

CHAPTER

01

GST IN INDIA

AN INTRODUCTION



Section A – ICAI Study Material Questions

Question 1

List some of the benefits that GST may accrue to the economy.

Answer : GST may accrue following benefits to the economy:

- (a) **Creation of unified national market:** GST aims to make India a common market with common tax rates and procedures and remove the economic barriers, thereby paving the way for an integrated economy at the national level.
- (b) **Boost to 'Make in India' initiative:** GST may give a major boost to the 'Make in India' initiative of the Government of India by making goods and services produced in India competitive in the national as well as international market. This would make India a manufacturing hub.
- (c) **Boost to investments, exports and employment:** Under the GST regime, the principle of exporting only the cost of goods or services and not taxes is being followed. This may boost Indian exports thereby improving the balance of payments position. Exporters are being facilitated by grant of provisional refund of 90% of their claims within 7 days of issue of acknowledgement of their application, thereby resulting in the easing of position with respect to cash flows.

Further, the subsuming of major Central and State taxes in GST, complete and comprehensive set-off of input tax on goods and services and phasing out of Central Sales Tax (CST) may reduce the cost of locally manufactured goods and services. Resultantly, the competitiveness of Indian goods and services in the international market may increase to give boost to investments and Indian exports.

With a boost in exports and manufacturing activity, more employment would be generated and GDP would increase.

Question 2

Explain with the help of examples how a particular transaction of goods and services is taxed simultaneously under Central GST (CGST) and State GST (SGST)?

Answer : The Central GST and the State GST is levied simultaneously on every intra-State supply of goods or services or both made by registered persons except the exempted goods and services as well as

goods and services which are outside the purview of GST. Further, both are levied on the same price or transaction value. The same can be better understood with the help of following examples:

Example I : Suppose that the rate of CGST is 10% and that of SGST is 10%. When a wholesale dealer of steel in Uttar Pradesh supplies steel bars and rods to a construction company which is also located within the same State for, say Rs. 100, the dealer would charge CGST of Rs. 10 and SGST of Rs. 10 in addition to the basic price of the goods. The CGST component will go into a Central Government account while the SGST portion into the account of the concerned State Government (viz. U.P.).

It is important to note that he might not actually pay Rs. 20 (Rs. 10 + Rs. 10) in cash as he would be entitled to set-off this liability against the CGST or SGST paid on his eligible purchases (inputs, input services and capital goods) assuming that all his purchases are intra-State. However, for paying CGST, he would be allowed to use only the credit of CGST paid on his purchases while for SGST he can utilize the credit of SGST alone. CGST credit cannot be used for payment of SGST and vice versa.

Example II : Suppose, again the rate of CGST is 10% and that of SGST is 10%. When an advertising company located in Mumbai supplies advertising services to a company manufacturing soap also located within the State of Maharashtra for, let us say Rs. 100, the ad company would charge CGST of Rs. 10 as well as SGST of Rs. 10 at the basic value of the service. The CGST component will go into a Central Government account while the SGST portion into the account of the Maharashtra Government.

He might not actually pay Rs. 20 (Rs. 10+Rs. 10) in cash as it would be entitled to set-off this liability against the CGST or SGST paid on his eligible purchases (say, of inputs such as stationery, office equipment, services of an artist etc.) assuming that all his purchases are intra-State. However, for paying CGST, he would be allowed to use only the credit of CGST paid on its purchase while for SGST, he can utilise the credit of SGST alone. CGST credit cannot be used for payment of SGST and vice versa.

Question 3

Why was the need to amend the Constitution of India before introducing the GST?

Answer : Earlier, the fiscal powers between the Centre and the States were clearly demarcated in the Constitution with almost no overlap between the respective domains. The Centre had the powers to levy tax on the manufacture of goods (except alcoholic liquor for human consumption, opium, narcotics etc.) while the States had the powers to levy tax on the sale of goods. In the case of inter-State sales, the Centre had the power to levy the Central Sales Tax but the tax was collected and retained entirely by the States. As for services, it was the Centre alone that was empowered to levy service tax.

Introduction of the GST necessitated the amendments in the Constitution so as to simultaneously empower the Centre and the States to levy and collect this tax. The Constitution of India was amended by the Constitution (101st Amendment) Act, 2016 for this purpose. Article 246A of the Constitution introduced thereby empowered the Centre and the States to simultaneously levy and collect the GST.

Question 4

GST is a destination-based tax on consumption of goods or services or both. Discuss the validity of the statement.

Answer : The given statement is valid. GST is a destination-based tax on consumption of goods or services or both. GST is known as destination-based tax since the tax would accrue to the taxing authority which has jurisdiction over the place of consumption which is also termed as place of supply.

For example, if A in Delhi produces the goods and sells the goods to B in Haryana. In this case, the tax would accrue to the State of Haryana and not to the State of Delhi. On the other hand, under pre-GST regime, origin-based taxation was prevailing in such cases.

Under origin-based taxation, the tax used to accrue to the State from where the transaction originated. In the given case, under origin-based taxation, the central sales tax would have been levied by Centre and collected by the State of Delhi and not by the State of Haryana.

Question 5

Discuss the leviability of GST or otherwise on the following:

- (a) Alcoholic liquor for human consumption
- (b) Petroleum crude, diesel, petrol, Aviation Turbine Fuel (ATF) and natural gas
- (c) Tobacco
- (d) Opium, Indian hemp and other narcotic drugs and narcotics

Answer :

- (a) **Alcoholic liquor for human consumption:** is outside the realm of GST. The manufacture/production of alcoholic liquor continues to be subjected to State excise duty and inter-State/intra-State sale of the same is subject to CST/VAT respectively.
- (b) **Petroleum crude, diesel, petrol, ATF and natural gas:** As regards petroleum crude, diesel, petrol, ATF and natural gas are concerned, they are not presently leviable to GST. GST will be levied on these products from a date to be notified on the recommendations of the GST Council.
Till such date, central excise duty continues to be levied on manufacture/production of petroleum crude, diesel, petrol, ATF and natural gas and inter-State/intra-State sale of the same is subject to CST/ VAT respectively.
- (c) **Tobacco:** Tobacco is within the purview of GST, i.e. GST is leviable on tobacco. However, Union Government has also retained the power to levy excise duties on tobacco and tobacco products manufactured in India. Resultantly, tobacco is subject to GST as well as central excise duty.
- (d) **Opium, Indian hemp and other narcotic drugs and narcotics:** Opium, Indian hemp and other narcotic drugs and narcotics are within the purview of GST, i.e. GST is leviable on them. However, State Governments have also retained the power to levy excise duties on such products manufactured in India. Resultantly, Opium, Indian hemp and other narcotic drugs and narcotics are subject to GST as well as State excise duties.

Question 6

Under Goods and Services Tax (GST), only value addition is taxed and burden of tax is to be borne by the final consumer. Examine the validity of the statement.

Answer : The statement is correct. Goods and Services Tax is a destination-based tax on consumption of goods and services. It is levied at all stages right from manufacture up to final consumption with credit of taxes paid at previous stages available as setoff. Resultantly, only value addition is taxed and burden of tax is to be borne by the final consumer.

Question 7

Which are the commodities which have been kept outside the purview of GST? Examine the status of taxation of such commodities after introduction of GST.

Answer : Article 366(12A) of the Constitution as amended by 101st Constitutional Amendment Act, 2016 defines the Goods and Services tax (GST) as a tax on supply of goods or services or both, except supply of alcoholic liquor for human consumption. Therefore, alcohol for human consumption is kept out of GST by way of definition of GST in the Constitution. Five petroleum products viz. petroleum crude, motor spirit (petrol), high speed diesel, natural gas and aviation turbine fuel have temporarily been kept out of the purview of GST; GST Council shall decide the date from which they shall be included in GST. The erstwhile taxation system (CST/VAT & central excise) still continues in respect of the said commodities.

Question 8

A dual GST has been implemented in India. Elaborate.

Answer : A dual GST has been implemented in India with the Centre and States simultaneously levying it on a common tax base. The GST levied by the Centre on intra-State supply of goods and / or services is called the Central GST (CGST) and that levied by the States/ Union territory is called the State GST (SGST)/ Union GST (UTGST). Similarly, Integrated GST (IGST) is levied and administered by Centre on every inter-State supply of goods and/or services.

India is a federal country where both the Centre and the States have been assigned the powers to levy and collect taxes through appropriate legislation. Both the levels of Government have distinct responsibilities to perform according to the division of powers prescribed in the Constitution for which they need to raise resources. A dual GST, therefore, keeps with the Constitutional requirement of fiscal federalism.

Question 9

Discuss Article 269A pertaining to levy and collection of GST on inter-State supply.

Answer : Article 269A of the Constitution stipulates that Goods and Services Tax on supplies in the course of inter-State trade or commerce shall be levied and collected by the Government of India and such tax shall be apportioned between the Union and the States in the manner as may be provided by Parliament by law on the recommendations of the Goods and Services Tax Council.

Here, supply of goods, or of services, or both in the course of import into the territory of India shall be deemed to be supply of goods, or of services, or both in the course of inter-State trade or commerce.

The amount so apportioned to a State shall not form part of the Consolidated Fund of India. Where an amount collected as IGST has been used for payment of SGST or vice versa, such amount shall not form part of the Consolidated Fund of India/State respectively. This is to facilitate transfer of funds between the Centre and the States.

Parliament is empowered to formulate the principles for determining the place of supply, and when a supply of goods, or of services, or both takes place in the course of inter-State trade or commerce.

Question 10

Discuss Article 246A which grants the power to make laws with respect to Goods and Services Tax.

Answer : Article 246A stipulates that Parliament, and, the Legislature of every State, have power to make laws with respect to goods and services tax imposed by the Union or by such State.

Parliament has exclusive power to make laws with respect to goods and services tax where the supply of goods, or of services, or both takes place in the course of inter-State trade or commerce.

However, in respect to petroleum crude, high speed diesel, motor spirit (commonly known as petrol), natural gas and aviation turbine fuel, the aforesaid provisions shall apply from the date to be notified by the Government on the recommendations by the GST Council.

Question 11

Differentiate between direct and indirect taxes.

[CA Inter Nov 2018, 2 Marks]

Answer : Difference between direct taxes and indirect taxes:

Direct Taxes	Indirect Taxes
The person paying the tax to the Government directly bears the incidence of the tax.	The person paying the tax to the Government collects the same from the ultimate consumer. Thus, incidence of the tax is shifted to the other person.
Progressive in nature - high rate of taxes for people having higher ability to pay.	Regressive in nature - All the consumers equally bear the burden, irrespective of their ability to pay.

Question 12

Explain the salient features of indirect taxes.

Answer : Salient features of indirect taxes are:

- (i) **An important source of revenue:** Indirect taxes are a major source of tax revenues for Governments worldwide and continue to grow as more countries move to consumption oriented tax regimes. In India, indirect taxes contribute more than 50% of the total tax revenues of Central and State Governments.
- (ii) **Tax on commodities and services:** It is levied on commodities at the time of supply or manufacture or purchase or sale or import/export thereof. Hence, it is also known as commodity taxation. It is also levied on supply of services.

- (iii) **Shifting of burden:** There is a clear shifting of tax burden in respect of indirect taxes. For example, GST paid by the supplier of the goods is recovered from the buyer by including the tax in the cost of the commodity.
- (iv) **No perception of direct pinch:** Since, value of indirect taxes is generally inbuilt in the price of the commodity, most of the time the tax payer/consumer pays the same without actually knowing that he is paying tax to the Government. Thus, tax payer does not perceive a direct pinch while paying indirect taxes.
- (v) **Inflationary:** Tax imposed on commodities and services causes an all- round price spiral. In other words, indirect taxation directly affects the prices of commodities and services and leads to inflationary trend.
- (vi) **Wider tax base:** Unlike direct taxes, the indirect taxes have a wide tax base. Majority of the products or services are subject to indirect taxes with low thresholds.
- (vii) **Promotes social welfare:** Higher taxes are imposed on the consumption of harmful products (also known as 'sin goods') such as alcoholic products, tobacco products etc. This not only checks their consumption but also enables the State to collect substantial revenue.
- (viii) **Regressive in nature:** Generally, the indirect taxes are regressive in nature. The rich and the poor have to pay the same rate of indirect taxes on certain commodities of mass consumption. This may further increase the income disparities between the rich and the poor.

Question 13

Write a short note on various Lists provided under Seventh Schedule to the Constitution of India.

Answer : Seventh Schedule to Article 246 of the Constitution contains three lists which enumerate the matters under which the Union and the State Governments have the authority to make laws.

- (i) **List -I (UNION LIST):** It contains the matters in respect of which the Parliament (Central Government) has the exclusive right to make laws.
- (ii) **List -II (STATE LIST):** It contains the matters in respect of which the State Government has the exclusive right to make laws.
- (iii) **List -II (CONCURRENT LIST):** It contains the matters in respect of which both the Central & State Governments have power to make laws.

Question 14

Discuss the deficiencies in the existing indirect taxes which led to the need for ushering into GST regime.

Answer : Deficiencies in the erstwhile indirect tax regime:

- (a) Certain transactions were subject to double taxation and were taxed as both goods and services, since under the earlier regime, distinction between goods and services was often blurred.
- (b) CENVAT did not include chain of value addition in the distributive trade after the stage of production. Similarly, in the State-level VAT, CENVAT load on the goods was not removed leading to the cascading of taxes.

- (c) Though CENVAT and State-Level VAT were essentially value added taxes, set off of one against the credit of another was not possible as CENVAT was a central levy and State-Level VAT was a State levy.
- (d) There were several taxes in the States, such as, Luxury Tax, Entertainment Tax, etc. which were not subsumed in the VAT. Hence for a single transaction, multiple taxes in multiple forms were required to be paid.
- (e) VAT on goods was not integrated with tax on services, at the State level, to remove the cascading effect of service tax. With service sector being the fastest growing sector in the economy, the exclusion of services from the tax base of the States potentially eroded their tax- buoyancy.
- (f) CST was another source of distortion in terms of its cascading nature since it was non-VATABLE. Being an origin based tax, CST was also against one of the basic principles of consumption taxes that tax should accrue to the jurisdiction where consumption takes place.

Question 15

Discuss the dual GST model as introduced in India.

Answer : India has adopted a Dual GST model in view of the federal structure of the country. Consequently, Centre and States simultaneously levy GST on taxable supply of goods or services or both, which takes place within a State or Union Territory. Thus, tax is imposed concurrently by the Centre and States, i.e. Centre and States simultaneously tax goods and services. Now, the Centre also has the power to tax intra-State sales & States are also empowered to tax services. GST extends to whole of India including the State of Jammu and Kashmir.

Question 16

List the Central and State levies which have been subsumed in GST in India.

[CA Inter Nov. 2018, 2 Marks] [MTP Nov. 2018, 2 Marks][CA Inter May 2018, 3 Marks]

Answer : **Central levies that are subsumed in GST are as follows:**

- Central Excise Duty & Additional Excise Duties
- Service Tax
- Excise Duty under Medicinal & Toilet Preparation Act
- Countervailing Duty and Special Countervailing Duty (under Customs)
- Central Sales Tax
- Central surcharges & Cesses in so far as they relate to supply of goods & services

State levies that are subsumed in GST are as follows:

- State surcharges and cesses in so far as they relate to supply of goods & services
- Entertainment Tax (except those levied by local bodies)
- Tax on lottery, betting and gambling
- Entry Tax (All Forms) & Purchase Tax
- VAT/ Sales tax
- Luxury Tax

- Taxes on advertisements

Question 17

Discuss the need and functions of the common GST portal.

Answer : GST being a destination-based tax, the inter-State trade of goods and services (IGST) needed a robust settlement mechanism amongst the States and the Centre. A Common Portal was needed which could act as a clearing house and verify the claims and inform the respective Governments to transfer the funds. This was possible only with the help of a strong IT Infrastructure.

Resultantly, Common GST Electronic Portal – www.gst.gov.in – a website managed by Goods and Services Network (GSTN) [a company incorporated under the provisions of section 8 of the Companies Act, 2013] is set by the Government to establish a uniform interface for the tax payer and a common and shared IT infrastructure between the Centre and States.

The functions of the GSTN include facilitating registration; forwarding the returns to Central and State authorities; computation and settlement of IGST; matching of tax payment details with banking network; providing various MIS reports to the Central and the State Governments based on the taxpayer return information; providing analysis of taxpayers' profile.

Question 18

Briefly explain the leviability of GST or otherwise on petroleum crude, diesel, petrol, Aviation Turbine Fuel (ATF) and natural gas.

Answer : Petroleum crude, diesel, petrol, ATF and natural gas are presently not leviable to GST. GST will be levied on these products from a date to be notified on the recommendations of the GST Council. Till such date, central excise duty continues to be levied on manufacture/production of petroleum crude, diesel, petrol, ATF and natural gas and inter-State/intra-State sale of the same is subject to CST/ VAT respectively.

Question 19

Elaborate the principles that were borne in mind while subsuming various central, state and local levies, under GST.

Answer : The various central, state and local levies were examined to identify their possibility of being subsumed under GST. While identifying, the following principles were kept in mind:

- (i) Taxes or levies to be subsumed should be primarily in the nature of indirect taxes, either on the supply of goods or on the supply of services.
- (ii) Taxes or levies to be subsumed should be part of the transaction chain which commences with import/ manufacture/ production of goods or provision of services at one end and the consumption of goods and services at the other.
- (iii) The subsuming of taxes should result in free flow of tax credit in intra and inter-State levels. The taxes, levies and fees that were not specifically related to supply of goods & services should not be subsumed under GST.
- (iv) Revenue fairness for both the Union and the States individually would need to be attempted.

Question 20

GST is a simplified tax structure. Justify the statement.

[MTP Nov. 21, 4 Marks] [MTP May 2021]

Answer : GST is a simplified tax structure. The statement is justified. Simpler tax regime with fewer exemptions along with reduction in multiplicity of taxes under GST has led to simplification and uniformity in tax structure. The uniformity in laws, procedures and tax rates across the country makes doing business easier. Common system of classification of goods and services across the country ensures certainty in tax administration across India.

Question 21

List the advantages that GST accrues to the trade and industry.

Answer : GST accrues following advantages to the trade and industry

- (i) **Benefits to industry:** GST has given more relief to trade and industry through a more comprehensive and wider coverage of input tax set-off and service tax set-off, subsuming of several Central and State taxes in the GST and phasing out of CST. The transparent and complete chain of set-offs which results in widening of tax base and better tax compliance also leads to lowering of tax burden on an average dealer in trade and industry.
- (ii) **Mitigation of ill effects of cascading:** By subsuming most of the Central and State taxes into a single tax and by allowing a set-off of prior-stage taxes for the transactions across the entire value chain, it helps in mitigating the ill effects of cascading, improving competitiveness and improving liquidity of the businesses.
- (iii) **Benefits to small traders and entrepreneurs:** GST has increased the threshold for GST registration for small businesses. Further, single registration is needed in one State. Small businesses have also been provided the additional benefit of composition scheme. With the creation of a seamless national market across the country, small enterprises have an opportunity to expand their national footprint with minimal investment.

Question 22

List the special category States as prescribed in Article 279A of the Constitution of India.

Answer : There are 11 Special Category States, namely, States of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Jammu and Kashmir, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim, Tripura, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand.

Question 23

Discuss the levibility of GST or otherwise on tobacco.

Answer : Tobacco is within the purview of GST, i.e. GST is leviable on tobacco. However, Union Government has also retained the power to levy excise duties on tobacco and tobacco products manufactured in India. Resultantly, tobacco is subject to GST as well as central excise duty.

Section B – Additional Questions

Past RTPs, MTPs, And Exams Papers

Question 24

Explain the meaning of the term "recipient of supply of goods and/or services" under the CGST Act, 2017. [CA Inter May 2018, 5 Marks][MTP Nov. 2020, 5 Marks]

Answer : Recipient of supply of goods or services or both, means –

- (i) where a consideration is payable for the supply of goods or services or both, the person who is liable to pay that consideration;
 - (ii) where no consideration is payable for the supply of goods, the person to whom the goods are delivered or made available, or to whom possession or use of the goods is given or made available; and
 - (iii) where no consideration is payable for the supply of a service, the person to whom the service is rendered, and
- (i) any reference to a person to whom a supply is made shall be construed as a reference to the recipient of the supply, and
 - (ii) shall include an agent acting as such on behalf of the recipient in relation to the goods or services or both supplied.

Question 25

Discuss any two functions of GSTN.

[MTP Nov. 2018, 2 Marks]

Answer : The functions of the GSTN include:

- facilitating registration;
- forwarding the returns to Central and State authorities;
- computation and settlement of IGST;
- matching of tax payment details with banking network;
- providing various MIS reports to the Central and the State Governments based on the taxpayer return information;
- providing analysis of taxpayers' profile; and running the matching engine for matching, reversal and reclaim of input tax credit.

(Note: Any two points may be mentioned)

Multiple Choice Questions

Question 1

Various taxes have been subsumed in GST to make one nation one tax one market for consumers. Out of the following, determine which taxes have been subsumed in GST.

- (i) Basic customs duty levied under Customs Act, 1962
 - (ii) Taxes on lotteries
 - (iii) Environment tax
- (a) (ii) (b) (ii) and (iii) (c) (iii) (d) (i), (ii) and (iii)

Question 2

