether such addition sustainable?
- Q.325 A survey was conducted at the corporate office of the corporate entity, on the basis of credible information received from investigation wing. Issues transpired were (a) land development expenses were bogus recorded and (b) share capital introduced was bogus. Incriminating documents were found and impounded. The completed assessment u/s. 143(3) has been reopened duly recording reasons and with specific queries with respect to what is now sought to be reopened. The corporate entity challenged the notice u/s. 148 as not legal and approached the High Court by a Writ to quash the notice.
- Q.326 Pursuant to survey conducted under section 133A of Act, at the business premises of assessee firm, the statements on the particulars were recorded. A sum of Rs. 20 lakh was surrended during survey based on the material gathered during survey. Prior to the

commencement of assessment proceedings after a lapse of 3 months from the date of survey, retraction letter was filed before the assessing officer. Assessing Officer made addition duly framing the assessment u/s. 144 of I.T. Act. State the legality of the assessment of the assessment of the assessment of the assessing officer as to the addition to the extent of income surrendered during survey.

Q.327 Survey under section 133A of I.T. Act, 1961 was conducted at the business premises of an assessee firm. Persuant to a search u/s.132 of the Act on a different entity proceedings u/s. 153C have been initiated. For the discrepancy in stock and cash, a statement was made by the salesman of the assessee firm. The statement u/s. 133A was reaffirmed by the maker of the statement. In other words, salesman of the assessee firm, in terms of letter addressed to Assistant Director of Income Tax (Investigation) clarified his earlier statement u/s. 133A of the Act. The assessee firm has not produced any evidence to show that the contents of statement of salesman were incorrect. On these facts, will the assessing officer be justified in relying upon such statement recorded from the salesman of the assessee firm for framing the addition, during the

Q.328 A survey was conducted under section 133A, at the business premises of a corporate entity and its sister concern carrying on liaisoning job for an entity supplying pharmaceutical products to Government and other agencies and also at the branch premises of the supplying entity. Statements under section 131 were recorded from the liaisoning entity

assessment.

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and at the branch premises of the principal entity i.e., supplying entity. The statements do not bear the signature of the deponent and the officer. In both the statements the deponents confirmed that the payment of commission was not genuine and they were book entries only. Subsequently, other partner of the principal entity i.e., supplying entity retracted the statement mentioning that the survey team has put undue pressure, and misguided the partner of the supplying entity and compelled him to confess that commission was bogus. The undisputed facts on record proved that commission has been paid by account payee cheques and tax at source was deducted and remitted on the commission payments to the Government.

0.329

A survey u/s. 133A was conducted at the business premises of an assessee carrying on business in purchase and sale of jewellery. In the statement recorded during survey proceedings, on the basis of a letter written by the assessee on a plain paper to one Mr. 'A' about the cessation of a liability, that has been found, assessee surrendered the liability amount and also offered additional income on account of discrepancy in stocks and cash payments outside the books. Assessee in the return of income submitted had not declared the amount admitted in respect of the cessation of the liability, that was accepted when the statement was recorded u/s. 131. Assessing Officer while completing the assessment added the amount of cessation of liability invoking the provisions of section 69 on the premise that the correct state of affairs was not corroborated by any evidence. In the given facts whether

the addition by the assessing officer in respect of cessation of the liability was justified?

- 0.330A survey was conducted at the business premises of the assessee, running coaching centres at various places and thus catering to the needs of the students preparing for engineering and medical examinations. Cash receipts unaccounted were found and impounded. The managing director accepted that the amount involved was unaccounted receipts. While filing the return of income, the admitted amount pertaining to the unaccounted receipts that were found during survey was not admitted duly retracting from the surrender. Further loss was returned by explaining that the cash receipts found were inter branch transfers. The assessing officer added the amount as undisclosed investment u/s. 69A of I.T. Act, 1961. Is the assessing officer justified, as to the addition made?
- Q.331 In the course of survey a scribbling has been noticed on a piece of paper. It indicated variation between the stamp value of the flats sold and the actual sale consideration in respect of flats sold by the assessee firm, which was lesser than the stamp value of the flat. The buyer was examined. He denied any cash payment to the seller. Whether conclusive inference could be drawn by the assessing officer for the purposes of addition in the assessment proceedings merely because that the stamp value was more, and when there was no exchange of cash between the parties, was proved.
- **Q.332** A Society was served with a notice u/s. 133(6) of Income-tax Act, 1961, calling for information of persons who deposited more than Rs. 5 lakhs and interest income

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received by persons exceeding Rs.10,000/-in the respective financial years, as mentioned in the notice, the society did not furnish the details called for as per notice u/s. 133(6) of the Act. Penalty proceedings were initiated invoking provisions of section 272A(2)(c) read with section 274 and imposed the penalty as specified by the statute since no reasonable cause for the failure was shown by the society. Is the assessing officer, justified in imposing the penalty?

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Q.333 During survey, assessee surrendered a sum of Rs. 75 lakh, in terms of the statement recorded. Within a week, assessee retracted by submitting a letter to the Additional Commissioner. During the assessment proceedings assessee submitted that surrender was obtained under intimidation and coercion and was based on forged documents and survey team had planted certain slips. Assessee wanted to furnish evidence in the context of the slips, planted showing receivables, that they never existed. Additional evidence sought to be filed by the assessee was refused.

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Q.334 A survey under section 133A was conducted at the business premises of the assessee, a partnership firm carrying on business in manufacturing of handicraft items besides trading in such items in retail. During survey proceedings stocks were physically verified and were inventorised. Statement of one of the partner's was recorded on oath, wherein the partner admitted that undisclosed income earned was invested in stocks. Later when the return of income was filed, the

surrendered income was not reflected. In the course of assessment proceedings assessee firm pleaded as under:-

- (i) The admission made in the statement recorded under section 133A on oath during survey cannot be relied as evidence against the assessee firm.
- (ii) There were mistakes in the physical inventory, by overwriting, cutting, calculation mistakes and tampering of inventory sheets.
- (iii) The valuation of stocks was not correct, because the deduction granted towards deduction of discount and gross profit rate from the tag price, for arriving at the valuation was not correct.

It was on the above premise, assessee firm contended that (a) there was no excess investment in stocks (b) the statement recorded on oath u/s. 133A during survey cannot be relied as evidence during assessment and (c) stock was estimated by tampering inventory sheets, lesser deduction on discounts from the tag price resulted in high rate of gross profit. The assessing officer did not give weight to any of the contentions and made the addition of the amount admitted in the statement. Is the assessing officer justified in making the addition, on such premise of unexplained investment in stocks?

Q.335 A survey was conducted at the business premises of the partnership firm. Stocks-intrade were found to be in excess and the value in excess was agreed to be surrendered as unexplained investment. Assessee firm contended that such investment had flown from out of the additions that are not specific and that are intangible in the earlier

years and sought telescoping the addition into the unexplained investment found in stocks.

Q.336 There was a search action u/s. 132 of I.T. Act, 1961 on an individual assessee. The individual engaged the corporate entity, a builder and contractor for construction of his house. On the same data there was a survey in the premises of a corporate entity, the builder and interior decorator. The survey at the builder's premises, revealed a payment by the individual to the builder, which was not accounted for Assessing Officer, after having regard to the facts and circumstances of the case, contemplated the block assessment of the individual. He concluded that the payment made to the builder is liable to tax as undisclosed income during the block period and completed the assessment. On these facts, the question that has arisen was that "whether adverse material found during survey can be used while making the block assessment of an individual".

Q.337 Pursuant to the investigation carried out by the department, instances have come to its notice, that there were transactions in shares through broking firms, entry operators, syndicate members resulting in long-term capital gains and such gains have been claimed as exempt u/s. 10(38). Such transactions termed out to be arising out of fraudulent and illegal practices resulting in tax evasion. Based on such information, survey has taken place. Department had initiated further proceedings, as the situation warranted, with a view to tax such gain accounted as unexplained cash credits

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