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* **IN THE HIGH COURT OF DELHI AT NEW DELHI**

Date of decision: 11th November, 2025

\+ **W.P.(C) 17074/2025 & CM APPL. 70272/2025**

WOODEN CRAFT .....Petitioner

Through: Mr. Rakesh Kumar, Adv.

versus

COMMISSIONER OF DELHI GOODS AND SERVICE TAX AND OTHERS & ORS. .....Respondent

Through: Mr. Rakesh Kumar, Mr. Parveen Kumar Gambhir, Mr. Naveen & Mr. Rahul Chauhan, Advs.
Mr. Sumit K. Batra, Adv.
Mr. Shubham Tyagi, SSC, CBIC with Mr. Navruti Ojha, Adv.

CORAM:
JUSTICE PRATHIBA M. SINGH
JUSTICE SHAIL JAIN

Prathiba M. Singh, J. (Oral)

1. This hearing has been done through hybrid mode.

CM APPL. 70271/2025 (for exemption)

2. Allowed, subject to all just exceptions. Application is disposed of.

W.P.(C) 17074/2025 & CM APPL. 70272/2025

3. The present petition has been filed by the Petitioner- Wooden Craft, through its proprietor Mr. Ramesh Kumar, under Article 226 of the Constitution of India, *inter alia*,seeking the quashing of the impugned order dated 25th August, 2024 passed by the Sales Tax Officer Class II/Avato Ward 63, Zone-6, Delhi for the Financial Year 2019-20. The present petition furtherchallenges the impugned Show Cause Notice dated 20th May, 2024 (hereinafter '*impugned SCN*'). *Vide* the impugned order, a demand to the tune

of Rs. 72,99,391/- has been raised against the Petitioner

4. Additionally, the present petition also challenges the following Notifications:

- ***Notification No. 9/2023- Central Tax*** dated 31st March, 2023;
- ***Notification No. 56/2023- Central Tax*** dated 28th December, 2023; and
- ***Notification No. 56/2023- State Tax*** dated 11th July, 2024 *(hereinafter, 'the impugned notifications').*

5. The challenge in the present petition is similar to a batch of petitions wherein *inter alia*, the impugned notifications were challenged. ***W.P.(C) No. 16499/2023*** titled ***DJST Traders Private Limited v. Union of India &Ors.***was the lead matter in the said batch of petitions. On 22nd April, 2025, the parties were heard at length *qua* the validity of the impugned notifications and accordingly, the following order was passed:

> *"4. Submissions have been heard in part. The broad challenge to both sets of Notifications is on the ground that the proper procedure was not followed prior to the issuance of the same. In terms of Section 168A, prior recommendation of the GST Council is essential for extending deadlines. In respect of Notification no.9, the recommendation was made prior to the issuance of the same. However, insofar as Notification No. 56/2023 (Central Tax) the challenge is that the extension was granted contrary to the mandate under Section 168A of the Central Goods and Services Tax Act, 2017 and ratification was given subsequent to the issuance of the notification. The notification incorrectly states that it was on the recommendation of the GST Council. Insofar as the Notification No. 56 of 2023 (State Tax) is concerned, the challenge is to the effect that the same was issued on 11th July, 2024 after the expiry of the limitation in terms*

of the Notification No.13 of 2022 (State Tax).

5. In fact, Notification Nos. 09 and 56 of 2023 (Central Tax) were challenged before various other High Courts. The Allahabad Court has upheld the validity of Notification no.9. The Patna High Court has upheld the validity of Notification no.56. Whereas, the Guwahati High Court has quashed Notification No. 56 of 2023 (Central Tax).

6. The Telangana High Court while not delving into the vires of the assailed notifications, made certain observations in respect of invalidity of Notification No. 56 of 2023 (Central Tax). This judgment of the Telangana High Court is now presently under consideration by the Supreme Court in S.L.P No 4240/2025 titled M/s HCC-SEW-MEIL-AAG JV v. Assistant Commissioner of State Tax &Ors. The Supreme Court vide order dated 21st February, 2025, passed the following order in the said case:

> *"1. The subject matter of challenge before the High Court was to the legality, validity and propriety of the Notification No.13/2022 dated 5-7-2022 & Notification Nos.9 and 56 of 2023 dated 31-3-2023 & 8-12-2023 respectively.*
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> *2. However, in the present petition, we are concerned with Notification Nos.9 & 56/2023 dated 31-3-2023 respectively.*
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> *3. These Notifications have been issued in the purported exercise of power under Section 168 (A) of the Central Goods and Services Tax Act. 2017 (for short, the "GST Act").*
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> *4. We have heard Dr. S. Muralidhar, the learned Senior counsel appearing for the petitioner.*
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> *5. The issue that falls for the consideration of this Court is whether the time limit for adjudication of show cause notice and passing order under Section 73 of the GST Act and SGST Act (Telangana GST Act) for financial year 2019-2020 could have been extended by issuing the Notifications in question*

under Section 168-A of the GST Act.

6. There are many other issues also arising for consideration in this matter.

7. Dr.Muralidhar pointed out that there is a cleavage of opinion amongst different High Courts of the country. 8. Issue notice on the SLP as also on the prayer for interim relief, returnable on 7-3-2025."

7. In the meantime, the challenges were also pending before the Bombay High Court and the Punjab and Haryana High Court. In the Punjab and Haryana High Court vide order dated 12th March, 2025, all the writ petitions have been disposed of in terms of the interim orders passed therein. The operative portion of the said order reads as under:

"65. Almost all the issues, which have been raised before us in these present connected cases and have been noticed hereinabove, are the subject matter of the Hon'ble Supreme Court in the aforesaid SLP.

66. Keeping in view the judicial discipline, we refrain from giving our opinion with respect to the vires of Section 168-A of the Act as well as the notifications issued in purported exercise of power under Section 168-A of the Act which have been challenged, and we direct that all these present connected cases shall be governed by the judgment passed by the Hon'ble Supreme Court and the decision thereto shall be binding on these cases too.

67. Since the matter is pending before the Hon'ble Supreme Court, the interim order passed in the present cases, would continue to operate and would be governed by the final adjudication by the Supreme Court on the issues in the aforesaid SLP-4240-2025.

68. In view of the aforesaid, all these connected cases are disposed of accordingly along with

pending applications, if any."

8. The Court has heard ld. Counsels for the parties for a substantial period today. A perusal of the above would show that various High Courts have taken a view and the matter is squarely now pending before the Supreme Court.

9. Apart from the challenge to the notifications itself, various counsels submit that even if the same are upheld, they would still pray for relief for the parties as the Petitioners have been unable to file replies due to several reasons and were unable to avail of personal hearings in most cases. In effect therefore in most cases the adjudication orders are passed ex-parte. Huge demands have been raised and even penalties have been imposed.

10. Broadly, there are six categories of cases which are pending before this Court. While the issue concerning the validity of the impugned notifications is presently under consideration before the Supreme Court, this Court is of the prima facie view that, depending upon the categories of petitions, orders can be passed affording an opportunity to the Petitioners to place their stand before the adjudicating authority. In some cases, proceedings including appellate remedies may be permitted to be pursued by the Petitioners, without delving into the question of the validity of the said notifications at this stage.

11. The said categories and proposed reliefs have been broadly put to the parties today. They may seek instructions and revert by tomorrow i.e., 23rd April, 2025."

6. As observed by this Court in the order dated 22nd April, 2025 as well, since the challenge to the above mentioned notifications is presently under consideration before the Supreme Court in ***S.L.P No 4240/2025*** titled ***M/s HCC-SEW-MEIL-AAG JV v. Assistant Commissioner of State Tax &Ors.,***

the challenge made by the Petitioner to the impugned notifications in the present proceedings shall also be subject to the outcome of the decision of the Supreme Court.

7. However, in cases where the challenge is to the parallel State Notifications, the same have been retained for consideration by this Court. The lead matter in the said batch is ***W.P.(C) 9214/2024*** titled ***Engineers India Limited v. Union of India &Ors.***

8. On facts, however, the submission of ld. Counsel for the Petitioner is that the SCN dated 20th May, 2024 from which the impugned order arises, was uploaded on the *'Additional Notices Tab'*, therefore, the same did not come to the knowledge of the Petitioner. Thereafter, two reminder notices dated 16th July, 2024 and 30th July, 2024 were also issued to the Petitioner, however the same was uploaded on the *'Additional Notices Tab'*. The submission on behalf of the Petitioner is that the impugned order dated 25th August, 2024 was passed without providing the Petitioner a personal hearing and in the absence of a reply on behalf of the Petitioner.

9. The only reason given by the Petitioner is that the impugned order and SCN came to the knowledge of the Petitioner when the Petitioner received a telephonic call from the GST Department. The relevant portion of the petition reads as under:

> *"3(e) The Demand has come in to the knowledge of the Petitioner, when a call received from department in regarding payment of Demand. Thereafter the petitioner has logged in the portal and found the impugned Show cause notice and order."*

10. However, on the other hand, ld. Counsel for the Respondent submits that the SCN as also two reminders were issued after 16th January, 2024*i.e,*

after the change in the GST portal

11. The Court has heard the parties. In fact, this Court in ***W.P.(C) 4779/2025*** titled ***'Sugandha Enterprises through its Proprietor Devender Kumar Singh V. Commissioner Delhi Goods And Service Tax and Others'***, under similar circumstances where no reply was filed to the SCN had remanded the matter in the following terms:

> *"6. On facts, however, the submission of the Petitioner in the present petition is that the Petitioner was not afforded with an opportunity to file a reply to the SCN dated 23rd May, 2024 and the impugned order was passed without affording the Petitioner with an opportunity to be heard. Hence, the impugned order is a non-speaking order and is liable to be set aside on the said ground.*
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> *7. Heard. The Court has considered the submissions made. The Court has perused the records. In this petition, as mentioned above, no reply to the SCN has been filed by the Petitioner. Relevant portion of the impugned order reads as under:*
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> > *And whereas, the taxpayer had neither deposited the proposed demand nor filed their objections/ reply in DRC-06 within the stipulated period of time, therefore, following the Principle of Natural Justice, the taxpayer was granted opportunities of personal hearing for submission of their reply/objections against the proposed demand before passing any adverse order.*
> >
> > *And whereas, neither the taxpayer filed objections/reply in DRC 06 nor appeared for personal hearing despite giving sufficient opportunities, therefore, the undersigned is left with no other option but to upheld the*

> *demand raised in SCN/DRC 01. DRC 07 is issued accordingly.*
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> ***8. This Court is of the opinion that since the Petitioner has not been afforded an opportunity to be heard and the said SCN and the consequent impugned order have been passed without hearing the Petitioner, an opportunity ought to be afforded to the Petitioner to contest the matter on merits.***
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> *9. Accordingly, the impugned order is set aside. The Petitioner is granted 30 days' time to file the reply to SCN. Upon filing of the reply, the Adjudicating Authority shall issue to the Petitioner, a notice for personal hearing. The personal hearing notice shall be communicated to the Petitioner on the following mobile no. and e-mail address:...."*

12. Under such circumstances, considering the fact that the Petitioner did not get a proper opportunity to be heard and no reply to the SCN have been filed by the Petitioner, the matter deserves to be remanded back to the concerned Adjudicating Authority. Insofar as the submission that the notices were uploaded on the Additional Tab is concerned, the same is not tenable as they are dated post 16th January 2024.

13. Accordingly, the impugned order is set aside, subject to payment of Rs. 20,000/- as costs to the Delhi High Court Bar Association. The bank details of Delhi High Court Bar Association are as under:

- ***Name: Delhi High Court Bar Association***
- ***Account No.: 15530100000478***
- ***IFSC Code: UCBA0001553***
- ***Bank & Branch: UCO Bank, Delhi High Court***

14. The Petitioner is granted time till 15th December, 2025, to file the

reply to SCN. Upon filing of the reply, the Adjudicating Authority shall issue to the Petitioner, a notice for personal hearing. The personal hearing notice shall be communicated to the Petitioner on the following mobile no. and e-mail address:

- ***Mobile No.: 9811595510***
- ***E-mail Address :adv.aggarwal.rakesh@gmail.com***

15. The reply filed by the Petitioner to the SCN along with the submissions made in the personal hearing proceedings shall be duly considered by the Adjudicating Authority and fresh order with respect to the SCN shall be passed accordingly.

16. However, it is made clear that the issue in respect of the validity of the impugned notifications is left open. Any order passed by the Adjudicating Authority shall be subject to the outcome of the decision of the Supreme Court in ***S.L.P No 4240/2025*** *titled* ***M/s HCC-SEW-MEIL-AAG JV v. Assistant Commissioner of State Tax &Ors.*** and this Court in ***W.P.(C) 9214/2024*** titled '***Engineers India Limited v. Union of India &Ors'.***

17. The petition is disposed of in these terms. All pending applications, if any, are also disposed of.

PRATHIBA M. SINGH, J.

SHAIL JAIN, J.

NOVEMBER 11, 2025/*pd/ck*