BLOGS

Passage Based Questions on Circumstantial Evidence for CLAT PG

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No doubt, the subsequent acts of cleaning up the crime scene and making false enquiries amount to disappearance of evidence and raise grave suspicion against the appellant. However, mere suspicion, no matter how grave, cannot take the place of proof in a criminal trial. The suspicion ought to have been substantiated by undeniable, reliable, unequivocal, consistent and credible circumstantial evidence, which does not leave the probability of any other theory. In the present case, the theory put across by the appellant is fairly probable and is supported by medical evidence including the examination of the bullet injury and trajectory.

Contrarily, the conclusion drawn by the Courts below is not supported by medical evidence and is not consistent with the bullet injury and trajectory, as discussed above. We have come far since our acknowledgement that in a case purely based on circumstantial evidence, it must be established that the chain of circumstances is complete. Such a chain must be consistent with the conclusion of guilt only and must not support a contrary finding.

The rigid principles underlying an examination based on circumstantial evidence are based on the premise that the very act of arriving at a finding of guilt on the basis of inferences must be performed with great caution and margin of error must be kept at a minimum. Having said so, we may also observe that naturally, there could be some inconsistencies in the chain of circumstances in the natural course of things and mere presence of inconsistencies does not automatically demolish the case of the prosecution.

However, the prosecution must be able to explain the inconsistencies to the satisfaction of the Court. For, the ultimate test is the judicial satisfaction of the Court. In the present case, the counter probabilities and inconsistencies in the chain of circumstances have not been explained."

Judgement Excerpt from Vaibhav .V. State of Maharashtra (2025)

1. What is required in order to prove guilt when the case is completely based on circumstantial evidence?

a. The evidence should result in grave suspicion and must lead to the accused

b. The chain of circumstantial evidence must be in a consistent chain and must led to the guilt

c. A majority of circumstances need to be established by the prosecution

d. Mere suspicion is enough to prove the guilt of accused

2. What is the role of suspicion in a criminal trial?

a. The suspicion needs to be grave

b. Suspicion needs to combined with circumstantial evidence in order to prove guilt of the accused

c. Suspicion cannot take place of proof

d. Suspicion is a conclusive proof of guilt

3. Which of the following is a quality of circumstantial evidence in order to substantiate suspicion?

a. Consistent

b. Reliable

c. Undeniable

d. All of the Above

4. Who was the one of the following judges in the above mentioned case?

a. Justice B.V Nagarathna

b. Justice Abdul Nazeer

c. Justice Surya Kant

d. Justice B.R Gavai

5. How inconsistencies are treated in the chain of circumstances as per the above mentioned case?

a. Inconsistency demolishes the case of prosecution

b. They are irrelevant as long as there exists chain of circumstances to prove the guilt of the accused

c. Just the presence of inconsistency does not demolish the case of prosecution as it needs to be explained

d. Inconsistencies are only acceptable in the case of direct evidence

6. What is the ultimate test of conviction in the case of circumstantial evidence?

a. Completeness of the chain of circumstances

b. Judicial satisfaction

c. No presence of alternative theory

d. Corroboration of circumstantial evidence

7. How many judges did the panel of the Supreme Court comprised while delivering the judgement in the above mentioned case?

a. 2 judge bench

b. 3 judge bench

c. 5 judge bench

d. 7 judge bench

8. Which principle of circumstantial evidence is discussed in the above mentioned case?

a. It is always inferior to direct evidence

b. It must be a complete chain of circumstances

c. Partial chain of circumstances if combined with confessions are accepted in the court of law

d. Circumstantial evidence are a supplement to direct evidence

9. Who gave a dissenting opinion in the above mentioned case?

a. Justice Abdul Nazeer

b. Justice Vivian Bose

c. No dissenting opinion was given in the case

d. Justice Jaswant Singh

10. What role did the medical evidence play in the above mentioned case?

a. It was considered inconclusive and disregarded by the court

b. It supported the prosecution’s theory of guilt

c. It supported the appellant’s theory and helped to overturn the lower court’s judgement

d. It was used just to establish the cause of death

11. What can be done by the prosecution when there are inconsistencies in the chain of circumstances?

a. Ask the court to draw inferences against the accused

b. Support the case with additional witnesses

c. Explain the inconsistencies to the court

d. Mention the inconsistencies as minor and peripheral

12. What was decided in the above mentioned case?

a. In case of circumstantial evidence, the prosecution must establish a complete chain of circumstances

b. Circumstantial evidence are a supplement to direct evidence

c. Inconsistencies in the prosecution's case demolished the case altogether

d. All of the Above

13. In the above mentioned case it has been stated that the circumstantial evidence must not be supported by a contrary finding. What can be implied from this statement?

a. The evidence needs to be corroborated by at least 2 witnesses

b. The evidence should be incompatible with the innocence of accused

c. Every defense of the accused needs to be disproved by the prosecution

d. The chain of circumstances must be based on documentary evidence

14. What is the meaning of fairly probable theory?

a. Theory of accused is irrelevant once the suspicion is established

b. Theory supported by medical evidence is enough to raise reasonable doubt against the prosecution's case

c. The theory of the accused needs to be proved beyond reasonable doubt

d. None of the Above

15. Which of the following cases are considered as landmark cases of circumstantial evidence?

a. Sharad Birdhichand Sarda .V. State of Maharashtra

b. Abdul Naseer .V. State of Kerala

c. Ramesh .V. State

d. All of the Above

Answers

1. Option b
2. Option c
3. Option d
4. Option a
5. Option c

6. Option b
7. Option a
8. Option b
9. Option c
10. Option c
11. Option c
12. Option a
13. Option b
14. Option b
15. Option d