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II ORDER IN APPEAL I:

M/s. Madhu Silica Pvt. Co., Plot No. 53, 54 & 54H @ UC Chitra Bhawanagar (hereinafter referred to as 'Appellant') have filed appeals against Orders-in-Original No. 27 to 31 (hereinafter referred to as 'the impugned order') passed by the Assistant Commissioner Central Excise City Division, Bhubaneswar (hereinafter referred to as 'the lower adjudicating authority').

2. The brief facts of the case are that the appellant provided detailed information regarding availment and utilization of Central credit of Service Tax paid on outward transportation of goods on being asked by the Range Superintendent. The scrutiny of information revealed that the appellant during the period availed Central credit of service tax paid on outward transportation of the imported goods beyond the place of removal as under :

Sr. No.	Show Cause Notice No.	SCN date	Amount Rs.	Period Involved
1.	V/15-37/Demand-Madhu Silica/2009-10	21.03.2010	11,341/-	April-09 to Nov-09
2.	AR-1/Cen. Ex/SCN Madhu Silica/2010-11	07.09.2010	27,144/-	Dec-09 to Mar-10
3.	AR-1/Cen. Ex/SCN-Madhu Silica-APP-10 to Oct-10/2010-11	28.12.2010	81,309/-	Apr-10 to Oct-10
4.	AR-1/Dem/Madhu Silica-DU-II/2011-12	26.09.2011	51,747/-	Nov-10 to Mar-11
5.	AR-1/Dem/Madhu Silica-DU-III/2011-12	02.01.2012	97,933/-	Apr-11 to Sep-11

2.1 Show Cause Notices were issued to the appellant for recovery of wrongly availed Central credit along with interest under Rule 14 of the Central Excise Rules, 2004 (hereinafter referred to as 'the CCR') read with Section 11A of the Central Excise Act, 1944 (hereinafter referred to as 'the Act'). The demands of wrongly availed Central credit were confirmed along with interest and penalty also imposed under Rule 15(1) of the Rules read with Section 11A(2)(i) of the Act by the lower adjudicating authority vide impugned order.

3. Being aggrieved with the impugned order, the appellant preferred the present appeals on the grounds that judgment of the Hon'ble High Court of Kolkata in the case of CCE Vs. Vestibular India Ltd. reported as 2014(34) STR 26 (Kol) discussed by the lower adjudicating authority in the impugned orders is not applicable inasmuch the said judgment is dated 28.01.2014 whereas on CESTAT, Ahmedabad 03.01.2014 in the case of United Phosphorus Ltd. reported as 2014(46) STR 662 (Tri. Ahmed) at Para. 4 held as under :-

6.7. From the above, it is observed that "input service" means any service used by the manufacturer, whether directly or indirectly, in or in relation to manufacture of final products and clearance of final products upto the place of removal, with the inclusion of outward transportation upto the place of removal. It is, therefore, evident that as per main clause (i) the service should be used by the manufacturer which has direct or indirect relation with the manufacture of final products and clearance of final products upto the place of removal and also the inclusive clause requires the outward transportation upto the place of removal. The place of removal has been defined under Section 4 of the Act. As per Section 4(3)(c) of the Act, "place of removal" means a factory or any other place or premises of production or manufacture of excisable goods; a warehouse or any other place or premises wherein the excisable goods have been permitted to be stored without payment of duty or a depot, premises of a consignee agent or any other place or premises from where the excisable goods are to be sold.

7. I find that the issue is no more res integra and the Hon'ble Supreme Court vice judgment dated 01.09.2018 in the case of UltraTech Cement Ltd reported as 2018-TOL-12-50-CX has held as under :

54. As mentioned above, the assessee is involved in packing and stacking of cement. It is supposed to pay the service tax on the *offtaxable* services. At the same time, it is entitled to avail the benefit of Cessat Credit in respect of any input service dis paid. In the instant case, input service tax was also paid on the outward transportation of the goods from factory to the customer's premises of which the assessee stocked the goods. The question is as to whether it can be treated as 'input service'.

55. Input service is defined in Rule 2(9) of the Rules, 2004 which reads as under:

2(9) "input service" means any service,

- (i) used by a provider of taxable service for providing an output service; or
- (ii) used by the manufacturer, whether directly or indirectly, in or in relation to the manufacture of final products and clearance of final products upto the place of removal and includes services used in relation to setting up, modernization, renovation or repairs of a factory, premises of provider of output service or an office relating to such factory or premises, advertisement or sales promotion, market research, storage upto the place of removal, procurement of inputs, activities relating to business such as creating, auditing, financing, reconstruction and merging, rental, leasing and trading, computer networking, credit rating, share registry, and security, inward transportation of inputs or capital goods and outward transportation from the place of removal;

56. It is an admitted position that the instant case does not fall in sub-clause (i) and the issue is to be decided on the application of sub-clause (ii). Reading of the aforesaid provision makes it clear that those services are included which are used by the manufacturer, whether directly or indirectly, in or in relation to the manufacture of final products and clearance of final products upto the place of removal.

7. It may be relevant to point out here that the original definition of 'input service' contained in Rule 2(1) of the Rules, 2004 used the expression 'from the place of removal'. As per the said definition, service used by the manufacturer of clearance of final products 'from the place of removal to the warehouse or customer's place etc.' was eligible for Cenvat Credit. This status finally decided in Civil Appeal No. 11710 of 2016 (Chairman of Central Excise, Belgium v. M/s. Vaswaddatta Cements Ltd.) vide judgement dated January 17, 2018. However, vide amendment carried out in the aforesaid Rules in the year 2004, which became effective from March 1, 2004, the word 'from' is replaced by the word 'input'. Thus, it is only upto the place of removal that service is treated as input service. This amendment has changed the entire scenario. The benefit which was available even beyond the place of removal now gets terminated at the place of removal and duty to the extent credit or input tax paid gets closed at that place. This credit cannot travel therefrom. It becomes dead from the time coming of this amended Rule, which applies to the period in question. Also, the Goods Transport Agency service used for the purpose of outward transportation of goods, i.e. from the factory to customer's premises, is not covered within the ambit of Rule 2(1) of Rules, 2004. Whereas the word 'from' is the indication of starting point, the expression 'input' signifies the connecting point, putting an end to the transport journey. We, therefore, find that the Assessing Authority was right in interpreting Rule 2(1) in the following manner:

10. The input service has been defined to mean any service used by the manufacturer whether directly or indirectly and also includes, inter-alia, services used in relation to inward transportation of inputs or export goods and outward transportation upto the place of removal. The two clauses in the definition of 'input services' take care to be mutually input credit by stating that service used in relation to the clearance from the place of removal and service used for outward transportation upto the place of removal are to be treated as input service. The first clause does not mention transport service in particular. The second clause restricts transport service credit upto the place of removal. When these two clauses are read together, it becomes clear that transport services credit cannot go beyond transport upto the place of removal. The two clauses, thus, deal with general provision and other dealing with a specific item, are not to be read alternatively so as to bring about conflict to defeat the law scheme. The purpose of interpretation is to find harmony and reconciliation among the various provisions.

11. Credit availability is in regard to inputs. The credit covers duty paid on input materials as well as tax paid on services used to or in relation to the manufacture of the final product. The final products, manufactured by the assessee in their factory premises, are not the final products are fully manufactured and cleared from the factory premises. The question of utilization of service areas not used as such cannot be considered as used in relation to the manufacture of the final product. Therefore, extending the credit beyond the point of removal of the final product as payment of duty would be contrary to the scheme of Cenvat Credit Rules. The words clause in the definition states that the service in regard to which credit of tax is sought, should be used in or in relation to clearance of the final products from the place of removal. The definition of input services should be read as a whole and should not be fragmented in order to avail freight credit. Once the clearances have taken place, the question of granting input service stage credit does not arise. Transportation is an entirely different activity from manufacture and this position remains settled by the judgment of Uthayakumar Sawangi Court in the case of Bombay Tyre International 1983 (14) FTR 2882-110 (54) SC-CX-LB, Indian Dyeing Ltd. 1988 (16) FTR 773 SC = 2002-110, 88 SC-CX and Garuda Electric Motors 1997 (24) FTR 13 SC = 2001 (31) 36 SC-CX-LB. The cost incurred on transport of manufactured goods is not payable in the warehouse. Similarly, in the case of M/s. Ultratech Cements Ltd. v. CCE, Bangalore 2007 (6),

STR 206 (2011-2012) 1103. 429 CESTAT AHM, It was held that when the final products are cleared from the place of removal, there will be no scope of subsequent use of service to be treated as input. The above observations and views explain the scope of relevant provisions clearly, correctly and in accordance with the legal provisions.

8. The aforesaid order of the Appellate Authority was quashed by the Commissioner (Appeals) principally on the ground that the Bench in its Order dated August 23, 2007 had clarified the definition of 'place of removal' and the three conditions contained therein stand satisfied insofar as the case of the respondent is concerned, i.e. (i) removal of ownership of the goods (ii) the delivery of the goods at the purchaser's door step; (iii) either bearing the risk of loss or damage to the goods during transit to the purchaser and, (iv) freight charges to be integral part of the price of the goods. The approach of the Commissioner (Appeals) has been approved by the CESTAT as well as by the High Court. This was the main argument advanced by the learned counsel for the respondent supporting the judgment of the High Court.

9. We now find that the aforesaid approach of the Courts below is clearly sustainable for the following reasons:

10. At the first instance, it needs to be laid to rest that Bench in its Order dated August 23, 2007 was issued in clarification of the definition of 'input service' as existed on that date i.e. it related to amended definition. Relevant portion of the said Order was under

QUESTION: Up to what stage a manufacturer/consignor can take credit on the service tax paid on goods transport by road?

ANSWER: This issue has been examined in great detail by the CESTAT in the case of *M/s. Gujarat Arzoo Ja Cement Ltd. vs CCE, Ludhiana* (2007 26 STR 240 TR 21) - 2007 (10) 429 CESTAT AHM. In this case, CESTAT has made the following observations:-

'The road sale transport of manufactured goods is not an input for the manufacturer/consignor. The two clauses in the definition of 'input services' have to circumscribe input credit by stating that service used in relation to the clearance from the place of removal and service used for outward transportation from the place of removal are to be treated as input service. The first clause does not mention transport service in particular. The second clause restricts transport service credit upto the place of removal. When these two clauses are read together, it becomes clear that transport service credit cannot go beyond transport upto the place of removal. The two clauses, the one dealing with general provision and other dealing with a specific item, have to be read conjunctively so as to bring about result to defeat the tax scheme. The purpose of interpretation is to find harmony and reconciliation among the various provisions'. Similarly, in the case of *M/s. Ghatem Cement Ltd vs CCE Warrangal - 2007-TQ-429-CESTAT-AHM*, it was held that after the final products are cleared from the place of removal, there will be no scope of subsequent use of service to be treated as input. The above observations and views explain the scope of the relevant provisions clearly, correctly and in accordance with the legal provisions. In conclusion, a manufacturer / consignor can take credit on the service tax paid on outward transport of goods up to the place of removal and not beyond that.

8.2 In this connection, the phrase 'place of removal' needs determination taking into account the facts of an individual case and the applicable provisions. The phrase 'place of removal' has not been defined in CESTAT Credit Rules. In terms of sub-rule (1) of rule 7 of the said rules, if any words or expressions are used in the CESTAT Credit Rules, 2004 and are not defined therein but are defined in the Central Excise Act, 1944 or The Finance Act, 1992, they shall have the same meaning for the CESTAT Credit Rules as assigned to them in those Acts. The phrase 'place of removal' is defined under section 4 of the Central Excise Act, 1944. It states that:-

'place of removal' means

(i) a factory or any other place or premises of production or manufacture of the excisable goods ;

(ii) a warehouse or any other place or premises wherein the excisable goods have been permitted to be stored without payment of duty ;

(iii) a depot, premises of a consignee agent or any other place or premises from where the excisable goods are to be sold after their clearance from the factory;

from where such goods are removed. "

It is, therefore, clear that for a manufacturer /consignor, the eligibility to avail credit or the service tax paid on the transportation during removal of excisable goods would depend upon the place of removal as per the definition. In case of a factory gate sale, sale from a non-duty paid warehouse, or from a duty paid depot from where the excisable goods are sold, after their clearance from the factory, the determination of the 'place of removal' does not pose much problem. However, there may be situations where the manufacturer /consignor may claim that the sale has taken place in the warehouse being because in terms of the sale contract agreement (i) the ownership of goods and the property in the goods remained with the seller of the goods (ii) the delivery of the goods is made in compliance to the purchaser in his own name, (iii) the seller bore the risk of loss of or damage to the goods during transit to the destination, and (iv) the freight charges were an adjoined part of the price of goods. In such cases, the credit of the service tax paid on the transportation up to such place of sale would be admissible if it can be established by the claimant of such credit that the sale and the transfer of property in goods in terms of the definition as under section 2 of the Central Excise Act, 1944 as also in terms of the provisions under the Sale of Goods Act, 1930 occurred at the said place.

10. 10/10/11

11. As can be seen from the reading of the aforesaid portion of the circular, the issue was examined after keeping in mind judgments of CITAT in Gujarat andhra Cement Ltd. and M/s. Bhatnagar Cement Ltd. These judgments obviously dealt with amended Rule 20) of Rules, 2004. The three conditions which were mentioned regarding the place of removal as defined under Section 4 of the Act, there is no caveat upon this stage. However, the important aspect of the matter is that Central Credit is permissible in respect of 'input service' and the Circular relates to the amended regime. Therefore, it cannot be applied after amendment in the definition of 'input service' which brought about a legal change. Now, the definition of 'place of removal' and the conditions which are to be satisfied have to be to the extent of 'upto' the place of removal. It is this amendment which has made the entire difference. The issue is not dealt with in the said Board's circular, nor it could be.

12. Secondly, if such a circular is made applicable even in respect of post amendment cases, it would be violative of Rule 26) of Rules, 2004 and such a situation should be avoided.

13. The result of the aforesaid discussion would be to hold that Central Credit on goods transport agency service availed for transport of goods from place of removal to buyer's premises was not admissible in the respondent. Accordingly, the appeal is allowed, judgment of the High Court is set aside and the Order in Original dated August 22, 2011 of the Assessing Officer is restored.

(Emphasis supplied)

8. In view of above legal position held by the Hon'ble Supreme Court, Central Credit or GTA service availed by the appellant for outward transportation of goods from place of removal to buyer's premises is not admissible i.e., 01/04/2011. The period involved in this case is from April, 2009 to September,

2011 and hence, Cenvat credit of service tax paid on GTA for outward transportation of goods cannot be allowed.

9. I find that the reliance placed upon the judgment of Hon'ble High Court of Gujarat in the case of *M/s. Gujarat Guardian Ltd. supra* is not relevant and has to be considered to be judgment passed per incuriam in the light of judgment of the Hon'ble Apex Court in the case of *M/s. Ultra-tech Cement Ltd. supra*. The argument of the Appellant regarding applicability of Rule 111 of the Place of Provisions of Services Rules, 2002 has also no relevance to the present case as the Hon'ble Supreme Court has delivered clear verdict that Cenvat credit of Service Tax paid on outward transportation of the goods is admissible upto the place of removal and not beyond and in this case, the place of removal is the factory gate of the appellant.

9.1 Regarding penalty imposed under Rule 1(1) of the rules read with Section 11A(1) of the Act, I find that there is no case of suppression of fact with intent to evade payment of duty or fraudulently availing of Cenvat credit by the appellant as disputed Cenvat credit has been shown by them in their statutory returns filed with the Department. In my considered view, the issue involved in this case is of interpretation of the place of removal, therefore, do not see any reason to uphold penalty imposed upon the appellant and hence, penalty imposed is set aside. I rely on the judgment of the Hon'ble Supreme Court in the case of *CCE, Jaipur vs. Shree Rajasthan Syntax Ltd.* reported as 2015 (118) EIT 676 (SC) wherein in similar set of facts of the case penalty has been set aside holding as under :-

Shree

14. We have state here that the period involved is November 1996 to July 2001. Show cause notice in this regard, as noted above, was issued on 25.11.2001. The submission of the periodic goods has to be in terms of Section 4 of the Central Excise Act, 1944. The said section was amended in the year 2000 when, considerable amendments were made on 1.1.2000. The legal position relating to exemption under the Excise duty scheme which would prevail in place of the exemption provisions as well as amended provisions, came up for consideration before this Court in *Commissioner of Central Excise, Jaipur vs. Shree Syntax (infra)* (2011) 333 ELT 373 (SC). This case mark the view after analyzing the provision of Section 4 which provided prior to the amendment, that the assessee would be entitled to claim discounts towards duties levied from the assessable value and such tax benefits would be retained by the assessee unless 75% duty has accrued in their case. The Court also held that this position changed after the amendment in Section 4 which came from 1.1.2000 and in anyway the amount of 75% which was retained by the assessee, will be retained. As per the aforesaid decision, the assessors/return filers will not be liable to pay any extra duty on the sales for amount which were retained under the incentive scheme up to July June, 2001. However, this requirement of sales tax which was retained by the assessee

सिंह 1-7-2000) shall be includable in arrears in the assessment year 2001 and suit set shall be paid thereon.

5. In view of the question of extended period of limitation is concerned, the law goes through the order of the Commissioner and one of the reasons was the law stipulated that the extended period of limitation as per the proviso of section 11(1) of the Central Excise Act, 1944 would be applicable in the given circumstances.

6. However, we are of the opinion that in a case like the present one, where the legal remedy and jurisdiction of unassessable Section 4 used the position after the assessment in the said provision with effect from 1-7-2000 was in a final state it would not be appropriate to supply penalty.

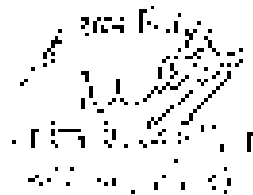
7. In the aforesaid circumstances the wrong systems are allowed to pass by revoking the Commissioner's Order in original passed on 09-3-2000 insofar as it relates to the period from 1-7-2000 to July 2001 and the penalty is rescinded. However, there shall be no order as to costs."

[Emphasis supplied]

13. In view of above, I reject the appeals on allowing Central Excise, but allow appeals for setting aside penalty imposed.

13A अधीनस्थे वृत्तात दशे मीसई अपील नस निपटाय उपरोक्त तरीके से किया जाया है।

13B The appeals filed by the appellant are disposed off in above terms.



कुमार सलोष
साबुक्त (अपीलस)

By R.P.A.S.

To,

M/s. Madhu Silca Pvt. Ltd.
DU III, Plot No. 52, 55 & 56/A + B,
192, 186 & 187,
GIDC, Ch. 2nd,
Bhavnagar.

सेक्ससे मयु सिंकेला वाइंडर लिमिटेड,
DU III, GIDC, Ch. 2nd,
भावनगर - ३६३ ००६-

Copy for information and necessary action to:-

- 1) The Chief Commissioner, GST & Central Excise, Ahmedabad Zone, Ahmedabad for his kind information.
- 2) The Commissioner, GST & Central Excise, Bhavnagar.
- 3) The Assistant Commissioner, GST & Central Excise, City Division, Bhavnagar.
Guard file.