BLOGS

Principle-Fact Based Questions on Legal Reasoning for CLAT UG 2026

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1. Principle: Article 14 of the Indian Constitution guarantees that the State shall not deny to any person equality before the law or the equal protection of the laws. To be valid, any classification made by a law must be reasonable and non-arbitrary, treating “likes alike”.

Facts: A State enacts a law granting an agricultural subsidy only to farmers who keep buffaloes, while excluding farmers who keep cows. Both sets of farmers are similarly situated in need of support.

Options:

(A) The law is valid; classifying buffalo owners separately is a reasonable policy choice.

(B) The law violates Article 14; it arbitrarily distinguishes between similarly situated farmers.

(C) The law is valid; buffaloes are more productive than cows, so subsidy must differ.

(D) The law violates Article 14 only if buffaloes and cows serve identical purposes in agriculture.

Answer: (B)

Explanation: Under Article 14, the State must not treat similarly situated persons differently without a rational basis. Farmers who rear buffaloes and cows fall into the same class—dairy farmers. There is no intelligible differentia that connects buffalo ownership with the objective of the subsidy. The classification is arbitrary and hence unconstitutional.

2. Principle: The right to privacy is protected as an intrinsic part of the right to life and personal liberty under Article 21. Any law or action invading privacy must be justified under this fundamental right.

Facts: To enhance security, the government mandates that all shoppers be enrolled in a facial recognition database without their consent. An affected citizen challenges this requirement.

Options:

(A) The requirement violates the fundamental right to privacy.

(B) The requirement is valid; there is no privacy violation because it is done in the public interest.

(C) The requirement is valid; personal data collected in public does not attract Article 21 protections.
(D) The requirement is valid; national security overrides privacy rights without limitation.

Answer: (A)
Explanation: In Justice K.S. Puttaswamy v. Union of India (2017), privacy was declared a fundamental right. Collecting facial recognition data without consent is a direct intrusion. Without a lawful, necessary, and proportionate basis, this violates Article 21.

3. Principle: Sections 299 and 300 IPC distinguish culpable homicide from murder. Murder involves a higher degree of intent or knowledge. Culpable homicide not amounting to murder occurs when the act causes death with the intention or knowledge of likely death, but without the special intent required for murder.

Facts: X and Y quarrel. X strikes Y with a heavy stick intending only to cause hurt, not to kill. Y unexpectedly dies from the injury.

Options:
(A) X has committed murder under Section 300 IPC.
(B) X has committed culpable homicide not amounting to murder under Section 299 IPC.
(C) X has committed only simple hurt (Section 323 IPC), since he had no intent to kill.
(D) X is not guilty, because death was accidental and unintended.

Answer: (B)
Explanation: Since X had no intent to kill or knowledge that the act would likely cause death, it is not murder under Section 300. But he did cause death by an act likely to cause bodily harm, so this is culpable homicide not amounting to murder.

4. Principle: The IPC distinguishes kidnapping from abduction. Kidnapping includes taking a minor out of the lawful guardianship of their parent or guardian without consent. Abduction generally involves inducement or force to move someone.

Facts: A 17-year-old girl's father, without the mother's consent, persuades her to move from their home city to his. The girl's mother did not agree.

Options:
(A) Kidnapping from lawful guardianship.
(B) Abduction.

(C) Rape.

(D) No offence, since a parent can take his child anywhere.

Answer: (A)

Explanation: A minor taken without the consent of the lawful guardian (the mother in this case) amounts to kidnapping under Section 361 IPC. The father's action violates the law.

5. Principle: Under Section 4 of the Indian Contract Act, acceptance is complete when it is put into the course of transmission to the offeror (e.g., when a properly addressed and stamped letter is posted).

Facts: P of Delhi mails an offer to sell land to Q of Mumbai. Q posts a letter of acceptance back to P, but this letter never reaches P due to postal loss.

Options:

(A) A binding contract is formed when Q posted the acceptance.

(B) No contract is formed because P never received Q's acceptance.

(C) No contract is formed because acceptance by post is invalid unless expressly agreed.

(D) A contract is formed only when P learns of the acceptance.

Answer: (A)

Explanation: Under Section 4, the contract is complete when the letter of acceptance is posted by Q. The offeror is bound once acceptance is posted, even if it is never received.

6. Principle: Under Section 20 of the Indian Contract Act, an agreement is void if both parties are under a mistake as to a matter of fact essential to the agreement.

Facts: A sells what he and B both believe to be a genuine antique painting. Later, they discover it is a replica.

Options:

(A) The agreement is void for mutual mistake.

(B) The agreement is valid; only A can sue for misrepresentation by B.

(C) The agreement is voidable at A's option due to B's mistake.

(D) The agreement is voidable at B's option.

Answer: (A)

Explanation: Both parties were under a mistaken belief about an essential fact (authenticity of the painting). There was no real meeting of minds, making the agreement void under Section 20.

7. Principle: Under the doctrine of res ipsa loquitur, negligence can be presumed if (i) the type of injury does not occur without negligence, (ii) the cause of injury was under the defendant's control, and (iii) the plaintiff did not contribute to the harm.

Facts: Sarah undergoes an appendectomy. Later, she discovers a surgical sponge was left inside her abdomen. She had no way of knowing or preventing this.

Options:

(A) Sarah can invoke res ipsa loquitur and prevail.

(B) Sarah cannot succeed; she must prove exactly which staff member was negligent.

(C) Sarah cannot succeed; hospitals have absolute immunity for surgical errors.

(D) Sarah cannot succeed; leaving sponges is not negligence per se.

Answer: (A)

Explanation: The circumstances suggest negligence (surgical sponge left inside). All elements of res ipsa loquitur are met. The burden shifts to the hospital to prove absence of negligence.

8. Principle: Under Section 56 of the Indian Contract Act, an agreement to do an act that becomes impossible or unlawful after it is made is void.

Facts: M agrees to rent N's beachfront cottage for a vacation. Before the vacation, a cyclone destroys the cottage.

Options:

(A) The contract is void/terminated by impossibility (frustration).

(B) The contract stands; N must provide a substitute cottage.

(C) The contract is voidable at N's option.

(D) The contract is valid; M is liable for the agreed rent.

Answer: (A)

Explanation: The contract's objective has become impossible due to an unforeseen natural event. Performance is frustrated, and the contract is void under Section 56.

9. Principle: Defamation involves the publication of a false statement that harms a person's reputation in the eyes of a reasonable third party.

Facts: Z writes in a local newspaper that A has been convicted of theft. In fact, A was only charged and acquitted later.

Options:

(A) Z is liable for defamation.

(B) Z is not liable because the statement was made in public interest.

(C) Z is not liable because A was charged.

(D) Z is not liable because the newspaper printed it, not Z.

Explanation: The statement falsely claims A was convicted, which harms A's reputation. It is a defamatory falsehood. Public interest or prior charge does not justify this false statement.

10. Principle: Under tort law, nuisance occurs when a person's reasonable enjoyment of their property is disturbed due to the unreasonable actions of a neighbor.

Facts: B plays loud music at night every day, disturbing A's sleep. Despite repeated requests, B refuses to stop.

Options:

(A) B is liable for nuisance.

(B) B is not liable because he has a right to enjoy his property.

(C) B is not liable because playing music is not a tort.

(D) B is not liable because the disturbance happens only at night.

Explanation: Regular nighttime loud music causing loss of sleep is an unreasonable interference with A's peaceful enjoyment of property. B's conduct constitutes nuisance.