BLOGS

MCQ’s on Administrative Laws for CLAT PG [Part 4]

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Q1. The doctrine of *ultra vires* in administrative law primarily ensures:

A. Political accountability of the executive

B. Supremacy of Parliament over courts

C. That authorities act within the limits of power

D. Efficiency in administration

Q2. Natural justice is concerned mainly with:

A. Legislative fairness

B. Procedural fairness in decision-making

C. Substantive justice

D. Social equity

Q3. Which of the following is not a component of natural justice?

A. Rule against bias

B. Right to be heard

C. Right to legal representation in all cases

D. Fair procedure

Q4. Judicial review in administrative law is primarily concerned with:

A. Correctness of the decision

B. Wisdom of the policy

C. Legality of the decision-making process

D. Political desirability

Q5. The doctrine of *legitimate expectation* arises from:

A. Constitutional mandate

B. Consistent administrative practice

C. Statutory compulsion

D. Judicial precedent alone

Q6. Which principle prevents an authority from using a power for an alien purpose?

A. Reasonableness

B. Colourable exercise

C. Proportionality

D. Necessity

Q7. Delegated legislation derives its authority from:

A. The Constitution

B. Judicial recognition

C. Parent statute

D. Executive discretion

Q8. The primary object of "laying" of delegated legislation is:

A. Judicial scrutiny

B. Executive convenience

C. Legislative control

D. Public participation

Q9. A jurisdictional error occurs when:

A. Authority acts harshly

B. Authority misapplies policy

C. Authority lacks legal power to act

D. Authority gives inadequate reasons

Q10. Which writ directly questions the legality of holding a public office?

A. Habeas Corpus

B. Mandamus

C. Quo Warranto

D. Certiorari

Q11. The doctrine of *proportionality* requires that:

A. All decisions be popular

B. Means must be rationally connected to the end

C. Courts substitute administrative judgment

D. All policies be constitutionally valid

Q12. Which doctrine allows relaxation of natural justice in rare cases?

A. Rule of law

B. Doctrine of waiver

C. Doctrine of necessity

D. Doctrine of estoppel

Q13. Administrative discretion is best understood as:

A. Absolute freedom of action

B. Power guided by law and reason

C. Political supremacy

D. Uncontrolled authority

Q14. The principle that "justice must not only be done but must appear to be done" relates to:

A. Fair hearing

B. Reasoned orders

C. Rule against bias

D. Proportionality

Q15. The purpose of certiorari is to:

A. Prevent future action

B. Enforce duty

C. Quash illegal orders

D. Test public office

Answers

1. C – That authorities act within the limits of power

Explanation – The doctrine of *ultra vires* is the backbone of administrative control. It ensures that every administrative authority acts strictly within the power granted by statute. Any act beyond that limit is void.

2. B – Procedural fairness in decision-making

Explanation – Natural justice is not about the correctness of the outcome but about how the decision is made. It guarantees fair procedure—absence of bias and opportunity of hearing—before power is exercised.

3. C – Right to legal representation in all cases

Explanation – Natural justice does not automatically include a right to a lawyer. Representation depends on statute, complexity of the matter, and potential prejudice.

4. C – Legality of the decision-making process

Explanation – Judicial review examines whether the authority acted lawfully, fairly, and within jurisdiction. Courts do not sit as appellate bodies over administrative wisdom or policy choices.

5. B – Consistent administrative practice

Explanation – Legitimate expectation arises when a public authority, by regular practice or promise, creates an expectation of continued benefit. It protects procedural fairness, not substantive entitlement.

6. B – Colourable exercise

Explanation – This doctrine prevents an authority from achieving indirectly what it cannot do directly. Even if an action appears lawful, it is invalid if done for an improper purpose.

7. C – Parent statute

Explanation – Delegated legislation has no independent existence. Its authority flows entirely from the enabling Act; if the parent statute falls, the delegated law collapses with it.

8. C – Legislative control

Explanation – “Laying” ensures that Parliament retains oversight over delegated legislation. It preserves democratic accountability over executive-made rules.

9. C – Authority lacks legal power to act

Explanation – A jurisdictional error strikes at the root of authority. If the power to act never existed, the decision is null regardless of procedural correctness.

10. C – Quo Warranto

Explanation – This writ protects the public from illegal usurpation of office. It asks “by what authority” a person holds a public position.

11. B – Means must be rationally connected to the end

Explanation – Proportionality requires a balance between objective and method. Even lawful goals cannot be pursued through excessive or oppressive means.

12. C – Doctrine of necessity

Explanation – Where no unbiased authority exists, necessity allows even a biased authority to decide. Otherwise, governance would collapse due to paralysis.

13. B – Power guided by law and reason

Explanation – Administrative discretion is not arbitrariness. It is structured freedom—choice exercised within legal bounds, for lawful purposes, and on rational grounds.

14. C – Rule against bias

Explanation – Public confidence in justice depends not only on fairness but its appearance. Even likelihood of bias vitiates decision-making.

15. C – Quash illegal orders

Explanation – Certiorari operates retrospectively. It nullifies decisions already made when they suffer from jurisdictional error, breach of natural justice, or error of law.