

Greetings from TEAM SA !

It is said that a genius is someone who takes something complicated and makes it simple. An idiot is someone who takes something simple and makes it complicated. So while discussing about tax issues I should try hard not to be an idiot.

Right from the moment I ventured in to the field of taxation, one thought that has vexed my mind was the philosophy of taxation. All the books that I read for my profession had always started with the perfunctory ritual of Article 265 of Indian Constitution and concluded with a penalty or a saving clause . A mind vexed with 'why' can never be satisfied with 'how'. So until I came to know about the existence of an ideal system of taxation envisaged by the great philosopher and statesman Kautilya, through some outstanding judgments, my craving left unanswered.

While gulping the daily dose of amendments , notifications ,circulars and perfunctory orders it is necessary to pause for a moment and think of what Kautilya beautifully summarised as limited taxing power, progressive taxation, convenience of payment, ease of collection, inexpensive administration, fairness, neutrality etc.

Also while galloping to a new system of taxation ,i.e, Goods and Service tax it is need of the hour to know there are lots to grab from the most extensive and remarkable treatise of Arthashastra. The basic tenets of Arthashastra on preservation of economic incentives, preservation of balance between production and consumption , highly structured and centralised tax system, progressive increase in tax rates , fairness and equity can certainly be guiding principles for an effective GST era.

Like Mimamsa principles has contributed to the law of interpretations, I am sure that Arthashastra would contribute to GST and I sincerely pray and hope that the best brains working in drafting the GST law for the future of this country, take adequate cue from the treasure and thus frame laws with vision.