

Prosecution to be at instance of Chief Commissioner or Commissioner.

279. (1) A person shall not be proceeded against for an offence under section 275A, section 275B, section 276, section 276A, section 276B, section 276BB, section 276C, section 276CC, section 276D, section 277, section 277A or section 278 except with the previous sanction of the Commissioner or Commissioner (Appeals) or the appropriate authority:

Provided that the Chief Commissioner or, as the case may be, Director General may issue such instructions or directions to the aforesaid income-tax authorities as he may deem fit for institution of proceedings under this sub-section.

Explanation.—For the purposes of this section, “appropriate authority” shall have the same meaning as in clause (c) of section 269UA.

(1A) A person shall not be proceeded against for an offence under section 276C or section 277 in relation to the assessment for an assessment year in respect of which the penalty imposed or imposed on him under clause (iii) of sub-section (1) of section 271 has been reduced or waived by an order under section 273A.

(2) Any offence under this Chapter may, either before or after the institution of proceedings, be compounded by the Chief Commissioner or a Director General.

(3) Where any proceeding has been taken against any person under sub-section (1), any statement made or account or other document produced by such person before any of the income-tax authorities specified in clauses (a) to (g) of section 116 shall not be inadmissible as evidence for the purpose of such proceedings merely on the ground that such statement was made or such account or other document was produced in the belief that the penalty imposed would be reduced or waived, under section 273A or that the offence in respect of which such proceeding was taken would be compounded.

Explanation.—For the removal of doubts, it is hereby declared that the power of the Board to issue orders, instructions or directions under this Act shall include and shall be deemed always to have included the power to issue instructions or directions (including instructions or directions to obtain the previous approval of the Board) to other income-tax authorities for the proper composition of offences under this section.