



From the President

Dear Members

As this edition of our journal reaches you, many of you may be vacationing or preparing for one, offering a perfect opportunity to step away from routine to reevaluate your working styles, priorities, and goals. This time not only strengthens family bonds but also fosters personal growth and development, particularly among children. Meanwhile, Phase 5 of the General elections wrapped up on May 20th, covering eight states and 49 constituencies. I am sure that before embarking on your well-deserved breaks, you've all participated in this critical democratic process. Voting is not just our right but a profound responsibility that maintains the integrity of our governance and ensures our collective values are represented. Each vote lays another block in the foundation of our nation's future, just as each moment spent with family reinforces the ties that bind us.

As the Modi 3.0 agenda progresses, a major focus is the anticipated overhaul of the Direct Taxes Code (DTC), drawing from the 2019 task force's recommendations. The revised DTC aims to simplify existing tax laws by rationalizing capital gains tax rates and periods, reducing TDS to three simplified slabs, and updating personal income tax structures to provide relief for incomes up to ₹ 55 lakh. These changes are expected to lessen litigation and clarify ambiguities, thereby easing the compliance burden for taxpayers and enhancing the predictability of the tax environment. This reform aligns India's economic policies with global standards, potentially boosting foreign investment and domestic growth. The Chamber of Tax Consultants is committed to keeping members informed and prepared for these updates, ensuring effective adaptation to the new tax regime.

It is heartening to observe that GST collections this fiscal year 2023-24 have significantly demonstrated the economic progress we are making. Nearly a decade after its implementation, GST continues to evolve, reflecting our economy's resilience and the effectiveness of recent reforms. The increase in revenue from both producing and consuming states highlights GST's role in unifying our market and reducing economic disparities. These gains reduce resistance to further reforms, such as rate rationalization and coverage

expansion, which could substantially boost indirect tax collections. Efforts to streamline tax administration and reduce tax-related litigation have notably enhanced GST's efficiency. Looking ahead, proposals like including jet fuel under GST and the potential for a carbon tax show our commitment to refining the system further. Additionally, expanding GST to municipal levels could significantly support local development. As we refine GST, our focus remains on fostering a fair and growth-oriented tax system. Let's continue to support these reforms, ensuring they lead to beneficial outcomes for all.

As we navigate the complexities of modern business, the adoption of Artificial Intelligence (AI) has become a cornerstone for innovation and efficiency. Notably, seasoned leaders like Francisco Veloso, Dean of Insead, emphasize the surge in demand from top executives seeking to integrate AI into their business strategies. These professionals are not just learning to use AI tools but are applying them to enhance products, streamline operations, and drive significant business transformations. Sunil Dsouza of Tata Consumer highlights how his digital team uses AI to explore new business possibilities, turning innovative ideas into practical solutions. Similarly, Sunil Kataria of Raymond Lifestyle is working with AI experts and participating in workshops with Microsoft and AWS to build a digital-first leadership strategy, even pursuing advanced degrees like a PhD in AI through BITS Pilani to deepen his expertise. The imperative to integrate AI transcends the allure of technological upgradation—it is about redefining how businesses interact with customers and streamline their operations. It is becoming increasingly clear that AI literacy is not just an asset but a necessity, as articulated by Shailesh Haribhakti, who emphasizes the importance of automation and AI-driven analytics in boardroom discussions across various companies. This proactive approach in learning and applying AI is essential for all business leaders, including our members at the Chamber of Tax Consultants. By embracing AI, we can ensure our businesses are not only prepared for future challenges but are also leading the charge in utilizing new technologies to optimize customer interactions and operational efficiency. Let us be inspired by these leaders and push the boundaries of what we can achieve with AI, making sure that our practices are not just current but cutting edge. This streamlined version succinctly highlights how top professionals are utilizing AI to their strategic advantage, sets a benchmark for our members, and encourages an active and forward-thinking approach to AI adoption.

As we witness the transformation within the professional services sector, it's essential to consider the evolving strategies of the Big Four—Deloitte, PwC, EY, and KPMG—particularly their recent expansions in advisory services. Over the past year, these firms have significantly broadened their partner networks, with Deloitte alone integrating over 50 lateral partners, many from competitors, to bolster their expertise in areas like cybersecurity, financial services, and technology. This trend of attracting top-tier talent is indicative of a shift towards enhancing service capabilities and setting new industry standards, influenced

by technological advances and sector-specific demands. The strategic moves of these giants not only aim to expand their businesses but also to redefine operational excellence and innovation within the field. This proactive approach provides a valuable model for our own practices. It prompts us to ask: How can we refine our service offerings to better meet the dynamic needs of the market? What innovative growth strategies might we adopt to maintain our competitive edge? These questions are crucial as we strategize for the future. Let us take cue from the industry leaders, utilizing their insights to fortify our practices. I look forward to engaging in this discussion and developing forward-thinking strategies that not only keep pace with but also lead industry transformations.

In recent times, a remarkable trend has emerged that underscores the power of youth advocacy and the importance of listening to our younger generations. Globally, and within our own nation, children and teenagers are increasingly using legal avenues to effect change. This wave of youthful activism not only brings hope but also highlights the need for us to pay attention. For instance, a student in Karnataka successfully campaigned for a second school uniform through the courts, exemplifying determination and the impact of giving a voice to the young. In Kerala, students played a critical role in the repair of a crucial bridge, showcasing their ability to influence community improvements. These examples are part of a broader movement where the youth are stepping up to advocate for their rights and for the betterment of their communities. The involvement of youth in climate activism has gained significant momentum, as evidenced by a notable legal victory in Montana, USA, in 2023. Similarly, in India, young activists are tirelessly working to protect our natural resources, signalling a shift towards acknowledging and respecting the voices of our youth in matters that affect their futures. Yet, this inspiring shift is set against a backdrop of sobering realities where many children still lack basic rights, such as education and freedom from labor. These movements are not just about achieving legal victories; they are a call to all of us to truly listen to what our youth have to say. As professionals and leaders within our communities, we must reflect on our interactions with young individuals. Are we recognizing them as capable and thoughtful contributors to our society? Their recent achievements in the legal arena remind us of the profound changes possible when we empower and respect the voices of the young. This narrative of children as agents of change is both uplifting and a call to action. It challenges us to reevaluate our attitudes and embrace a more inclusive approach to addressing societal issues. Let us take inspiration from these young champions and commit to not only listening but actively supporting the voices that will shape our future.

The Chamber has successfully orchestrated a series of impactful and engaging events, each designed to address pivotal aspects of taxation that resonate with professional growth and knowledge enhancement. Our recent Virtual Half-Day Seminar on "Stay & Recovery

Proceedings Representation before First Appellate Authorities," expertly moderated by CA Ketan Vajani and Adv. Rahul Hakani, illuminated complex legal and procedural nuances for our members. This seminar, along with a panel discussion on the practical issues faced by professionals under FEMA with notable panelists CA Paresh P. Shah, CA Naresh Ajwani, and Mr. Suhas Bendre from HSBC, underscored our commitment to providing comprehensive learning experiences. Additionally, a session on "Recent Protocol Between India & Mauritius" by Adv. Sanjay Sanghvi and a panel on "Recent Important Case Laws on Income Tax" chaired by Hon'ble ITAT JM Shri Sudhanshu Srivastava, with panelists CA Soumitra Kumar Chakraborty and Adv. Ruchesh Sinha, further enriched our members' insights into international and domestic tax strategies. These initiatives were complemented by the International Taxation Committee's hybrid FEMA Study Circle Meeting on practical issues under Import and Export Regulations, and the Study Circle and Study Group Committee's virtual discussion on "Recent Judgements under the Income Tax Act, 1961," which provided in-depth analyses and fostered a proactive learning environment. The Indirect Taxes Committee also contributed significantly with their session addressing taxability concerns within SEZs, FTWZs, and GIFT City, which was expertly led by CA Amit Bothra on May 7th. These sessions not only provided clarity on complex topics but also offered our members an invaluable platform to enhance their expertise and engage with fellow professionals on emerging issues in the tax landscape. Our commitment to fostering a dynamic and interactive learning environment continues to be a cornerstone of the Chamber's mission to support the professional community.

The Study Circle and Study Group Committee is pleased to announce an upcoming virtual Study Circle Meeting on the "Analysis of Section 68 to 69C & 115 BBE." This insightful session, led by esteemed speaker Mr. T. Banusekar, Advocate from Chennai, is scheduled for Friday, May 17, 2024. The Chamber encourages all members to take advantage of this opportunity to deepen their understanding of these critical tax provisions. The IT Connect committee is excited to announce a forthcoming webinar titled "Boost Your Excel Skills: Power Query and AI Tools Simplified," which will focus on enhancing the Excel capabilities of CAs and tax professionals through practical applications of Power Query and AI tools.

I'm excited to announce our upcoming International Taxation Course for Beginners, organized by the International Taxation Committee and the Student Committee. Designed for beginners, this virtual series from May 27 to June 28, 2024, will cover essential aspects of international taxation under the Income Tax Act 1961 and the Double Tax Avoidance Agreements. It's a fantastic opportunity for professionals, their juniors, and students to deepen their understanding of cross-border tax issues through sessions led by eminent speakers. The seminars will address topics ranging from the basics of international taxation to specific issues like Transfer Pricing and taxation of foreign shipping companies. Participation fees are discounted for early registrations until May 15, 2024, and vary

for members, non-members, and students. Please visit our website for detailed session information, fee structure, and to register. Enroll early to take advantage of the early bird rates and secure your spot in this enriching series.

We are thrilled to announce that the response to our 17th Residential Conference on International Taxation at The Leela, Gandhinagar, in June 2024 has been overwhelmingly positive. The enrolment has not only reached but surpassed the double-century mark, and the numbers continue to grow. This enthusiastic participation underscores the value our community places on continuous learning and professional development in the dynamic field of international taxation. We look forward to a productive and enlightening conference, enriched by the presence of each and every participant.

The latest edition of our Journal focuses on the critical topic of "Salary Taxation - Overview and Contemporary Issues." I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to all the contributors of this edition. Their expert insights and thorough analysis have greatly enriched the content, making this issue an essential resource for everyone interested in the intricacies of salary taxation.

With best wishes,

HARESH KENIA

President