BLOGS

Passage-Based Questions on Legal Reasoning for CLAT UG [Part 22]

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Passage 1 (P.1)

The legal framework around biological diversity is designed to regulate how biological resources and traditional knowledge are accessed and used. In many biodiversity-rich countries, indigenous communities have preserved knowledge about plants, seeds, and natural remedies for generations. However, there have been several instances where corporations and researchers have used this knowledge for profit without acknowledging or compensating these communities. This practice is often referred to as biopiracy.

To address this issue, the law requires that anyone who wants to access biological resources for research or commercial purposes must seek proper approval. This becomes especially important when foreign individuals or organisations are involved. Even Indian researchers or companies may need permission if their work involves commercial use or sharing findings with foreign entities.

An important feature of this framework is the recognition of community rights. Traditional knowledge is not seen as freely available information, but as something that belongs to the community that has preserved it. If a company develops a product using such knowledge and earns profits, a part of those benefits must be shared with the concerned community. At the same time, the law does not aim to stop research or innovation. Instead, it tries to strike a balance.

It allows scientific progress but ensures that it does not come at the cost of exploitation or environmental harm. Violations of this framework can lead to penalties, including restrictions on patents or business activities. The real challenge arises in deciding where to draw the line between genuine research and unfair exploitation, especially in a world where collaborations often involve multiple countries.

1. A foreign pharmaceutical company uses a plant traditionally used by a tribal community for medicinal purposes and patents a drug derived from it without seeking

approval. Which is the most accurate legal conclusion?

a. The patent is valid as long as the drug is effective

b. The company's action may violate biological diversity regulations

c. The tribal community has no legal claim over traditional knowledge

d. The patent is valid if granted by an international authority

2. An Indian researcher studies a plant species and later shares the findings with a foreign corporation for commercial use without prior approval. Which principle applies?

a. Transfer of research outcomes to foreign entities may require regulatory approval

b. The act is irrelevant if research was initially domestic

c. Only commercial sale of plants is regulated

d. The act is automatically legal if no profit is made

3. Which of the following situations would most clearly require benefit sharing with local communities?

a. Academic research with no practical application

b. Commercial use of traditional medicinal knowledge

c. Government funded ecological surveys

d. Personal study of plant species

4. Which scenario would least likely violate the law?

a. Exporting biological samples without permission

b. Commercialising traditional knowledge without consent

c. Conducting independent research without commercial intent or foreign involvement

d. Patent application based on indigenous resources without approval

5. The core objective of the law is to?

a. prevent all biological research

b. regulate access and ensure equitable benefit sharing

c. eliminate foreign participation in research

d. transfer ownership of biodiversity to corporations

Passage 2 (P.2)

In today's digital world, a huge amount of personal data is collected and used by companies and governments. This includes information like financial details, health records, and even browsing

behaviour. Because of the risks involved in misuse of such data, laws have been developed to regulate how this information is handled. According to this framework, personal data should only be used for lawful purposes and with the consent of the individual. This consent should not be vague or assumed. It must be clear, informed, and given freely. Entities that collect and use data, often called data fiduciaries, have a responsibility to ensure that the data is handled carefully and securely. One important principle is that of purpose limitation.

This means that data collected for one reason cannot be used for something completely different without proper consent. Individuals are also given certain rights, such as the right to access their data, correct mistakes, or even request deletion under certain conditions. At the same time, the law recognises that there are situations where data may be used without consent, such as for national security or legal obligations.

However, even in such cases, safeguards are expected to prevent misuse. The real difficulty lies in maintaining a balance. On one hand, data is essential for innovation and governance. On the other, individuals have a right to privacy. As technology continues to evolve, the interpretation of these principles will become even more important.

6. A company collects user data for providing a service but later uses it for targeted advertising without informing users. Which is most accurate?

a. The action is valid as long as the service is provided

b. The action may violate the principle of purpose limitation

c. The action is valid if the data is anonymised

d. The action is irrelevant under data protection law

7. A government agency accesses personal data without consent citing national security concerns. Which statement is legally correct?

a. Consent is always mandatory

b. Government agencies are exempt from all lawsCertain

c. exceptions may allow processing without consent

d. Data protection applies only to private companies

8. Which of the following best illustrates a valid exercise of user rights?

a. A company deleting data without informing users

b. A government storing data indefinitely without reason

c. A business sharing data with third parties freely

d. An individual requesting correction of inaccurate personal data

9. Which scenario would most clearly violate the law?

a. Data collected with informed consent for a specific purpose

b. Use of data strictly for the purpose disclosed

c. Selling personal data to third parties without user consent

d. Processing data for legal compliance

10. The central aim of the law is to?

a. restrict all digital activity

b. balance data usage with individual privacy rights

c. eliminate data collection entirely

d. transfer control of data to corporations

Passage 3 (P.3)

Access to justice is a very important part of any legal system. However, not everyone has the financial means to approach courts or hire lawyers. Because of this, laws have been created to ensure that people who cannot afford legal services still have access to justice. Under this framework, certain groups such as economically weaker sections, women, children, and marginalised communities are entitled to free legal aid.

This includes not just representation in court, but also legal advice and assistance at earlier stages. Another important feature is the promotion of alternative dispute resolution methods like Lok Adalats. These forums aim to settle disputes quickly and without heavy costs, making justice more accessible. The law also recognises that legal help should begin even before a case is filed. Pre litigation assistance helps individuals understand their rights and make informed decisions. This reduces unnecessary litigation and ensures better outcomes.

However, the success of this system depends on awareness and proper implementation. Many people who are eligible for legal aid do not know about it, while others may face practical difficulties in accessing these services. The idea behind the framework is simple. Justice should not depend on how much money a person has. It should be available to everyone equally.

11. A person from an economically weaker section is denied legal representation due to inability to pay fees. Which is most accurate legally?

a. The denial is valid under law

b. The person may be entitled to free legal aid

c. Legal representation is only for paying clients

d. Courts cannot intervene

12. Which of the following disputes is most suitable for resolution through Lok Adalats?

a. Complex constitutional challenges

b. Minor civil disputes with scope for settlement

c. Criminal trials involving serious offences

d. International disputes

13. Which of the following best reflects the purpose of providing legal aid at the pre litigation stage?

a. To ensure individuals understand their legal rights before filing cases

b. To increase court workload

c. To delay legal proceedings

d. To restrict access to courts

14. Which scenario would most clearly defeat the purpose of the law?

a. Providing free legal advice to eligible individuals

b. Conducting awareness campaigns about legal rights

c. Denying aid to eligible persons due to lack of awareness

d. Resolving disputes through mediation

15. The framework is based on which legal principle?

a. justice should depend on financial capacity

b. legal services should be restricted

c. access to justice must be equitable

d. courts should handle all disputes

Answers

1. A – The company used traditional knowledge without approval, which goes against the law meant to protect community rights.
2. B – Sharing research with a foreign entity, especially for commercial use, usually requires prior approval.

3. B – When traditional knowledge is used for commercial purposes, the community must receive a share of the benefits.
4. C – Independent research without commercial use or foreign involvement is generally allowed.
5. B – The law mainly aims to regulate access and ensure fair benefit sharing.
6. B – Using data for a different purpose than what was originally stated violates purpose limitation.
7. D – There are exceptions where data can be used without consent, such as for national security.
8. D – Individuals have the right to correct inaccurate personal data.
9. C – Selling personal data without consent is a clear violation.
10. A – The law tries to balance data usage with protection of privacy.
11. B – People who cannot afford legal services may be entitled to free legal aid.
12. B – Lok Adalats are suitable for disputes that can be settled amicably.
13. A – Pre litigation aid helps people understand their rights before taking legal action.
14. C – If eligible people are denied aid due to lack of awareness, the purpose of the law is defeated.
15. C – The main idea is that justice should be equally accessible to everyone.