

Finance Act, 1987

Section 59 - Insertion of New Sections 245ba to 245bd

After section 245B of the Income-tax Act, the following sections shall be inserted with effect from the 1st day of June, 1987, namely :-

"245BA. Jurisdiction and powers of Settlement Commission. - (1) Subject to the other provisions of this Chapter, the jurisdiction, powers and authority of the Settlement Commission may be exercised by Benches thereof.

(2) Subject to the other provisions of this section, a Bench shall be presided over by the Chairman or a Vice-Chairman and shall consist of two other Members.

(3) The Bench for which the Chairman is the Presiding Officer shall be the principal Bench and the other Benches shall be known as additional Benches.

(4) Notwithstanding anything contained in sub-sections (1) and (2), the Chairman may authorise the Vice-Chairman or other Member appointed to one Bench to discharge also the functions of the Vice-Chairman or, as the case may be, other Member of another Bench.

(5) Notwithstanding anything contained in the foregoing provisions of this section, and subject to any rules that may be made in this behalf, when one of the persons constituting a Bench (whether such person be the Presiding Officer or other Member of the Bench) is unable to discharge his functions owing to absence, illness or any other cause or in the event of the occurrence of any vacancy either in the office of the Presiding Officer or in the office of one or the other Members of the Bench, the remaining two persons may function as the Bench and if the Presiding Officer of the Bench is not one of the remaining two persons, the senior among the remaining persons shall act as the Presiding Officer of the Bench :

Provided that if any stage of the hearing of any such case or matter, it appears to the Presiding Officer that the case or matter is of such a nature that it ought to be heard of by a Bench consisting of three Members, the case or matter may be referred by the Presiding Officer of such Bench to the Chairman for transfer to such Bench as the Chairman may deem fit.

(6) Subject to the other provisions of this Chapter, the places at which the principal Bench and the additional Benches shall ordinarily sit shall be such as the Central Government may, by notification in the Official Gazette, specify.

245BB. Vice-Chairman to act as Chairman or to discharge his functions in certain circumstances. -

(1) In the event of the occurrence of any vacancy in the office of the Chairman by reason of his death, resignation or otherwise, the Vice-Chairman or, as the case may be, such one of the Vice-Chairman as the Central Government may, by notification in the Official Gazette, authorise in this behalf, shall act as the Chairman until the date on which a new Chairman, appointed in accordance with the provisions of this Chapter to fill such vacancy, enters upon his office.

(2) When the Chairman is unable to discharge his functions owing to absence, illness or any other cause, the Vice-Chairman or, as the case may be such one of the Vice-Chairman as the Central Government may, by notification in the Official Gazette, authorise in this behalf, shall discharge the functions of the Chairman until the date on which the Chairman resumes his duties.

245BC. Power of Chairman to transfer cases from one Bench to another. -

On the application of the assessee or the Commissioner and after notice to them, and after hearing such of them as he may desire to be heard, or on his own motion without such notice, the Chairman may transfer any case pending before one Bench, for disposal, to another Bench.

245BD. Decision to be by majority. -If the Members of a Bench differ in opinion on any point, the point shall be decided according to the opinion of the majority, if there is a majority, but if the Members are equally divided, they shall state the point or points on which they differ, and make a reference to the Chairman who shall either hear the point or points himself or refer the case for hearing on such point or points by one or more of the other Members of the Settlement Commission and such point or points shall be decided according to the opinion of the majority of the Members of the Settlement Commission who have heard the case, including those who first heard it."
