

Supreme Court Landmark Ruling Favoring Deptt Revenue Holding DEPB etc is not Profit Derived from 80IA/80IB etc Undertakings

Key Conclusions of Supreme Court:

1. What attracts the incentives under Section 80-IA/80-IB is the generation of profits (operational profits). For example, an assessee company located in Mumbai may have a business of building housing projects or a ship in Nava Sheva. Ownership of a ship per se will not attract Section 80-IB(6). It is the profits arising from the business of a ship which attracts sub-section (6). In other words, deduction under sub-section (6) at the specified rate has linkage to the profits derived from the shipping operations. This is what we mean in drawing the distinction between profit linked tax incentives and investment linked tax incentives. It is for this reason that Parliament has confined deduction to profits derived from eligible businesses mentioned in sub-sections (3) to (11A)

2. It is evident that Section 80-IB provides for allowing of deduction in respect of profits and gains derived from the eligible business. The words "derived from" is narrower in connotation as compared to the words "attributable to". In other words, by using the expression "derived from", Parliament intended to cover sources not beyond the first degree.

3. In the present batch of cases, the controversy which arises for determination is: whether the DEPB credit/ Duty drawback receipt comes within the first degree sources? ...Therefore, at the outset, we stated that one needs to read Sections 80I, 80-IA and 80-IB as having a common Scheme We may reiterate that Sections 80I, 80-IA and 80-IB have a common scheme and if so read it is clear that the said sections provide for incentives in the form of deduction(s) which are linked to profits and not to investment. On analysis of Sections 80-IA and 80-IB it becomes clear that any industrial undertaking, which becomes eligible on satisfying sub-section(2), would be entitled to deduction under sub-section (1) only to the extent of profits derived from such industrial undertaking after specified date(s). Hence, apart from eligibility, sub-section(1) purports to restrict the quantum of deduction to a specified percentage of profits. This is the importance of the words "derived from industrial undertaking" as against "profits attributable to industrial undertaking".

4. Therefore, in our view, DEPB/Duty Drawback are incentives which flow from the Schemes framed by Central Government or from Section 75 of the Customs Act, 1962, hence, incentives profits are not profits derived from the eligible business under Section 80-IB. They belong to the category of ancillary profits of such Undertakings....Therefore, we are of the view that duty drawback, DEPB benefits, rebates etc. cannot be credited against the cost of manufacture of goods debited in the Profit & Loss account for purposes of Sections 80-IA/80-IB as such remissions (credits) would constitute independent source of income beyond the first degree nexus between profits and the industrial undertaking.