Chapter 1 – Preliminary

Question 1:
The paid-up share capital of Saras Private Limited is Rs. 1 crore, consisting of 8 lacs Equity Shares of Rs. 10 each, fully paid-up and 2 lacs Cumulative Preference Shares of Rs.10 each, fully paid-up. Jeevan (JVN) Private Limited and Sudhir Private Limited are holding 3 lacs Equity Shares and 50,000 Equity Shares respectively in Saras Private Limited. Jeevan Private Limited and Sudhir Private Limited are the subsidiaries of Piyush Private Limited. With reference to the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013 examine whether Saras Private Limited is a subsidiary of Piyush Private Limited? Would your answer be different if Piyush Private Limited has 8 out of 9 Directors on the Board of Saras Private Limited?

[RTP – May 18, May 19]

Answer
Relevant Provisions
In terms of section 2 (87) of the Companies Act 2013 "subsidiary company" or "subsidiary", in relation to any other company (that is to say the holding company), means a company in which the holding company:
(i) controls the composition of the Board of Directors; or
(ii) exercises or controls more than one-half of the total voting power either at its own or together with one or more of its subsidiary companies:

Provided that such class or classes of holding companies as may be prescribed shall not have layers of subsidiaries beyond such numbers as may be prescribed.

Explanation.—For the purposes of this clause,—
a) a company shall be deemed to be a subsidiary company of the holding company even if the control referred to in sub-clause (i) or sub-clause (ii) is of another subsidiary company of the holding company;
b) the composition of a company's Board of Directors shall be deemed to be controlled by another company if that other company by exercise of some power exercisable by it at its discretion can appoint or remove all or a majority of the directors.

Conclusion
In the present case, Jeevan Pvt. Ltd. and Sudhir Pvt. Ltd. together hold less than one half of the total share capital. Hence, Piyush Private Ltd. (holding of Jeevan Pvt. Ltd. and Sudhir Pvt) will not be a holding company of Saras Pvt. Ltd.
However, if Piyush Pvt. Ltd. has 8 out of 9 Directors on the Board of Saras Pvt. Ltd. i.e. controls the composition of the Board of Directors; it (Piyush Pvt. Ltd.) will be treated as the holding company of Saras Pvt. Ltd

Question 2:
Hastprat Ltd. is an unlisted public company, having five directors in its board which includes two independent directors.

Sankul (P) Ltd., is subsidiary company of Hastprat Ltd., actively carrying on its business, having paid up capital of ₹ 1.5 crore with 40 members and turnover of ₹ 18 crore, respectively and the said company is not a start-up company.

In the context of aforesaid case-scenario, please answer to the following question(s):

Whether Sankul (P) Ltd. is mandatorily required to prepare cash flow statement for the financial year as a part of its financial statements?

Provide your answer by analyzing Sankul (P) Ltd. into following category of companies:-
(i) One person company, (ii) Small company, (iii) Dormant company and (iv) Private company, respectively.

[RTP May 23]

OR

What does the term Financial Statements include in relation to a company under the Companies Act, 2013? Which companies need not prepare a cash flow statement?

[May 2018, Nov'22]

Answer

According to section 2(40) of the Companies Act, 2013, Financial statement in relation to a company, includes:

(i) a balance sheet as at the end of the financial year;
(ii) a profit and loss account, or in the case of a company carrying on any activity not for profit, an income and expenditure account for the financial year;
(iii) cash flow statement for the financial year;
(iv) a statement of changes in equity, if applicable; and
(v) any explanatory note annexed to, or forming part of, any document referred to in sub-clause (i) to sub-clause (iv):

Provided that the financial statement, with respect to one person company, small company, dormant company and private company (if such private company is a start-up company) may not include the cash flow statement

For considering the applicability of preparation cash flow statement in case of Sankul (P) Ltd., it is required first to be analyzed that Sankul (P) Ltd. does not fall in any of the categories of companies mentioned under proviso to section 2(10) of the Companies Act, 2013:

(i) One person company – It is given that the company is having 40 members and also its name does not contain the words 'OPC', so it is not a one person company.
(ii) Small company – A company which is a subsidiary company cannot be categorized as a small company as per proviso to section 2(85) even though its paid up capital and turnover are within the prescribed limits and accordingly, as Sankul (P) Ltd. is a subsidiary company of Hastprat Ltd., it cannot be considered as small company also.
(iii) Dormant company – It is given that the company is actively carrying on its business, so it cannot be also categorized as a dormant company based upon the facts given.
(iv) Private company (which is a start-up) – It is given that Sankul (P) Ltd. is not a start- up company and also, as per proviso to section 2(71) of the Act, a company which is a subsidiary of a company, not being a private company, shall be deemed to be public company for the purposes of this Act even where such subsidiary company continues to be a private company in its articles.

So, Sankul (P) Ltd. shall be deemed to be a public company as it is subsidiary of Hastprat Ltd., an unlisted public company and so it will not fall into this category of exemption as well.

Thus, it can be concluded that Sankul (P) Ltd. is mandatorily required to prepare cash flow statement for the financial year as a part of its financial statements as it does not fall in any of the categories of companies mentioned under proviso to section 2(10) of the Companies Act, 2013.

Question 3:

The statutory auditors of a company were required to issue a certificate on the net worth of the company as per the requirement of the management as on 30th September 2020 computed as per the provision of section 2(57) of the Companies Act, 2013.

The company had fair valued its property, plant and equipment in the current year which was mistakenly taken into retained earnings of the company in its books of accounts. Please advise whether this fair valuation would be covered in the net worth of the company as per the legal requirements.

[RTP Nov 21]

Answer

As per sec 2(57) of the Companies Act 2013, any reserves created out of revaluation of assets doesn't form part of net worth. The company fair valued its property, plant and equipment and took that to retained earnings.

Even if the company has taken the fair valuation to the retained earnings in its books of accounts, the resultant credit in reserves (by whatever name called) would be in the category of 'reserves created out of revaluation

of assets' which is specifically excluded in the definition of 'net worth' in section 2 (57) and hence should be excluded by the company.

Further the auditors should also consider the matter related to accounting of this reserve separately at the time of audit of books of accounts of the company.

Question 4:

SKP Limited (Registered in India), a wholly owned subsidiary company of Herry Limited decided to follow different financial year for consolidation of its accounts outside India. State the procedure to be followed in this regard.

[Nov 2019]

Answer

Where a company or body corporate, which is a holding company or a subsidiary or associate company of a company incorporated outside India and is required to follow a different financial year for consolidation of its accounts outside India, the Central Government may, on an application made by that company or body corporate in such form and manner as may be prescribed, allow any period as its financial year, whether or not that period is a year.

Any application pending before the Tribunal as on the date of commencement of the Companies (Amendment) Act, 2019, shall be disposed of by the Tribunal in accordance with the provisions applicable to it before such commencement.

Also, a company or body corporate, existing on the commencement of this Act, shall, within a period of two years from such commencement, align its financial year as per the provisions of this clause.

SKP Limited is advised to follow the above procedure accordingly.

[Note: This answer is based on the assumption that Herry limited is a foreign Company registered outside India as inferred from part (i) of the question]

Question 5:

The information extracted from the audited Financial Statement of Smart Solutions Private Limited as at 31st March, 2020 is as below:

(i) Paid-up equity share capital Rs. 50,00,000 divided into 5,00,000 equity shares (carrying voting rights) of Rs. 10 each. There is no change in the paid-up share capital thereafter.

(ii) The turnover is Rs. 2,00,00,000.

It is further understood that Nice Software Limited, which is a public limited company, is holding 2,00,000 equity shares, fully paid-up, of Smart Solutions Private Limited. Smart Solutions Private Limited has filed its Financial Statement for the said year with the Registrar of Companies (ROC) excluding the Cash Flow Statement within the prescribed timeline during the financial year 2020-21. The ROC has issued a notice to Smart Solutions Private Limited as it has failed to file the cash flow statement along with the Balance Sheet and Profit and Loss Account.

You are to advise on the following points explaining the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013:

(i) Whether Smart Solutions Private Limited shall be deemed to be a small company whose significant equity shares are held by a public company?

(ii) Whether Smart Solutions Private Limited has defaulted in filing its financial statement?

[July 2021]

Answer

According to section 2(85) of the Companies Act, 2013, small company means a company, other than a public company, having-

a) paid-up share capital not exceeding fifty lakh rupees or such higher amount as may be prescribed which shall not be more than ten crore rupees; and

b) turnover as per profit and loss account for the immediately preceding financial year not exceeding two crore rupees or such higher amount as may be prescribed which shall not be more than one hundred crore rupees:

Provided that nothing in this clause shall apply to a holding company or a subsidiary company.

Also, according to section 2(87), subsidiary company, in relation to any other company (that is to say the holding company), means a company in which the holding company exercises or controls more than one-half of the total voting power either at its own or together with one or more of its subsidiary companies.

In the given question, Nice Software Limited (a public company) holds 2,00,000 equity shares of Smart Solutions Private Limited (having paid up share capital of 5,00,000 equity shares @ Rs. 10 totalling Rs. 50 lakhs). Hence, Smart Solutions Private Limited is not a subsidiary of Nice Software Limited and hence it is a private company and not a deemed public company Further, the paid up share capital (Rs. 50 lakhs) and turnover (Rs. 2 crores) is within the limit as prescribed under section 2(85), hence, Smart Solutions Private Limited can be categorised as a small company.

Question 6: *(partially related to chapter 3)*
Johnson Limited goes for public issue of its shares. The issue was oversubscribed. A default was committed with respect to allotment of shares by the officers of the company. There were no Managing Director, Whole time Director or any other officer/person designated by the Board with the responsibility of Complying with the provisions of the Act.
State, who are the persons considered as officers in default under the Companies Act, 2013. Examine who will be considered in default in the instant case?

[July 2021]

Answer
Relevant Provisions
As per section 39 of the Companies Act, 2013, which deals with the allotment of securities, states that in case of any default related to minimum subscription and of return of allotment money under sub-section (3) and (4), the company and its officer who is in default shall be liable to a penalty, for each default, of one thousand rupees for each day during which such default continues or one lakh rupees, whichever is less.

As per section 2(60) of the Act, Officer who is in default, has been described as:
For the purpose of any provision in this Act which enacts that an officer of the company who is in default shall be liable to any penalty or punishment by way of imprisonment, fine or otherwise, means any of the following officers of a company, namely:—
(i) whole-time director (WTD);
(ii) key managerial personnel (KMP);
(iii) where there is no key managerial personnel, such director or directors as specified by the Board, or all the directors, if no director is so specified;
(iv) any person who, under the immediate authority of the Board or any key managerial personnel, is charged with any responsibility.
(v) any person in accordance with whose advice, directions or instructions the Board of Directors of the company is accustomed to act,
(vi) every director, in respect of a contravention of any of the provisions of this Act,
(vii) in respect of the issue or transfer of any shares of a company, the share transfer agents, registrars and merchant bankers to the issue or transfer;

Conclusion
In the given case, as stated Johnson Limited, committed a default with respect to the allotment of shares by the officers. As in company there were no managing director, whole time director, or any other officer/person designated by the Board with the responsibility of complying with the provisions of the Act. Therefore, in such situation, all the directors of the company may be treated as officers in default.

Question 7:

New Private Ltd. is a company registered under the Companies Act, 2013 with a paid -up share capital of Rs. 70 lakh and turnover of Rs. 60 crores. Explain the meaning of the "Small Company" and examine the following in accordance with the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013:
(i) Whether the New Private Ltd. can avail the status of small company?
(ii) What will be your answer if the turnover of the company is Rs. 35 crore and the capital is same as Rs. 70 lakh?

[MTP Oct 2021]

OR

MNP Private Ltd. is a company registered under the Companies Act, 2013 with a, paid up share capital of Rs. 45 lakh and turnover of Rs. 3 crores. Explain the meaning of the "Small Company" and examine the following in accordance with the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013:

(i) Whether the MNP Private Ltd. can avail the status of small company?
(ii) What will be your answer if the turnover of the company is Rs. 1.50 crore?

[May 18, MTP Oct, 2020, ICAI Module]

Answer

Relevant Provisions

Small Company: According to Section 2(85) of the Companies Act, 2013, Small Company means a company, other than a public company:

(i) paid-up share capital of which does not exceed Rs. 50 lakhs or such higher amount as may be prescribed which shall not be more than ten crore rupees; and
(ii) turnover of which as per its last profit and loss account does not exceed Rs. 2 crores or such higher amount as may be prescribed which shall not be more than one hundred crore rupees.

Nothing in this clause shall apply to:
(A) a holding company or a subsidiary company;
(B) a company registered under section 8; or
(C) a company or body corporate governed by any special Act.

As per the Companies (Specification of Definitions Details) Rules, 2014, for the purposes of sub clause (i) and sub-clause (ii) of clause (85) of section 2 of the Act, paid up capital and turnover of the small company shall not exceed Rs. 4 crores **and** Rs. 40 crores respectively.

Conclusions

(i) In the present case, New Private Ltd., a company registered under the Companies Act, 2013 with a paid up share capital of Rs. 70 lakh and having turnover of Rs. 60 crore. Since, only one criteria of share capital not exceeding Rs. 4 crores is met, but the second criteria of turnover not exceeding Rs. 40 crores is not met, and the provisions require both the criteria to be met in order to avail the status of a small company, New Private Ltd. cannot avail the status of small company.

(ii) If the turnover of the company is Rs. 35 crore, then both the criteria will be fulfilled, and New Private Ltd. can avail the status of small company.

Question 8:

MNP Limited is a registered public company having the following:

(a)	Directors and their Relatives	18
(b)	Employees	26
(c)	Ex-Employees (Shares were allotted during employment)	15
(d)	Members holding shares jointly (7 x 2)	14
(e)	Other Members	137

The Board of Directors of MNP Limited proposes to convert the company into a private limited company. Referring the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013, Advise:
i. Whether the company can be converted into a private company?
ii. Whether existing number of members need to be reduced for the proposed private company?

[ICAI Module, May 2022]

Answer

According to Section 2(68) of the Companies Act, 2013, "Private company" means a company having prescribed minimum paid-up share capital, and which by its articles, limits number of its members to 200

However, where two or more persons hold one or more shares in a company jointly, they shall, for the purposes of this clause, be treated as a single member.

It is further provided that following shall not be included in the number of members -

a) persons who are in the employment of the company; and
b) persons who, having been formerly in the employment of the company, were members of the company while in that employment and have continued to be members after the employment ceased.

Accordingly, total number of members in MNP Limited are:

(i)	Directors and their relatives	18
(ii)	Joint shareholders (7x2)	7
(iii)	Other Members	137
	Total	162

(i) MNP Limited may be converted into a private company only if the total members of the company are limited to 200. In the instant case, since existing number of members are 162 which is within the prescribed maximum limit of 200, so MNP Limited can be converted into a private company.
(ii) There is no need for reduction in the number of members for the proposed private company as existing number of members are 162 which does not exceed maximum limit of 200.

Question 9:

ABC Private Ltd. has two wholly owned subsidiary companies, D Private Limited and E Private Limited. Examine, whether, D Private Limited and E Private Limited will be treated as related party as per the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013?

[May 2022]

Answer

According to section 2(76)(viii) of the Companies Act, 2013, Related party, with reference to a company, means any body corporate which is -

a) a holding, subsidiary or an associate company of such company;
b) a subsidiary of a holding company to which it is also a subsidiary; or
c) an investing company or the venturer of the company;

In the given question, D Private Limited and E Private Limited are wholly owned subsidiary companies of ABC Private Ltd. According to stated clause (B), above, D Private Limited and E Private Limited are related parties.

However, as per the Notification No. G.S.R. 464(E) dated 5th June, 2015, clause(viii) shall not apply with respect to section 188 to a private company, though being a related parties.

Alternate Answer:

According to section 2(76)(viii)(B) of the Companies Act, 2013, Related party, with reference to a company, means any body corporate which is a subsidiary of a holding company to which it is also a subsidiary.
However, Clause (viii) shall not apply with respect to section 188 (Related Party transactions) to a private company vide Notification No. G.S.R. 464(E) dated 5th June, 2015.

In the given question, D Private Limited and E Private Limited are wholly owned subsidiary companies of ABC Private Ltd. According to stated clause (B), above, D Private Limited and E Private Limited are related parties. However, as per the mentioned Notification, clause (viii) shall not apply with respect to section 188 to a private company. Therefore, D Private Limited and E Private Limited are not related parties for the purpose of section 188.

Question 10:

Referring the relevant provisions of the Companies Act, 2013, examine, whether following companies will be considered as listed company or unlisted company:

(i) ABC Limited, a public company, has listed its non-convertible Debt securities issued on private placement basis in terms of SEBI (Issue and Listing of Debt Securities) Regulations, 2008.

(ii) CHG Limited, a public company, has listed its non-convertible redeemable preference shares issued on private placement basis in terms of SEBI (Issue and Listing of Non-Convertible Redeemable Preference Shares) Regulations, 2013

(iii) PRS Limited, a public company, which has not listed its equity shares on a recognized stock exchange but whose equity shares are listed on a stock exchange in a jurisdiction as specified in sub-section (3) of section 23 of the Companies Act, 2013.

[Nov 22]

Answer:

According to Section 2(52) of the Companies Act, 2013, listed company means a company which has any of its securities listed on any recognised stock exchange.

Rule 2A: According to Rule 2A of the Companies (Specification of definitions details) Rules, 2014, the following classes of companies shall not be considered as listed companies, namely:

(a) Public cos. which have not listed their equity shares on a recognized stock exchange but have listed their:
   (i) non-convertible debt securities issued on private placement basis in terms of SEBI (Issue and Listing of Debt Securities) Regulations, 2008; or
   (ii) non-convertible redeemable preference shares issued on private placement basis in terms of SEBI (Issue and Listing of Non-Convertible Redeemable Preference Shares) Regulations, 2013; or
   (iii) both categories of (i) and (ii) above.

(b) Public cos. which have not listed their equity shares on a recognized stock exchange but whose equity shares are listed on a stock exchange in a jurisdiction as specified in section 23(3) of the Act.

In view of the above provisions of the Act:

(i) ABC Limited is an unlisted company.
(ii) CHG Limited is an unlisted company.
(iii) PRS Limited is an unlisted company.

Chapter 2 – Incorporation of company and matters incidental thereto

Question 1:
The Articles of Association of XYZ Ltd. provides the Board of Directors authority to issue bonds provided such issue is authorized by the shareholders by a necessary resolution in the general meeting of the company. The company was in dire need of funds and therefore, it issued the bonds to Mr. X without passing any such resolution in general meeting. Can Mr. X recover the money from the company? Decide referring the relevant provisions of the Companies Act, 2013.

[Nov 2016]

Answer
Relevant Provisions
Doctrine of Indoor Management:
According to this doctrine, persons dealing with the company need not inquire whether internal proceedings relating to the contract are followed correctly, once they are satisfied that the transaction is in accordance with the memorandum and articles of association.

Stakeholders need not enquire whether the necessary meeting was convened and held properly or whether necessary resolution was passed properly. They are entitled to take it for granted that the company had gone through all these proceedings in a regular manner.

The doctrine helps to protect external members from the company and states that the people are entitled to presume that internal proceedings are as per documents submitted with the Registrar of Companies.

The company is bound to Mr. X:

(i) since the lender, Mr. X, had lent the money to the company assuming that the company was authorized to borrow money after obtaining authorization from the members in GM;
(ii) since, on the same facts, the Court held in **"Royal British Bank v Turquand"** that the outsiders dealing with the company were not required to inquire into the internal management of the company, and the outsiders were entitled to assume that as far as internal proceedings of the company were concerned, everything had been done regularly (termed as doctrine of indoor management).

Conclusion
In the present case, XYZ Ltd. will be bound to return the money to Mr. X.

Question 2
The directors of Smart Computers limited borrowed a sum of money from Mr. Tridev. The company's articles provided that the directors may borrow on bonds such sums as may, from time to time, be authorized by resolution passed at a general meeting of the company. The shareholders claimed that there had been no such resolution authorizing the loan, and therefore, it was taken without their authority and the company is not bound to repay the loan to Tridev. In the light of the contention of shareholders, decide whether the company is bound to pay the loan.

[MTP May 2020]

Answer
Relevant provision
Doctrine of Indoor Management:
According to this doctrine, persons dealing with the company need not enquire whether internal proceedings relating to the contract are followed correctly, once they are satisfied that the transaction is in accordance with the memorandum and articles of association.

Stakeholders need not enquire whether the necessary meeting was convened and held properly or whether necessary resolution was passed properly. They are entitled to take it for granted that the company had gone through all these proceedings in a regular manner.

The doctrine helps to protect external members from the company and states that the people are entitled to presume that internal proceedings are as per documents submitted with the Registrar of Companies.
Thus,

(i) What happens internal to a company is not a matter of public knowledge. An outsider can only presume the intentions of a company, but not know the information he/she is not privy to.
(ii) If not for the doctrine, the company could escape creditors by denying the authority of officials to act on its behalf.

Conclusion

In the given question, Mr.Tridev being a person external to the company, need not enquire whether the necessary meeting was convened and held properly or whether necessary resolution was passed properly. Even if the shareholders claim that no resolution authorizing the loan was passed, the company is bound to pay the loan to Mr.Tridev.

Question 3

The role of doctrine of 'Indoor management' is opposed to that of the role of 'Constructive notice'. Comment on this statement with reference to the Companies Act, 2013.

[January 2021]

The persons (not being members) dealing with the company are always protected by the doctrine of Indoor management. Explain. Also, explain when doctrine of Constructive Notice will apply.

[Nov 2018, ICAI Module, MTP Nov'22]

Answer

According to this doctrine, persons dealing with the company cannot be assumed to have knowledge of internal problems of the company. They can simply assume that all the required things were done properly in the company.

Stakeholders need not enquire whether the necessary meeting was convened and held properly or whether necessary resolution was passed properly. They are entitled to take it for granted that the company had gone through all these proceedings in a regular manner.

The doctrine helps protect external members from the company and states that the people are entitled to presume that internal proceedings are as per documents submitted with the Registrar of Companies.

The doctrine of indoor management was evolved around 150 years ago in the context of the doctrine of constructive notice. The role of doctrine of indoor management is opposed to of the role of doctrine of constructive notice. Whereas the doctrine of constructive notice protects a company against outsiders, the doctrine of indoor management protects outsiders against the actions of a company. This doctrine also is a possible safeguard against the possibility of abusing the doctrine of constructive notice.

Basis for Doctrine of Indoor Management

(i) What happens internal to a company is not a matter of public knowledge. An outsider can only presume the intentions of a company, but not know the information he/she is not privy to.
(ii) If not for the doctrine, the company could escape creditors by denying the authority of officials to act on its behalf.

Exceptions to Doctrine of Indoor Management (Applicability of doctrine of constructive notice)

Knowledge of irregularity: In case this 'outsider' has actual knowledge of irregularity within the company, the benefit under the rule of indoor management would no longer be available. In fact, he/she may well be considered part of the irregularity.

Negligence: If, with a minimum of effort, the irregularities within a company could be discovered, the benefit of the rule of indoor management would not apply. The protection of the rule is also not available in the circumstances where company does not make proper inquiry.

Forgery: The rule does not apply where a person relies upon a document that turns out to be forged since nothing can validate forgery. A company can never be held bound for forgeries committed by its officers. The above doctrines have been well considered while framing the provisions of various Acts pertaining to the companies worldwide. The Companies Act, 2013 and the earlier Acts relevant for the Companies in India are no exception to the same.

Question 4

Mr. Raja along with his family members is running successfully a trading business. He is capable of developing his ideas and participating in the market place. To achieve this, Mr. Raja formed a single person economic entity in the form of One Person Company with his brother Mr. King as its nominee. On 4th May 2020, Mr. King withdrew his consent as Nominee of the One Person Company. Can he do so under the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013?

Examine whether the following individuals are eligible for being nominated as Nominee of the One Person Company as on 5th May 2020 under the above said Act.

(i) Mr. Shyam, son of Mr. Raja who is 15 years old as on 5th May 2020.

(ii) Ms. Devaki an Indian Citizen, sister of Mr. Raja stays in Dubai and India. She stayed in India during the period from 2nd January 2019 to 16th August 2019. Thereafter she left for Dubai and stayed there.

(iii) Mr. Ashok, an Indian Citizen residing in India who is presently a member of a 'One Person Company'.

[November 2020]

Answer

Relevant provisions

As per section 3 of the Companies Act, 2013, the memorandum of One Person Company (OPC) shall indicate the name of the other person (nominee), who shall, in the event of the subscriber's death or his incapacity to contract, become the member of the company.

The other person (nominee) whose name is given in the memorandum shall give his prior written consent in prescribed form and the same shall be filed with Registrar of companies at the time of incorporation along with its Memorandum of Association and Articles of Association.

Such other person (nominee) may withdraw his consent in such manner as may be prescribed.

Analysis:

Therefore, in terms of the above law, Mr. King, the nominee, whose name was given in the memorandum, can withdraw his consent as a nominee of the OPC by giving a notice in writing to the sole member and to the One Person Company.

Conclusion:

Following are the answers to the second part of the question as regards the eligibility for being nominated as nominee:

(i) No minor shall become member or nominee of the OPC. Therefore, Mr. Shyam, being a minor is not eligible for being nominated as Nominee of the OPC.

(ii) Only a natural person who is an Indian citizen whether resident in India or otherwise, shall be a nominee or the sole member of a One Person Company. The term "Resident in India" means a person who has stayed in India for a period of not less than 120 days during the immediately preceding financial year.

Here Ms. Devaki though an Indian Citizen and a resident in India. So, she is eligible for being nominated as nominee of the OPC.

(iii) As per the Rule 3 of the Companies (Incorporation) Rules, 2014, a person shall not be a member of more than one OPC at any point of time and the said person shall not be a nominee of more than 1 OPC.

Mr. Ashok, an Indian Citizen residing in India who is a member of an OPC (Not a nominee in any OPC), can be nominated as nominee.

Question 5

Red Limited was incorporated on 1st April, 2014 is facing severe effects of depression of the economy. Owing to its bad financial status most of the members have started withdrawing their holding from the company. The company had 250 members on 10th January, 2019. By 15th January, 2019, 244 members had withdrawn their holding. No new member has invested in the company after 15th February till date. Now, Mr. A, an existing member has approached you to advise him regarding his liabilities in such a situation.

[RTP Nov 2019]

OR

What is the minimum number of persons required to form a Private company and a Public Company? Explain the consequences when the number of members falls below the minimum prescribed limit.

[MTP Nov 2021]

Answer

Relevant Provisions

According to section 3A of the Companies Act, 2013, if at any time the number of members of a company is reduced, in the case of a public company, below seven, in the case of a private company, below two, and the company carries on business for more than six months while the number of members is so reduced, every person who is a member of the company during the time that it so carries on business after those six months and is cognizant of the fact that it is carrying on business with less than seven members or two members, as the case may be, shall be severally liable for the payment of the whole debts of the company contracted during that time, and may be severally sued therefor.

Conclusion

Hence, in the given situation, the number of member in the said public company have fallen below 7 [250-244=6] and these members have continued beyond the specified limit of 6 months, the reduced members of the company during the period of 1 month shall be severally liable for the payment of the whole debts of the company contracted during that time, and may be severally sued therefor.

Question 6

Yadav Dairy Products Private limited has registered its articles along with memorandum at the time of registration of company in December, 2014. Now directors of the company are of the view that provisions of articles regarding forfeiture of shares should not be changed except by a resolution of 90% majority. While as per section 14 of the Companies Act, 2013 articles may be changed by passing a special resolution only. Hence, one of the directors is of the view that they cannot make a provision against the Companies Act, 2013. You are required to advise the company on this matter.

[RTP May 2020, ICAI Module]

OR

The Articles of Association of a Company may contain provisions for entrenchment under Section 5 of the Companies Act, 2013. What is meant by entrenchment provisions in this context? Also State the relevant provisions of the said Act dealing with entrenchment provisions.

[Nov 2020, MTP Nov'22]

Answer

Relevant Provisions

As per section 5 of the Companies Act, 2013 the article may contain provisions for entrenchment to the effect that specified provisions of the articles may be altered only if more restrictive conditions than a special resolution, are met.

The provisions for entrenchment shall only be made either on formation of a company, or by an amendment in the articles agreed to by all the members of the company in the case of a private company and by a special resolution in the case of a public company.

Where the articles contain provisions for entrenchment, whether made on formation or by amendment, the company shall give notice to the Registrar of such provisions in prescribed manner.

Conclusions

In the present case, Yadav Dairy Products Private Limited is a private company and wants to protect provisions of articles regarding forfeiture of shares. It means it wants to make entrenchment of articles, which is allowed. But the company will have to pass a resolution taking permission of all the members and it should also give notice to Register of Companies regarding entrenchment of articles.

Question 7

Mr. Shyamlal is a B. Tech in computer science. He has promoted an IT start up and got it registered as a Private Limited Company. Initially, only he and his family members are holding all the shares in the company. While drafting the Articles of Association of the company, it has been included that Mr. Shyamlal will remain as a director of the company for lifetime.

Mr. Mehra, a close friend of Mr. Shyamlal has warned him (Mr. Shyamlal) that in future if 75% or more shares in the company are held by non- family members then by passing a Special Resolution, the relevant articles can be amended and Mr. Shyamlal may be removed from the post of director.

Mr. Shyamlal has approached you to advise him for protecting his position as a director for lifetime. Give your answer as per the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013.

[MTP April 2021]

Answer

Relevant provisions

As per the provisions of sub-section (3) of section 5 of the Companies Act, 2013, the articles may contain provisions for entrenchment to the effect that specified provisions of the articles may be altered only if conditions or procedures as that are more restrictive than those applicable in the case of special resolution are met or complied with.

Usually, an article of association may be altered by passing a special resolution but entrenchment makes it one difficult to change it. So, entrenchment means making something more protective.

Manner of inclusion of the entrenchment provision:

As per the provisions of sub-section (4) of section 5 of the Companies Act, 2013, the provisions of entrenchment shall only be made either on formation of a company, or by an amendment in the Articles of Association as agreed to by all the members of the company in the case of a private company and by a special resolution in case of a public company.

Notice to the Registrar of the entrenchment provision:

As per the provisions of sub-section (4) of section 5 of the Companies Act, 2013, where the articles contain provision for entrenchment whether made on formation or by amendment, the company shall give notice to the Registrar of such provisions in such form and manner as may be prescribed.

Conclusion

In the said situation the IT startup company is a private company. Therefore, Mr. Shyamlal can get the articles altered which is agreed to by all the members whereby the amended article will say that he can be removed from the post of director only if, say, 95% votes are cast in favour of the resolution and give notice of the same to the Registrar.

Question 8

Mr. Ram along with his brothers got registered a company in the state of Telangana by furnishing false information knowingly. What action may be taken against the company and its promoters under the provisions of the companies act, 2013?

[MTP-2 May 23]

OR

Mahima Ltd. was incorporated by furnishing false information. As per the Companies Act, 2013, state the powers of the Tribunal (NCLT) in this regard.

[Nov 2019]

Answer

Relevant Provisions

Order of the Tribunal:

According to section 7(7) of the Companies Act, 2013, where a company has been got incorporated by furnishing false or incorrect information or representation or by suppressing any material fact or information in any of the documents or declaration filed or made for incorporating such company or by any fraudulent action, the Tribunal may, on an application made to it, on being satisfied that the situation so warrants:

(i) pass such orders, as it may think fit, for regulation of the management of the company including changes, if any, in its memorandum and articles, in public interest or in the interest of the company and its members and creditors; or
(ii) direct that liability of the members shall be unlimited; or
(iii) direct removal of the name of the company from the register of companies; or
(iv) pass an order for the winding up of the company; or
(v) pass such other orders as it may deem fit.

However before making any order-.

(i) the company shall be given a reasonable opportunity of being heard in the matter; and
(ii) the Tribunal shall take into consideration the transactions entered into by the company, including the obligations, if any, contracted or payment of any liability.

Also the promoters, the persons named as the first directors of the company and the persons making declaration at the time of registration of company shall each be liable for action under section 447.

Question 9

Mr. Bindra is holding 950 equity shares of Bio safe Herbals, a section 8 company. Bio safe Herbals is planning to declare dividend in the Annual General Meeting for the Financial Year ended 31-03-2020. Examine whether the act of the company is in accordance with the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013.

[RTP May 2021]

Answer

Relevant Provisions

According to Section 8(1) of the Companies Act, 2013, the companies licensed under Section 8 of the Act (Formation of companies with Charitable Objects, etc.) are prohibited from paying any dividend to their members. Their profits are intended to be applied only in promoting the objects for which they are formed.

Conclusions

Hence, in the instant case, the proposed act of Bio safe Herbals, a company licensed under Section 8 of the Companies Act, 2013, which is planning to declare dividend, is not in accordance to the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013.

Question 10

One of the matters contained in the articles of Dhimaan Foundation, incorporated as a limited company under section 8 of the Companies Act, 2013, was altered by passing a special resolution in its general meeting and thereafter, intimation for the same was given to Registrar of Companies.

However, such alteration in the articles was opposed by Dhwaj & Co., a partnership firm which is its member that there such alteration was not valid.

Advise, as per the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013, whether the contention of Dhwaj & Co. was valid and whether it can be a member in such company?

[RTP May 2022]

Answer

According to **section 8** of the Companies Act, 2013, a company registered under this section shall not alter the provisions of its memorandum or articles except with the previous approval of the Central Government (the power has been delegated to Registrar of Companies).

Also, a firm may be a member of the company registered under section 8. Here, one of the matters of articles of Dhimaan Foundation was altered by passing a special resolution in its general meeting and thereafter, intimation for the same was given to Registrar of Companies.

As per the provisions of the Act, it is necessary to take previous approval of the Registrar of Companies for the same which was not done in the present case and thus the contention of Dhwaj & Co. was valid. Also, section 8 allows a firm to be a member of such company and hence, Dhwaj & Co. can be its member.

Question 11

Alfa school started imparting education on 1.4.2010, with the sole objective of providing education to children of weaker society either free of cost or at a very nominal fee depending upon the financial condition of their parents. However, on 30th March 2018, it came to the knowledge of the Central Government that the said school was operating by violating the objects of its objective clause due to which it was granted the status of a section 8 company under the Companies Act, 2013. Describe what powers can be exercised by the Central Government against the Alfa School, in such a case?

[MTP Aug 2018, MTP March 2019, ICAI Module]

OR

Mr. X, in association with his relative formed a company to promote education for the children of poor section. A license was issued by the Central Government allowing the said company to be registered under section 8 of the Company. Government aids and lot of funds were contributed by public for the fulfilment of the benevolent object. However, on the compliant against the company, CG came to know about the manipulation of the funds in the company and so order to revoke the license of the company. Further, directed for the amalgamation with another company registered under this section with an object to save girl child.

Examine the legal position as to the order passed by the Central government in the given situation in the light of the Companies Act, 2013.

[MTP Oct 2018]

OR

State Cricket Club was formed as a Limited Liability Company under Section 8 of the Companies Act, 2013 with the object of promoting cricket by arranging introductory cricket courses at district level and friendly matches. The club has been earning surplus. Of late, the affairs of the company are conducted fraudulently and dividend was paid to its members. Mr. Cool, a member decided make a complaint with Regulatory Authority to curb the fraudulent activities by cancelling the license given to the company.

(i) Is there any provision under the Companies Act, 2013 to revoke the license? If so, state the provisions.

(ii) Whether the Company may be wound up?

(iii) Whether the State Cricket Club can be merged with M/s. Cool Net Private Limited, a company engaged in the business of networking?

[July 2021, MTP Nov'22]

Answer

Section 8 of the Companies Act, 2013 deals with the formation of companies which are formed to promote the charitable objects of commerce, art, science, education, sports etc. Such company intends to apply its profit in promoting its objects.

Section 8 companies are registered by the Registrar only when a license is issued by the Central Government to them. Since, Alfa School was a Section 8 company and it had started violating the objects of its objective clause, hence in such a situation the following powers can be exercised by the Central Government:

(i) The Central Government may by order revoke the license of the company where the company contravenes any of the requirements or the conditions of this sections subject to which a license is issued or where the affairs of the company are conducted fraudulently, or violative of the objects of the company or prejudicial to public interest, and on revocation the Registrar shall put 'Limited' or 'Private Limited' against the company's name in the register.

Provided that, no such order shall be made unless the company is given a reasonable opportunity of being heard.

(ii) Where a license is revoked, the Central Government may, by order, if it is satisfied that it is essential in the public interest, direct that the company be wound up under this Act or amalgamated with another company registered under this section.

However, no such order shall be made unless the company is given a reasonable opportunity of being heard.

(iii) Where a license is revoked and where the Central Government is satisfied that it is essential in the public interest that the company registered under this section should be amalgamated with another company registered under this section and having similar objects, then, notwithstanding anything to the contrary contained in this Act, the Central Government may, by order, provide for such amalgamation to form a single company with such constitution, properties, powers, rights, interest, authorities and privileges and with such liabilities, duties and obligations as may be specified in the order.

Conclusion of the alternative question (Mr. X…)

According to the given situation, on revocation of license, the Central Government ordered for the amalgamation of the company with the separate entity registered under the section 8 of the Companies Act, 2013. However, an object for which both the Companies formed were promoting different objects. Accordingly, the order passed by the Central Government after the revocation of license, is not in compliance of the Section 8 of the Companies Act, 2013.

Question 12

A group of individuals intend to form a club namely 'Budding Pilots Flying Club' as limited liability company to impart classroom teaching and aircraft flight training to trainee pilots. It was decided to form a limited liability company for charitable purpose under Section 8 of the Companies Act, 2013 for a period of ten years and thereafter the club will be dissolved and the surplus of assets over the liabilities, if any, will be distributed amongst the members as a usual procedure allowed under the Companies Act, 2013.

Examine the feasibility of the proposal and advise the promoters considering the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013.

[MTP Oct 2020, May 2019, ICAI Module]

Answer

Relevant provision

According to section 8(1) of the Companies Act, 2013, where it is proved to the satisfaction of the Central Government that a person or an association of persons proposed to be registered under this Act as a limited company:

(i) has in its objects the promotion of commerce, art, science, sports, education, research, social welfare, religion, charity, protection of environment or any such other object;
(ii) intends to apply its profits, if any, or other income in promoting its objects; and
(iii) intends to prohibit the payment of any dividend to its members;

the Central Government may, by issue of license, allow that person or association of persons to be registered as a limited liability company.

Conclusion

In the instant case, the decision of the group of individuals to form a limited liability company for charitable purpose under section 8 for a period of ten years and thereafter to dissolve the club and to distribute the surplus of assets over the liabilities, if any, amongst the members will not hold good, since there is a restriction as pointed out in point (b) above regarding application of its profits or other income only in promoting its objects.

Further, there is restriction in the application of the surplus assets of such a company in the event of winding up or dissolution of the company as provided in sub-section (9) of Sec 8 of the Companies Act, 2013.

Therefore, the proposal is not feasible.

Author's Note:
Depending on the marks of the question, student may include the provision of Sec 8(9) in the Relevant provision section of this answer. **Sec 8(9) is as stated below:**
If on winding up/dissolution, there remains any assets, after satisfaction of its liabilities, they may be:
a. transferred to another section 8 co. having similar objects subject to T&C imposed by Tribunal, or
b. sold and proceeds thereof credited to Insolvency and Bankruptcy Fund formed u/s 224 of IBC, 2016

Question 13
Mr. Dinesh incorporated a new Private Limited Company under the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013 and desires to commence the business immediately. Please advise Mr. Dinesh about the procedure for commencement of business as laid under the provisions of the Section 10A of the Companies Act, 2013.
[MTP April 2021]

Answer
As per Section 10A of the Companies Act, 2013, a company incorporated after the commencement of the Companies (Amendment) Second Ordinance, 2019 and having a share capital shall not commence any business or exercise any borrowing powers unless:

(i) A declaration is filed by a director within a period of 180 days of the date of incorporation of the company in such form and verified in such manner as may be prescribed, with the Registrar that every subscriber to the memorandum has paid the value of the shares agreed to be taken by him on the date of making of such declaration; and
(ii) The company has filed with the Registrar a verification of it registered office as provided in sub-section (2) of section 12.

Mr. Dinesh has to comply with the above requirements and procedure for commencing the business of the company.

Question 14
XY Ltd. has its registered office at Mumbai in the State of Maharashtra. For better administrative conveniences the company wants to shift its registered office from Mumbai to Nashik (within the State of Maharashtra). What formalities the company has to comply with under the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013 for shifting its registered office as stated above? Explain.
[MTP April 2019,MTP Oct 2019,ICAI Module]

Answer
The Companies Act, 2013 under section 13 provides for the process of altering the Memorandum of a company. Since the location or Registered Office clause in the Memorandum only names the state in which its registered office is situated, a change in address from Mumbai to Nashik, does not result in the alteration of the Memorandum and hence the provisions of section 13 (and its sub sections) do not apply in this case.

However, under section 12 (5) of the Act which deals with the registered office of company, the change in registered office from one town or city to another in the same state, must be approved by a special resolution of the company.

Further, presuming that the Registrar will remain the same for the whole state of Maharashtra, there will be no need for the company to seek the confirmation to such change from the Regional Director.

Question 15
Examine the validity of the following different decisions/proposals regarding change of office by A Ltd. under the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013:

(i) The Registered office is shifted from Thane (Local Limit of Thane District) to Dadar (Local limit of

Mumbai District), both places falling within the jurisdiction of the Registrar of Mumbai, by passing a special resolution but without obtaining the approval of the Regional Director.

(ii) The Registered office is situated in Mumbai, Maharashtra (within the jurisdiction of the Registrar, Mumbai, Maharashtra State) whereas the Corporate Office is situated in Pune, Maharashtra State (within the jurisdiction of the Registrar, Pune). A Ltd. proposes to shift its corporate office from Pune to Mumbai under the authority of a Board resolution.

(iii) The registered office situated in certain place of a city is proposed to be shifted to another place within the local limits of the same city under the authority of Board Resolution.

[July 2021, MTP 1 May'23]

Answer

Regarding the validity of Proposals w.r.t change of registered office by A Ltd. in the light of the section 12 of the Companies Act, 2013:

(i) In the first case, where the Registered office is shifted from Thane to Dadar (one District to another District) falling under jurisdiction of same ROC i.e. Registrar of Mumbai.

As per Section 12 (5) of the Act which deals with the change in registered office outside the local limit from one town or city to another in the same state, may take place by virtue of a special resolution passed by the company. No approval of regional director is required as both the places are falling within the jurisdiction of the Registrar of Mumbai. Accordingly, said proposal is valid.

(ii) Section 12 talks about shifting of Registered office only, In the second case the corporate office is being shifted from Pune to Mumbai under the authority of Board resolution. Shifting of corporate office under the board resolution is valid.

(iii) In the third case, change of registered office within the local limits of the same city. Said proposal is valid in terms it has been passed under the authority of Board resolution.

Question 16

Vintage security equipment's limited is a manufacturer of CCTV cameras. It has raised Rs. 100 crores through public issue of its equity shares for starting one more unit of CCTV camera manufacturing. It has utilized 10 crores rupees and then it realized that its existing business has no potential for expansion because government has reduced customs duty on import of CCTV camera hence imported cameras from china are cheaper than its own manufacturing. Now it wants to utilize remaining amount in mobile app development business by adding a new object in its memorandum of association.

Does the Companies Act, 2013 allow such change of object. If not then what advise will you give to company. If yes, then give steps to be followed.

[RTP Nov 2019, ICAI Module]

Answer

Relevant Provisions

According to **section 13** of the Companies Act, 2013 a company, which has raised money from public through prospectus and still has any unutilized amount out of the money so raised, shall not change its objects for which it raised the money through prospectus unless a special resolution is passed by the company and:

(i) the details in respect of such resolution shall also be published in the newspapers (one in English and one in vernacular language) which is in circulation at the place where the registered office of the company is situated and shall also be placed on the website of the company, if any, indicating therein the justification for such change;

(ii) the dissenting shareholders shall be given an opportunity to exit by the promoters and shareholders having control in accordance with SEBI regulations.

Company will have to file copy of special resolution with ROC and he will certify the registration within a period of thirty days. Alteration will be effective only after this certificate by ROC.

Question 17

The object clause of the Memorandum of Vivek Industries Limited., empowers it to carry on real-estate business and any other business that is allied to it. Due to a downward trend in real-estate business, the management of the company has decided to take up the business of Food processing activity. The company wants to alter its Memorandum, so as to include the Food Processing Business in its objects clause. Examine whether the company can make such change as per the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013?

[ICAI Module]

Answer

Relevant provision

The Companies Act, 2013 has made alteration of the memorandum simpler and more flexible. Under section 13(1) of the Act, a company may, by a special resolution after complying with the procedure specified in this section, alter the provisions of its Memorandum.

In the case of alteration to the objects clause, section 13(6) requires the filing of the Special Resolution by the company with the Registrar. Section 13 (9) states that the Registrar shall register any alteration to the Memorandum with respect to the objects of the company and certify the registration within a period of thirty days from the date of filing of the special resolution by the company.

Section 13 (10) further stipulates that no alteration in the Memorandum shall take effect unless it has been registered with the Registrar as above.

Conclusion

Hence, the Companies Act, 2013 permits any alteration to the objects clause with ease. Vivek Industries Limited can make the required changes in the object clause of its Memorandum of Association.

Question 18

Manglu and friends got registered a company in the name of Taxmann Advisory private limited. Taxmann is a registered trademark. After 5 years when the owner of trademark came to know about the same, it filed an application with relevant authority. Can the company be compelled to change its name by the owner of trademark? Can the owner of registered trademark request the company and then company changes its name at its discretion?

[ICAI Module, RTP May'23]

Answer

Relevant provision

According to section 16 of the Companies Act, 2013 if a company is registered by a name which,—

(i) in the opinion of the Central Government, is identical with the name by which a company had been previously registered, it may direct the company to change its name. Then the company shall by passing an ordinary resolution change its name within 3 months.

(ii) is identical with a registered trade mark and owner of that trade mark apply to the Central Government within three years of incorporation of registration of the company, it may direct the company to change its name. Then the company shall change its name by passing an ordinary resolution within 3 months.

Company shall give notice to ROC along with the order of Central Government within 15 days of change. In case of default company and defaulting officer are punishable.

In the given case, owner of registered trade- mark is filing objection after 5 years of registration of company with a wrong name. While it should have filed the same within 3 years. Therefore, the company cannot be compelled to change its name.

As per section 13, company can anytime change its name by passing a special resolution and taking approval of Central Government. Therefore, if owner of registered trademark request the company for change of its name and the company accepts the same then it can change its name voluntarily by following the provisions of sec 13.

Question 19

The Board of Directors of Sindhu Limited wants to make some changes and to alter some Clauses of the Articles of Association which are to be urgently carried out, which include the increase in Authorized Capital of the company, issue of shares, increase in borrowing limits and increase in the number of directors.
Discuss about the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013 to be followed for alteration of Articles of Association.

[RTP Nov 2018]

Answer

Alteration in Articles of Association: Section 14 of the Companies Act, 2013, vests companies with power to alter or add to its articles. The law with respect to alteration of articles is as follows:

(i) Alteration by special resolution: Subject to the provisions of this Act and the conditions contained in its memorandum, if any, a company may, by a special resolution alter its articles.

(ii) Filing of alteration with the registrar: Every alteration of the articles and a copy of the order of the Tribunal approving the alteration, shall be filed with the Registrar, together with a printed copy of the altered articles, within 15 days in such manner as may be prescribed, who shall register the same.

(iii) Any alteration made shall be valid: Any alteration of the articles registered as above shall, subject to the provisions of this Act, be valid as if it were originally contained in the articles.

(iv) Alteration noted in every copy: Every alteration made in articles of a company shall be noted in every copy of the articles, as the case may be. If a company makes any default in complying with the stated provisions, the company and every officer who is in default shall be liable to a penalty of one thousand rupees for every copy of the articles issued without such alteration. [Section 15]

Question 20

Naveen incorporated a "One Person Company" making his sister Navita as the nominee. Navita is leaving India permanently due to her marriage abroad. Due to this fact, she is withdrawing her consent of nomination in the said One Person Company. Taking into considerations the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013 answer the questions given below:

(i) If Navita is leaving India permanently, is it mandatory for her to withdraw her nomination in the said One Person Company?

(ii) If Navita maintained the status of Resident of India after her marriage, then can she continue her nomination in the said One Person Company?

[Nov 19, RTP May 2021]

Answer

As per the Companies (Incorporation) Rules, 2014:

Only a natural person who is an Indian citizen whether resident in India or otherwise shall be eligible to incorporate a One Person Company or shall be a nominee for the sole member of a One Person Company.

In line with the above provision:

(i) No, it is not mandatory for Navita to withdraw her nomination in the said OPC as she is leaving India permanently as residential status is not relevant. A natural person who is an Indian citizen whether resident in India or otherwise can be a nominee in OPC.

(ii) Navita can continue her nomination in the said OPC irrespective of her residential status as she is a natural person with Indian citizenship.

Question 21

S Ltd. is a company in which H Ltd. is holding 60% of its paid up share capital. One of the shareholder of H Ltd. made a charitable trust and donated his 10% shares in H Ltd. And 50 crores to the trust. He appoints S Ltd. as the trustee. All the assets of the trust are held in the name of S Ltd. Can a subsidiary hold shares in its holding company in this way?

[RTP Nov 2019, ICAI Module, MTP Nov'22, MTP 1 May'23]

OR

Explain in the light of the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013, the circumstances under which a subsidiary company can become a member of its holding company

[ICAI Module]

Answer

Relevant Provisions

According to **section 19** of the Companies Act, 2013 a company shall not hold any shares in its holding company either by itself or through its nominees. Also, holding company shall not allot or transfer its shares to any of its subsidiary companies and any such allotment or transfer of shares of a company to its subsidiary company shall be void.

Following are the exceptions to the above rule—

(i) where the subsidiary company holds such shares as the legal representative of a deceased member of the holding company; or

(ii) where the subsidiary company holds such shares as a trustee; or

(iii) where the subsidiary company is a shareholder even before it became a subsidiary company of the holding company but in this case it will not have a right to vote in the meeting of holding company.

Conclusion

In the given case one of the shareholders of holding company has transferred his shares in the holding company to a trust where the shares will be held by subsidiary company. It means now subsidiary will hold shares in the holding company. But it will hold shares in the capacity of a trustee. Therefore, we can conclude that in the given situation S Ltd. can hold shares in H Ltd.

Question 22

Kavya Ltd. has a paid up share-capital of Rs. 80 crores. Anjali Ltd. holds a total of Rs. 50 crores of Kavya Ltd. Now, Kavya ltd. is making huge profits and wants to expand its business and is aiming at investing in Anjali Ltd. Kavya Ltd. has approached you to analyze whether as per the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013, they can hold 1/10th of the share capital of Anjali Ltd.

[MTP March 2021]

Answer

Relevant provision

In terms of section 2 (87) of the Companies Act 2013 "subsidiary company" or "subsidiary", in relation to any other company (that is to say the holding company), means a company in which the holding company—

(i) controls the composition of the Board of Directors; or

(ii) exercises or controls more than one-half of the total voting power either at its own or together with one or more of its subsidiary companies:

Provided that such class or classes of holding companies as may be prescribed shall not have layers of subsidiaries beyond such numbers as may be prescribed.

Since, Anjali ltd. is holding more than one half (50 crores out of 80 crores) of the total voting power of Kavya Ltd., it (Anjali Ltd.) is holding of Kavya Ltd.

Further, as per the provisions of section 19 of the Companies Act, 2013, no company shall, either by itself or through its nominees, hold any shares in its holding company and no holding company shall allot or transfer its shares to any of its subsidiary companies and any such allotment or transfer of shares of a company to its subsidiary company shall be void:

Provided that nothing in this sub-section shall apply to a case—

(i) where the subsidiary company holds such shares as the legal representative of a deceased member of the holding company; or

(ii) where the subsidiary company holds such shares as a trustee; or

(iii) where the subsidiary company is a shareholder even before it became a subsidiary company of the holding company

Conclusion

In the given question, Kavya ltd. cannot acquire the shares of Amjali Ltd. as the acquisition of shares does not fall within the ambit of any of the exceptions provided in section 19.

Question 23

AB Limited issued equity shares of Rs. 1,00,000 (10000 shares of Rs. 10 each) on 01.04.2020 which have been fully subscribed whereby XY Limited holds 4000 shares and PQ Limited holds 2000 shares in AB Limited. AB Limited is also holding 20% equity shares of RS Limited before the date of issue of equity shares stated above. RS Limited controls the composition of Board of Directors of XY Limited and PQ Limited from 01.08.2020. Examine with relevant provisions of the Companies Act, 2013:

(i) Whether AB Limited is a subsidiary of RS Limited?
(ii) Whether AB Limited can hold shares of RS Limited?
(iii) Whether AB Limited can vote at Annual General Meeting of RS Limited held on 30.09.2020?

[RTP Nov 2021]

Answer

Relevant Provisions

This given problem is based on sub-clause (87) of Clause 2 read with section 19 of the Companies Act, 2013. As per sub-clause (87) of Clause 2 of the Companies Act, 2013 "subsidiary company" or "subsidiary", in relation to any other company (i.e., the holding company), means a company in which the holding company—

(i) controls the composition of the Board of Directors; or
(ii) exercises or controls more than one-half of the total voting power either at its own or together with one or more of its subsidiary companies.

For the purposes of this clause, Explanation is given providing that a company shall be deemed to be a subsidiary company of the holding company even if the control referred to in point (i) or point (ii) above, is of another subsidiary company of the holding company.

Whereas Section 19 provides that, no company shall, hold any shares in its holding company and no holding company shall allot or transfer its shares to any of its subsidiary companies and any such allotment or transfer of shares of a company to its subsidiary company shall be void.

Provided that nothing in this sub-section shall apply to a case where the subsidiary company is a shareholder even before it became a subsidiary company of the holding company.

Here in the instant case, AB Ltd. issued 10,000 equity shares on 1.4.2020 whereby XY Ltd. & PQ Ltd. holds 4000 & 2000 shares respectively in AB Ltd., Considering 1 share = 1 vote, XY Ltd. and PQ Ltd. together holds more than one-half (50%) of the total voting power. Therefore, AB Ltd. will be subsidiary to XY Ltd. & PQ Ltd. from 1.4.2020.

Whereas AB Ltd. is already holding 20% equity shares of RS Ltd. before the date of issue of equity shares i.e., 1.4.2020.

Further, RS Ltd. controls the composition of Board of Directors of XY Ltd. and PQ Ltd. from 01.08.2020. In the light of sub-clause (87) of Clause 2, RS Ltd. is a holding company of XY Ltd. and PQ Ltd. (Subsidiary companies).

Conclusions

Following are the answers to the questions:

(i) Yes. In this case AB Ltd. shall be deemed to be a subsidiary company of the holding company (RS Ltd.) as RS Ltd. controls the composition of subsidiary companies XY Ltd. & PQ Ltd. as per explanation to sub-clause (87) of Clause 2.
(ii) Yes. In this case AB Limited is a subsidiary of RS Limited as AB Ltd. was holding 20% of equity shares of RS Ltd. even before it became a subsidiary company of the RS Ltd. (i.e. on 01 08.2020), according to the exception to section 19.
(iii) No. The subsidiary company shall have a right to vote at a meeting of the holding company only in

respect of the shares held by it as a legal representative or as a trustee but not where the subsidiary company is a shareholder even before it became a subsidiary company of the holding company. Therefore, AB Ltd. cannot vote at AGM of RS Ltd. held on 30.9.2020.

Question 24

Give answer in the following cases as per the Companies Act, 2013:

(i) X Ltd., holds 20 lacs shares in ABZ Ltd. In 2017, ABZ Ltd. controls the composition of the Board of directors of X Ltd. and transfers certain shares to it. State whether such transfer of shares by ABZ Ltd. to X Ltd. is valid.

(ii) In continuation of above facts, Mr. R, is a member of the ABZ Ltd. He met an accident. Mr. N (son of Mr. R), is one of the director of the X Ltd. He was also a nominee of shares held by Mr. R. Being a legal representative and nominee, Mr. N gets transferred the shares of Mr. R. State on the validity of the transfer of such shares to Mr. N of X Ltd.

[MTP Oct 2018]

Answer

Relevant provisions

As per section 2(87) of the Companies Act, 2013, X Ltd. is a subsidiary company of ABZ Ltd. as ABZ Ltd. controls the composition of the Board of Directors of X Ltd.

Further, section 19 of the companies Act provides that no company shall, either by itself or through its nominees, hold any shares in its holding company and no holding company shall allot or transfer its shares to any of its subsidiary companies and any such allotment or transfer of shares of a company to its subsidiary company shall be void.

Provided that this sub-section shall not apply-

a) where the subsidiary company holds such shares as the legal representative of a deceased member of the holding company; or

b) where the subsidiary company holds such shares as a trustee; or

c) where subsidiary co. is a shareholder even before it became a subsidiary company of the holding co.

Conclusion

On the basis of the above provisions, following are the answers:

(i) In the given case, X ltd. already holds shares in ABZ Ltd. before becoming its subsidiary. The given situations falls within the purview of the exceptions when such transfer of shares by holding company to its subsidiary is permissible. So this transfer of shares by ABZ Ltd. to X Ltd. is valid.

(ii) This situation falls within the purview of exemption stating that such subsidiary company who holds such shares as the legal representative of a deceased member of the holding company, are entitled to hold the shares of the holding company. So Mr. N being the legal representative of the deceased member of the Holding company, was entitled for the holding of shares of ABZ Ltd.

Question 25

S Ltd acquired 10% paid up share capital of H Ltd on 15th March 2017. H Ltd acquired 55% paid up share capital of S Ltd on 10th March 2018. H Ltd. on 25th September, 2020 decided to issue bonus shares in the ratio of 1:1 to the existing shareholders. Accordingly, bonus shares were allotted to S Ltd. Examine under the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013 and decide

(i) the validity of holding of shares by S Ltd. in H Ltd.

(ii) allotment of Bonus shares by H Ltd. to S Ltd.

[November 2020]

Answer

Relevant provision

As per Section 19 of the Companies Act, 2013, no company shall, hold any shares in its holding company and no holding company shall allot or transfer its shares to any of its subsidiary companies and any such allotment or transfer of shares of a company to its subsidiary company shall be void.

However, this shall not apply where the subsidiary company is a shareholder even before it became a subsidiary company of the holding company.

In the given case, H Ltd. has acquired 55% paid up share capital of S Ltd. on 10th March 2018. Whereas, S Ltd. has been holding 10% paid up share capital of H Ltd. since 15th March, 2017. The said instance as asked in the question falls under the exception stated above.

Conclusion

Therefore -

(i) Holding of shares by S Ltd. in H Ltd. is valid in view of the proviso (c) to sub-section (1) of section 19 of the Act, which states that the restrictions of provisions of section 19(1) will not be applicable where the subsidiary company is a shareholder even before it became a subsidiary company of the holding company.

(ii) Allotment of bonus shares by H Ltd. to S Ltd. is also valid in view of the above proviso.

Question 26

As at 31st March, 2018, the paid up share capital of S Ltd. is Rs. 1,00,00,000 divided into 10,00,000 equity shares of 10 each. Of this, H Ltd. is holding 6,00,000 equity shares and 4,00,000 equity shares are held by others. Simultaneously, S Ltd. is holding 5% equity shares of H Ltd. out of which 1% shares are held as a legal representative of a deceased member of H Ltd. On the basis of the given information, examine and answer the following queries with reference to the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013 :

(i) Can S Ltd. make further investment in equity shares of H Ltd. during 2018-19?

(ii) Can S Ltd. exercise voting rights at Annual general meeting of H Ltd.?

(iii) Can H Ltd. allot or transfer some of its shares to S Ltd.?

[May 2019]

Answer

The paid up share capital of S Ltd. is 1,00,00,000 divided into 10,00,000 equity shares of 10 each. Of this, H Ltd. is holding 6,00,000 equity shares. Hence, H Ltd. is the holding company of S Ltd. and S Ltd. is the subsidiary company of H Ltd. by virtue of section 2(87) of the Companies Act, 2013.

In the instant case,

(i) As per the provisions of sub-section (1) of Section 19 of the Companies Act, 2013, no company shall, either by itself or through its nominees, hold any shares in its holding company. Therefore, S Ltd. cannot make further investment in equity shares of H Ltd. during 2018-19.

(ii) As per second proviso to Section 19, a subsidiary company shall have a right to vote at a meeting of the holding company only in respect of the shares held by it as a legal representative or as a trustee. Therefore, S Ltd. can exercise voting rights at the Annual General Meeting of H Ltd. only in respect of 1% shares held as a legal representative of a deceased member of H Ltd.

(iii) Section 19 also provides that no holding company shall allot or transfer its shares to any of its subsidiary companies and any such allotment or transfer of shares of a company to its subsidiary company shall be void. Therefore, H Ltd. cannot allot or transfer some of its shares to S Ltd.

Question 27

Vijay, a member of Mayur Electricals Ltd. gave in writing to the company that the notice for any general meeting be sent to him only by registered post at his residential address at Kanpur for which he deposited sufficient money. The company sent notice to him by ordinary mail under certificate of posting. Vijay did not receive this notice and could not attend the meeting and contended that the notice was improper.

Decide:

(i) Whether the contention of Vijay is valid.

(ii) Will your answer be the same if Vijay remains in London for two months during the notice of the meeting and the meeting held?

[RTP Nov 2020, ICAI Module]

Answer

Relevant Provisions

According to **section 20(2)** of the Companies Act, 2013, a document may be served on Registrar or any member by sending it to him by post or by registered post or by speed post or by courier or by delivering at his office or address, or by such electronic or other mode as may be prescribed.

Provided that a member may request for delivery of any document through a particular mode, for which he shall pay such fees as may be determined by the company in its annual general meeting.

Thus, if a member wants the notice to be served on him only by registered post at his residential address at Kanpur for which he has deposited sufficient money, the notice must be served accordingly, otherwise service will not be deemed to have been effected.

Conclusions

Accordingly, the questions as asked may be answered as under:

(i) The contention of Vijay shall be tenable, for the reason that the notice was not properly served.

(ii) In the given circumstances, the company is bound to serve a valid notice to Vijay by registered post at his residential address at Kanpur and not outside India.

Question 28

Explain the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013 relating to the 'Service of Documents' on a company and the members of the company.

[MTP Mar 2021, ICAI Module, MTP Nov'22]

Answer

Under section 20 of the Companies Act, 2013 a document may be served on a company or an officer thereof by sending it to the company or the officer at the registered office of the company by registered post or by speed post or by courier service or by leaving it at its registered office or by means of such electronic or other mode as may be prescribed.

However, in case where securities are held with a depository, the records of the beneficial ownership may be served by such depository on the company by means of electronic or other mode.

Under section 20 (2), save as provided in the Act or the rule thereunder for filing of documents with the registrar in electronic mode, a document may be served on Registrar or any member by sending it to him by post or by registered post or by speed post or by courier or by delivering at his office or address, or by such electronic or other mode as may be prescribed.

However, a member may request for delivery of any document through a particular mode, for which he shall pay such fees as may be determined by the company in its annual general meeting.

Question 29

Parag Constructions Limited is a leading infrastructure company. One of the directors of the company Mr. Parag has been signing all construction contracts on behalf of company for many years. All the parties who ever deal with the company know Mr. Parag very well. Company has got a very important construction contract from a renowned software company. Parag constructions will do construction for this site in partnership with a local contractor Firozbhai. Mr. Parag signed partnership deed with Firozbhai on behalf of company because he has an implied authority. Later in a dispute company denied to accept liability as a partner. Can the company deny its liability as a partner?

[ICAI Module]

Answer

Relevant provision

As per section 22 of the Companies Act, 2013 a company may authorize any person as its attorney to execute deeds on its behalf in any place either in or outside India. But common seal should be affixed on his authority letter or the authority letter should be signed by two directors of the company or it should be signed by one director and secretary. This authority may be either general for any deeds or it may be for any specific deed.

A deed signed by such an attorney on behalf of the company and under his seal shall bind the company as if it were made under its common seal.

Conclusion

In the present case company has not neither given any written authority not affixed common seal of the authority letter. It means that Mr. Parag is not legally entitled to execute deeds on behalf of the company. Therefore, deeds executed by him are not binding on the company. Therefore, company can deny its liability as a partner.

Question 30:

Sapphire Private Limited has registered its articles along with memorandum as on 1st July 2021. The directors of the company seeks your advice regarding the effect of registration of the company on the company itself and on its members.

[May 2022]

Answer

As per Section 9 and 10 of the Companies Act, 2013 following shall be the effect of registration of a company:

(1) From the date of incorporation, the subscribers to the memorandum and all members of the company, shall become a body corporate.

(2) Such a registered company shall be capable of exercising all the functions of an incorporated company with the perpetual succession with power to acquire, hold and dispose of property, and to contract and to sue and be sued.

(3) The memorandum and articles shall, when registered, bind the company and the members thereof to the same extent as if they respectively had been signed by the company and by each member, and contained covenants on its and his part to observe all the provisions of the memorandum and of the articles.

(4) All monies payable by any member to the company under the memorandum or articles shall be a debt due from him to the company.

Question 31

Mr. Aditya had incorporated a one person company on 07.07.2021. Mr. Yash was named as a nominee in the memorandum of the said one person company. Now, Mr. Aditya, considering the perpetual nature of company form of business, desires to appoint ABC Private Limited as a nominee instead of Mr. Yash. Examine with reference to the Companies Act, 2013, whether the proposal of Mr. Aditya to appoint ABC Private Limited as a nominee is valid?

[RTP Nov 2022]

Answer

As per the provisions of Rule 3(1) of the Companies (Incorporation) Rules, 2014, only a natural person who is an Indian citizen whether resident in India or otherwise-

(a) shall be eligible to incorporate a One Person Company (OPC);

(b) shall be a nominee for the sole member of a One Person Company (OPC).

By taking into account the above provisions, ABC Private Ltd. cannot be appointed as nominee in one person company as only natural persons can be appointed as a nominee. Hence, the proposal of Mr. Aditya to appoint ABC Private Ltd. as a nominee is not valid.

Question 32

The Article of Association (AOA) of AB Ltd. provides that documents may be served upon the company only through Speed Post. Suresh dispatches some documents to the company by courier, under certificate of posting. The company did not accept it on the ground that it is in violation of the AOA. As a result, Suresh suffered from loss. Explain with reference to the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013:

(i) Whether refusal of document by the company is valid?

(ii) Whether Suresh can claim damages for it?

[Nov 22]

Answer

Serving of document to Company

In terms of Section 20(1) of the Companies Act, 2013, a document may be served on a company or an officer thereof by **sending it to the company** or the officer **at the registered office** of the company by-

- registered post, or
- speed post, or
- courier service, or
- leaving it at its registered office, or
- means of such electronic or other mode as may be prescribed.

In the instant case, Suresh dispatches some document to AB Ltd. by courier whereas the AOA of said company provides that documents may be served upon the company only through Speed Post. AB Ltd. did not accept the documents on the ground that it is in violation of the AOA.

Taking into account the above provision,

(i) Refusal of documents by AB Ltd. is not valid as sending of documents by courier to AB Ltd. is complying with the provisions given under section 20(1) of the Act.

(ii) Since, the AB Ltd. is at fault by not accepting the documents sent by Suresh, YES, he can claim the damages for any loss occurred to him.

Chapter 3 – Prospectus and Allotment of Securities

Question 1

Examine the validity of this allotment in the light of the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013 :
The Board of Directors of Reckless Investments Ltd. have allotted shares to the investors of the company without issuing a prospectus with the concerned Registrar of Companies. Explain the remedy available to the investors in this regard.

[MTP- Aug 2018]

Answer

Relevant Provision:
According to Section 23 of the Companies Act, 2013, a public company can issue securities to the public only by issuing a prospectus. Section 26 (1) lays down the matters required to be disclosed and included in a prospectus and requires the registration of the prospectus with the Registrar before its issue.

Conclusion:
In the given case, the company has violated with the above provisions of the Act and hence the allotment made is void. The company will have to refund the entire moneys received and will also be punishable under section 26 of the Act.

Question 2

The Board of Directors of Chandra Ltd. proposes to issue the prospectus inviting offers from the public for subscribing the shares of the Company. State the reports which shall be included in the prospectus for the purposes of providing financial information under the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013.

[Nov- 2019, RTP- Nov 2020, RTP May 2022]

Answer

Relevant Provision:
As per section 26(1) of the Companies Act, 2013, every prospectus issued by or on behalf of a public company either with reference to its formation or subsequently, or by or on behalf of any person who is or has been engaged or interested in the formation of a public company, shall be dated and signed and shall state such information and set out such reports on financial information as may be specified by the Securities and Exchange Board in consultation with the Central Government:

Provided that until the Securities and Exchange Board specifies the information and reports on financial information under this sub-section, the regulations made by the Securities and Exchange Board under the Securities and Exchange Board of India Act, 1992, in respect of such financial information or reports on financial information shall apply.

Prospectus issued make a declaration about the compliance of the provisions of this Act and a statement to the effect that nothing in the prospectus is contrary to the provisions of this Act, the Securities Contracts (Regulation) Act, 1956 and the Securities and Exchange Board of India Act, 1992 and the rules and regulations made thereunder.

Conclusion:
Accordingly, the Board of Directors of Chandra Ltd. who proposes to issue the prospectus shall provide such reports on financial information as may be specified by the Securities and Exchange Board in consultation with the Central Government in compliance with the above stated provision and make a declaration about the compliance of the above stated provisions.

Question 3

Keya Limited decides to issue 1,00,000 securities of the company. The company decides to publish an advertisement of the prospectus. Enumerate to the company about necessary contents of its memorandum to be specified therein.

[RTP- May 2021]

Answer

Relevant Provision:

According to Section 30, where an advertisement of any prospectus of a company is published in any manner, it shall be necessary to specify therein the contents of its memorandum as regards the following:

(i) the objects,
(ii) the liability of members and the amount of share capital of the company,
(iii) the names of the signatories to the memorandum,
(iv) the number of shares subscribed for by the signatories, and
(v) the capital structure of the company.

Question 4

Prakhar Ltd. intends to raise share capital by issuing Equity Shares in different stages over a certain period of time. However, the company does not wish to issue prospectus each and every time of issue of shares. Considering the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013, discuss what formalities Prakhar Ltd. should follow to avoid repeated issuance of prospectus?

[RTP- Nov 2018]

OR

What is a Shelf-Prospectus? State the important provisions relating to the issuance of Shelf-Prospectus under the provisions of Companies Act,2013.

[Nov- 2018]

Answer

Relevant Provision:

Shelf prospectus means a prospectus in respect of which the securities or class of securities included therein are issued for subscription in one or more issues over a certain period without the issue of a further prospectus

According to Section 31 of the Company Act, 2013 any class or classes of companies, as the Securities and Exchange Board may provide by regulations in this behalf, may file a shelf prospectus with the Registrar at the stage:

(i) of the first offer of securities included therein which shall indicate a period not exceeding one year as the period of validity of such prospectus which shall commence from the date of opening of the first offer of securities under that prospectus, and
(ii) in respect of a second or subsequent offer of such securities issued during the period of validity of that prospectus, no further prospectus is required.

The other formalities related to such repeated/subsequent issue of shares–

A company filing a shelf prospectus shall be required to file an information memorandum containing all material facts relating to new charges created, changes in the financial position of the company as have occurred between the first or previous offer of securities and the succeeding offer of securities and such other changes as may be prescribed, with the Registrar within the prescribed time, prior to the issue of a second or subsequent offer of securities under the shelf prospectus.

Conclusion:

Thus, Prakhar Ltd. can follow the above provisions and can issue a shelf prospectus.

Question 5

ABC Limited proposes to issue series of debentures frequently within a period of one year to raise the funds without undergoing the complicated exercise of issuing the prospectus every time of issuing a new series of debentures. Examine the feasibility of the proposal of ABC Limited having taken into account the concept of deemed prospectus dealt with under the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013.

[July- 2021]

Answer

Relevant Provision:

Information Memorandum together with Shelf Prospectus is deemed Prospectus. The expression "shelf prospectus" means a prospectus in respect of which the securities or class of securities included therein are issued for subscription in one or more issues over a certain period without the issue of a further prospectus. [Explanation to Section 31]

Any class or classes of companies, as the Securities and Exchange Board may provide by regulations in this behalf, may file a shelf prospectus with the Registrar at the stage:

(i) of the first offer of securities included therein which shall indicate a period not exceeding one year as the period of validity of such prospectus which shall commence from the date of opening of the first offer of securities under that prospectus, and

(ii) in respect of a second or subsequent offer of such securities issued during the period of validity of that prospectus,

No further prospectus is required for issue of securities. [Sub-section (1)]

Conclusion:

Hence, the proposal of ABC Limited to take into account the concept of deemed prospectus is correct.

Author's Note:

It seems that ICAI has casually used the word "Deemed Prospectus" in its question in order to confuse students. Student will have to understand that this question is based on the concept of shelf prospectus and in no way related to Section 25 – Deemed prospectus.

Question 6

What is meant by "Abridged Prospectus"? Under what circumstances an abridged prospectus need not accompany the detailed information regarding prospectus along with the application form? What are the penalties in case of default in complying with the provisions related to issue of abridged prospectus?

[MTP- March 2019, MTP Oct 2021]

Answer

Relevant Provision:

Meaning of Abridged Prospectus: According to Section 2(1) of the Companies Act, 2013, an abridged prospectus means a memorandum containing such salient features of a prospectus as may be specified by the Securities and Exchange Board by making regulations in this behalf.

Circumstances under which the abridged prospectus need not accompany the application forms:

Section 33 (1) of the Companies Act, 2013 states that no application form for the purchase of any of the securities of a company can be issued unless such form is accompanied by an abridged prospectus. In terms of the Proviso to section 33 (1) an abridged prospectus need not accompany the application form if it is shown that the form of application was issued:

- In connection with a bona fide invitation to a person to enter into an underwriting agreement with respect to such securities; or
- Where the securities are not offered to the public.

Conclusion:

If a company makes any default in complying with the provisions of this section, it shall be liable to a penalty of fifty thousand rupees for each default.

Question 7

An allottee of shares in a Company brought action against a Director in respect of false statements in prospectus. The director contended that the statements were prepared by the promoters and he has relied on them. Is the Director liable under the circumstances? Decide referring to the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013

[MTP- March 2018, MTP Oct 19, MTP March 21]

Answer

Yes, the Director shall be held liable for the false statements in the prospectus under sections 34 and 35 of the Companies Act, 2013. Whereas section 34 imposes a criminal punishment on every person who authorises the issue of such prospectus, section 35 more particularly includes a director of the company in the imposition of liability for such misstatements.

The only situations when a director will not incur any liability for mis statements in a prospectus are as under: No criminal liability under section 34 shall apply to a person if he proves that such statement or omission was immaterial or that he had reasonable grounds to believe, and did up to the time of issue of the prospectus believe, that the statement was true or the inclusion or omission was necessary.

No civil liability for any mis statement under section 35 shall apply to a person if he proves that:

(i) Having consented to become a director of the company, he withdrew his consent before the issue of the prospectus, and that it was issued without his authority or consent; or
(ii) The prospectus was issued without his knowledge or consent, and that on becoming aware of its issue, he forthwith gave a reasonable public notice that it was issued without his knowledge or consent.

Conclusion:

Therefore, in the present case the director cannot hide behind the excuse that he had relied on the promoters for making correct statements in the prospectus. He will be liable for mis statements in the prospectus.

Question 8

With a view to issue shares to the general public a prospectus containing some false information was issued by a company. Mr. X received copy of the prospectus from the company, but did not apply for allotment of any shares. The allotment of shares to the general public was completed by the company within the stipulated period. A few months later, Mr. X bought 2000 shares through the stock exchange at a higher price which later on fell sharply. X sold these shares at a heavy loss. Mr. X claims damages from the company for the loss suffered on the ground the prospectus issued by the company contained a false statement. Referring to the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013 examine whether X's claim for damages is justified.

[MTP March 2018]

Answer

Under section 2 (70) of the Companies Act, 2013, "prospectus" means any document described or issued as a prospectus and includes a red herring prospectus referred to in section 32 or shelf prospectus referred to in section 31 or any notice, circular, advertisement or other document inviting offers from the public for the subscription or purchase of any securities of a body corporate.

A prospectus is a document inviting offers from the public. The prospectus and any statement therein has no legal binding either on the company or its directors, promoters or experts to a person who has not purchased securities in response to it. Since, X purchased shares through the stock exchange (open market) which cannot be said to have bought shares on the basis of prospectus. X cannot bring action for deceit against the directors.

Hence, X will not succeed. It was also held in the case of Peek Vs. Gurney that the above-mentioned remedy by way of damage will not be available to a person if he has not purchased the shares on the basis of prospectus.

Question 9

RD Ltd. issued a prospectus. All the statements contained therein were literally true. It also stated that company had paid dividends for a number of years but did not disclose the fact that the dividends were not paid out of trading profits but out of capital profits. An allotee of shares claims to avoid the contract on the ground that the prospectus was false in material particulars. Decide that the argument of shareholder, as per the provision of the Companies Act, 2013, is correct or not?

[Dec- 2021]

Answer

Relevant Provision:

According to section 34 of the Companies Act, 2013, where a prospectus, issued, circulated or distributed, includes any statement which is untrue or misleading in form or context in which it is included or where any inclusion or omission of any matter is likely to mislead, every person who authorises the issue of such prospectus shall be liable under section 447.

Further, Section 35(3) provides that, where it is proved that a prospectus has been issued with intent to defraud the applicants for the securities of a company or any other person or for any fraudulent purpose, every person referred to in section 35(1), shall be personally responsible, without any limitation of liability, for all or any of the losses or damages that may have been incurred by any person who subscribed to the securities on the basis of such prospectus.

Conclusion:

In the given question, the non-disclosure of the fact that dividends were paid out of capital profits is a concealment of material fact as a company is normally required to distribute dividend only from trading or revenue profits and under exceptional circumstances it can pay dividend out of capital profits. Hence, a material misrepresentation has been made.

Accordingly, in the given case the allottee can avoid the contract of allotment of shares.

Question 10

Sudarshan Exports Ltd. was dealing in export of rubber to specified foreign countries. The company was willing to purchase rubber trees in Andhra Pradesh. The prospectus issued by the company contained some important extracts of the expert report and number of trees in Andhra Pradesh. The report was found untrue. Mr. Alok purchased the shares of Sudarshan Exports Ltd. on the basis of the expert report published in the prospectus. Will Mr. Alok have any remedy against the company? State also the circumstances where an expert is not liable under the Companies Act, 2013.

[RTP and MTP May- 2020, CA Inter Nov'22]

Answer

Relevant Provision:

Under section 35 (1) of the Companies Act 2013, where a person has subscribed for securities of a company acting on any statement included in the prospectus which is misleading and has sustained any loss or damage as a consequence thereof, the company and every person including an expert shall, be liable to pay compensation to the person who has sustained such loss or damage.

In the present case, Mr. Alok purchased the shares of Sudarshan Exports Ltd. on the basis of the expert report published in the prospectus. Mr. Alok can claim compensation for any loss or damage that he might sustained from the purchase of shares, which has not been mentioned in the given case.

Conclusion:

Hence, Mr. Alok will have no remedy against the company.

Circumstances when an expert is not liable: An expert will not be liable for any mis- statements in the prospectus under the following situations:

- Under section 26 (5), that having given his consent, but withdrew it in writing before delivery of the copy of prospectus for registration, or

- Under section 35 (2), that the prospectus was issued without his knowledge / consent and that on becoming aware of it, he forthwith gave a reasonable public notice that it was issued without his knowledge or consent;
- An expert will not be liable in respect of any statement not made by him in the capacity of an expert and included in the prospectus as such
- Under Section 35 (2) (c) of the Act: It states that, as regards every misleading statement purported to be made by an expert or contained in what purports to be a copy of or an extract from a report or valuation of an expert, it was a correct and fair representation of the statement, or a correct copy of, or a correct and fair extract from, the report or valuation; and he had reasonable ground to believe and did up to the time of the issue of the prospectus believe, that the person making the statement was competent to make it and that the said person had given the consent required by Section 26(5) of the Act to the issue of the prospectus and had not withdrawn that consent before filing of a copy of the prospectus with the Registrar or, to the defendant's knowledge, before allotment thereunder.

Question 11

State in what way does the Companies Act, 2013 regulate and restrict the following in respect of a company going for public issue of shares:

(i) Minimum Subscription, and

(ii) Application Money payable on shares being issued

[MTP- Oct 2018, April 2019, April 2021]

Answer

Relevant Provision:

The Companies Act, 2013 by virtue of provisions as contained in Section 39 (1) and (2) regulates and restricts the minimum subscription and the application money payable in a public issue of shares as under:

Minimum subscription [Section 39 (1)]No Allotment shall be made of any securities of a company offered to the public for subscription; unless; -

(i) the amount stated in the prospectus as the minimum amount has been subscribed; and

(ii) the sums payable on application for such amount has been paid to and received by the company-

Application money: Section 39 (2) provides that the amount payable on application on each security shall not be less than 5% of the nominal amount of such security or such amount as SEBI may prescribe by making any regulations in this behalf.

Further section 39 (3) provides that if the stated minimum amount is not received by the company within 30 days of the date of issue of the prospectus or such time as prescribed by SEBI, the company will be required to refund the application money received within such time and manner as may be prescribed.

In case of any default under sub-section, the company and its officer who is in default shall be liable to a penalty, for each default, of one thousand rupees for each day during which such default continues or one lakh rupees, whichever is less.

Section 40 (3) provides that all moneys received on application from the public for subscription to the securities shall be kept in a separate bank account maintained with a scheduled bank.

Question 12

A Ltd. issued 1,00,000 equity shares of Rs. 100 each at par to the public by issuing a prospectus. The prospectus discloses the minimum subscription amount of Rs. 15,00,000 required to be received on application of shares and share application money shall be payable at Rs. 20 per share. The prospectus further reveals that A Ltd. has applied for listing of shares in 3 recognized stock exchanges of which 1 application has been rejected. The issue was fully subscribed and A Ltd. received an amount of Rs. 20,00,000 on share application. A Ltd., then proceeded for allotment of shares.

Examine the three disclosures in the above case study which are the deciding factors in an allotment of shares and the consequences for violation, if any under the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013.

[Jan- 2021, MTP 2 May'23]

Answer

Relevant Provision:

As per the requirement of the question, disclosures which are the deciding factors in an allotment of shares are laid down in section 39 of the Companies Act, 2013.

According to Section 39(1), no allotment of any securities of a company offered to the public for subscription shall be made unless-

(i) the amount stated in the prospectus as the minimum amount has been subscribed, and

(ii) the sums payable on application for the amount so stated have been paid to, and received by the company by cheque or other instrument.

The amount payable on application on every security shall not be less than five per cent of the nominal amount of the security or such other percentage or amount, as may be specified by the Securities and Exchange Board by making regulations in this behalf.

Given Case and Analysis:

In the question, A Ltd. issued shares to public by issuing of prospectus, disclosing minimum subscription, sum payable on application for the amount; and the amount received on share application is more than 5% of the nominal amount of the security.

Further, it revealed that A Ltd. has applied for listing of shares in 3 recognized stock exchanges of which one application was rejected.

In the given instance, there is compliance to section 23, as nothing is talked about matters required to be included in the prospectus under section 26 (1) and about filing with the registrar; assuming that the said requirements have been complied with, requirement of section 39 as regards obtaining of minimum subscription and the minimum amount receivable on application (not less than 5% of the nominal value of the securities offered) are fulfilled.

The provisions of section 40 of the Companies Act, 2013 states that every company making public offer shall, before making such offer, make an application to one or more recognized stock exchange or exchanges and obtain permission for the securities to be dealt with in such stock exchange or exchanges.

The above provision is very clear that not only the company has to apply for listing of the securities at a recognized stock exchange, but also obtain permission thereof from all the stock exchanges where it has applied, before making the public offer.

Since one of the three recognized stock exchanges, where the company has applied for enlisting , has rejected the application and the company has proceeded with making the offer of shares, it has violated the provisions of section 40. Therefore, this shall be deemed to be irregular allotment of shares.

Conclusion:

Consequently, A Ltd. shall be required to refund the application money to the applicants in the prescribed manner within the stipulated time frame.

Question 13

Kapoor Builders Limited decides to pay 2.5 percent of the value of debentures as underwriting commission to the underwriters but the Articles of the company authorize only 2.0 percent underwriting commission on debentures. The company further decides to pay the underwriting commission in the form of flats. Examine the validity of the above arrangements under the provisions of the Companies Act,2013.

[RTP- May 2018]

Answer

Relevant Provision:

Section 40 (6) of the Companies Act 2013, provides that a company may pay commission to any person in connection with the subscription or procurement of subscription to its securities, whether absolute or conditional, subject to a number of conditions which are prescribed under Companies (Prospectus and Allotment of Securities) Rules, 2014. In relation to the case given, the conditions applicable under the above Rules are as under:

(i) The payment of such commission shall be authorized in the company's articles of association;

(ii) The commission may be paid out of proceeds of the issue or the profit of the company or both;

(iii) The rate of commission paid or agreed to be paid shall not exceed, in case of shares, five percent (5%) of the price at which the shares are issued or a rate authorised by the articles, whichever is less, and in case of debentures, shall not exceed two and a half per cent (2.5 %) of the price at which the debentures are issued, or as specified in the company's articles, whichever is less;

Conclusion:

Thus, the Underwriting commission is limited to 5% of issue price in case of shares and 2.5% in case of debentures subject to the rates in articles of association.

In view of the above, the decision of Kapoor Builders Ltd. to pay underwriting commission exceeding 2% as prescribed in the Articles is invalid.

The company may pay the underwriting commission in the form of flats as both the Companies Act and the Rules do not impose any restriction on the mode of payment though the source has been restricted to either the proceeds of the issue or profits of the company.

Question 14

Examine the validity of the following statement referring to the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013 and/or Rules: "The Articles of Association of X Ltd. contained a provision that upto 4% of issue price of' the shares may be paid as underwriting commission to the underwriters. The Board of Directors of X Ltd. decided to pay 5% underwriting commission.

[MTP April- 2019]

OR

Modern Jewellery Ltd decides to pay 5% issue price of shares as underwriting commission to the underwriter, but the articles of the company authorize only 4% underwriting commission on shares. Examine the validity of the above decision under the provision of the Companies Act, 2013.

[May 2019]

Answer

Relevant Provision:

Section 40 (6) of the Companies Act 2013, provides that a company may pay commission to any person in connection with the subscription or procurement of subscription to its securities, whether absolute or conditional, subject to the number of conditions which are prescribed under Companies (Prospectus and Allotment of Securities) Rules, 2014.

Under the Companies (Prospectus and Allotment of Securities) Rules, 2014 the rate of commission paid or agreed to be paid shall not exceed, in case of shares, five percent (5%) of the price at which the shares are issued or a rate authorised by the articles, whichever is less.

In the given problem, the articles of X Ltd. have prescribed 4% underwriting commission but the directors decided to pay 5% underwriting commission.

Conclusion:

Therefore, the decision of the Board of Directors to pay 5% commission to the underwriters is invalid.

Question 15

Explain various instances which make the allotment of securities as irregular allotment under the Companies Act, 2013.

[May- 2019]

Answer

Relevant Provision:

Irregular allotment: The Companies Act, 2013 does not specifically provide for the term "Irregular Allotment" of securities. Hence, we have to examine the requirements of a proper issue of securities and consider the consequences of non- fulfilment of those requirements.

In broad terms an allotment of shares is deemed to be irregular when it has been made by a company in violation of Sections 23, 26, 39 or 40. Irregular allotment therefore arises in the following instances:

(i) Where a company does not issue a prospectus in a public issue as required by section 23; or
(ii) Where the prospectus issued by the company does not include any of the matters required to be included therein under section 26 (1), or the information given is misleading, faulty and incorrect; or
(iii) Where the prospectus has not been filed with the Registrar for registration under section 26 (4); or
(iv) The minimum subscription as specified in prospectus has not been received in terms of section 39; or
(v) The minimum amount receivable on application is less than 5% of the nominal value of the securities offered or lower than the amount prescribed by SEBI in this behalf; or
(vi) In case of a public issue, approval for listing has not been obtained from one or more of the recognized stock exchanges under section 40 of the Companies Act, 2013.

Question 16

TDL Ltd., a public company is planning to bring a public issue of equity shares in June, 2018. The company has appointed underwriters for getting its shares subscribed. As a Chartered Accountant of the company appraise the Board of TDL Ltd. about the provisions of payment of underwriter's commission as per Companies Act, 2013.

[May 2018]

Answer

The provisions of the Companies Act, 2013 regarding the payment of underwriter's commission are as follows:

Payment of commission: A company may pay commission to any person in connection with the subscription to its securities, whether absolute or conditional, subject to such conditions as given in Rule 13 of the Companies (Prospectus and Allotment of Securities) Rules, 2014.

Conditions for the payment of commission:

(a) the payment of such commission shall be authorized in the company's articles of association;
(b) the commission may be paid out of proceeds of the issue or the profit of the company or both;

Rate of commission: The rate of commission paid or agreed to be paid shall not exceed, in case of shares, 5% of the price at which the shares are issued or a rate authorised by the articles, whichever is less, and in case of debentures, shall not exceed two and a half per cent of the price at which the debentures are issued, or as specified in the company's articles, whichever is less.

Disclosure of particulars: the prospectus of the company shall disclose the following particulars -

a. the name of the underwriters;
b. the rate and amount of the commission payable to the underwriter; and
c. the number of securities which is to be underwritten or subscribed by the underwriter absolutely or conditionally.

No commission to be paid: There shall not be paid commission to any underwriter on securities which are not offered to the public for subscription;

Copy of contract of payment of commission to be delivered to registrar: a copy of the contract for the payment of commission is delivered to the Registrar at the time of delivery of the prospectus for registration.

Question 17

Prakash Limited wants to raise funds for its upcoming project. Accordingly, it has issued private placement offer letters for issuing equity shares to 55 persons, of which four are qualified institutional buyers and remaining are individuals. Before the completion of allotment of equity shares under this offer letter, company issued another private placement offer letter to another 155 persons in their individual names for issue of its debentures.

Being a public company is it possible for Prakash Limited to issue securities under a private placement offer? By doing so, whether the company is in compliance with provisions relating to private placement or should these offers be treated as public offers? What if the offer for debentures is given after allotment of equity shares but within the same financial year?

[Dec 2021, MTP- March 2021, MTP May'22, MTP Nov'22]

Answer

Relevant Provision:

According to section 42 of the Companies Act, 2013 any private or public company may make private placement through issue of a private placement offer letter.

However, the offer shall be made to the persons not exceeding fifty or such higher number as may be prescribed, in a financial year. For counting number of persons, Qualified Institutional Buyers (QIBs) and employees of the company being offered securities under a scheme of employees' stock option will not be considered.

Further, Rule 14 (2) of the Companies (Prospectus and Allotment of Securities) Rules, 2014 prescribes maximum of 200 persons who can be offered securities under the private placement in a financial year, though this limit should be counted separately for each type of security.

It is to be noted that if a company makes an offer or invitation to more than the prescribed number of persons, it shall be deemed to be an offer to the public and accordingly, it shall be governed by the provisions relating to prospectus.

Also, a company is not permitted to make fresh offer under this section if the allotment with respect to any offer made earlier has not been completed or otherwise, that offer has been withdrawn or abandoned by the company. This provision is applicable even if the issue is of different kind of security.

Any offer or invitation not in compliance with the provisions of this section shall be treated as a public offer and all provisions will apply accordingly.

Conclusion:

In the given case Prakash Limited, though a public company but the private placement provisions allow even a public company to raise funds through this route. The company has given offer to 55 persons out of which 4 are qualified institutional buyers and hence, the offer is given effectively to only 51 persons which is well within the limit of 200 persons. From this point of view, the company complies the private placement provisions.

However, as per the question, the company has given another private placement offer of debentures before completing the allotment in respect of first offer and therefore, the second of fer does not comply with the provisions of section 42.

Hence, the offers given by the company will be treated as public offer. In case the company gives offer for debentures in the same financial year after allotment of equity shares is complete then both the offers can well be treated as private placement offers.

Question 18

Discuss the provisions relating to private placement of shares under the Companies Act, 2013.

[Nov- 2018]

Answer

Relevant Provision:

"Private placement" means any offer of securities or invitation to subscribe securities to a select group of persons by a company (other than by way of public offer) through issue of a private placement offer letter and which satisfies below conditions. Any offer or invitation not in compliance with the provisions of this section shall be treated as a public offer and all provisions of this Act, and the Securities Contracts (Regulation) Act, 1956 and the Securities and Exchange Board of India Act, 1992 shall be required to be complied with.

If a company makes an offer or accepts monies in contravention of this section, the company, its promoters and directors shall be liable for a penalty which may extend to the amount involved in the offer or invitation or two crore rupees, whichever is lower, and the company shall also refund all monies to subscribers within a period of thirty days of the order imposing the penalty.

Requirements of offer or invitation for subscription of securities on private placement: [Section 42]

Issue of private placement offer letter: According to Section 42(1), a company may, make private placement through issue of a private placement offer letter.

Offer/invitation to number of persons: The offer of securities or invitation to subscribe securities, shall be made to such number of persons not exceeding fifty or such higher number as may be prescribed, in a financial year and on such conditions (including the form and manner of private placement) as may be prescribed in the relevant Rules given in the Companies (Prospectus and Allotment of Securities) Rules, 2014.

Offer/ invitation made to more than the prescribed number of persons : If a company, listed or unlisted, makes an offer to allot or invites subscription, or allots, or enters into an agreement to allot, securities to more than the prescribed number of persons, whether the payment for the securities has been received or not or whether the company intends to list its securities or not on any recognised stock exchange in or outside India, the same shall be deemed to be an offer to the public and shall accordingly be governed by the provisions of Part I of Chapter III.

No issue of fresh offer/ invitation: No fresh offer or invitation under this section shall be made unless the allotments with respect to any offer or invitation made earlier-

- have been completed, or
- that offer or invitation has been withdrawn, or
- abandoned by the company. (Not applicable to specified IFSC Public and IFSC Private Companies)

Offer / invitation treated as public offer: Any offer or invitation not in compliance with the provisions of this section shall be treated as a public offer and all provisions of this Act, and the Securities Contracts (Regulation) Act, 1956 and the Securities and Exchange Board of India Act, 1992 shall be required to be complied with.

Payment of amount: All monies payable towards subscription of securities under this section shall be paid through cheque or demand draft or other banking channels but not by cash.

Time for allotment of securities: A company making an offer or invitation under this section shall allot its securities within sixty days from the date of receipt of the application money for such securities. (90 days in case in the case of specified IFSC Public and IFSC Private Companies)

Default in allotment of securities: Where the company is not able to allot the securities within that period, it shall repay the application money to the subscribers within fifteen days from the date of completion of sixty days and if the company fails to repay the application money within the aforesaid period, it shall be liable to repay that money with interest at the rate of twelve per cent per annum from the expiry of the sixtieth day:

Separate Bank Account: Provided that monies received on application under this section shall be kept in a separate bank account in a scheduled bank and shall not be utilised for any purpose other than—

(i) for adjustment against allotment of securities; or
(ii) for the repayment of monies where the company is unable to allot securities.

Offers made to the persons whose name is recorded : All offers covered under this section shall be made only to such persons whose names are recorded by the company prior to the invitation to subscribe, and that such persons shall receive the offer by name, and that a complete record of such offers shall be kept by the company in such manner as may be prescribed and complete information about such offer shall be filed with the Registrar within a period of thirty days of circulation of relevant private placement offer letter. (Not applicable to specified IFSC Public and IFSC Private Companies)

No publication required: No company offering securities under this section shall release any public advertisements or utilise any media, marketing or distribution channels or agents to inform the public at large about such an offer.

Filing with the registrar: Whenever a company makes any allotment of securities under this section, it shall file with the Registrar a return of allotment in such manner as may be prescribed, including the complete list of all security-holders, with their full names, addresses, number of securities allotted and such other relevant information as may be prescribed. In contravention of the section: If a company makes an offer or accepts monies in contravention of this section-

Persons liable	Penalty
Company, Promoters and Directors	May extend to the amount involved in the offer or invitation, or
	Two crore rupees- whichever is lower
Company	Shall also refund all monies to subscribers within a period of thirty days of the order imposing the penalty.

Author's Note – If this question is asked in exam, it is practically impossible to write all the points. Hence, a student will have to decide based on the marks of this questions. For example, if this question is of 4 marks, then writing 4 to 6 important points will be enough.

Question 19

CDS Ltd. is planning to make a private placement of securities. The Managing Director arranged to obtain a brief note from some source explaining the salient features of the issue of private placement that the Board of Directors shall keep in mind while approving the proposal on this subject. The brief note includes, inter alia, the information / suggestions on the following points:

(i) A private placement shall be made only to a select group of identified persons not exceeding 200 in a financial year.
The aforesaid ceiling of identified persons shall not apply to the offer made to the qualified institutional buyers but is applicable to the employees of the Company who will be covered under the Company's Employees Stock Option Scheme.
(ii) The offer on private placement basis shall be made only once in a financial year for any number of identified persons not exceeding 200.
The Company solicits your remarks on the points referred above as to whether they are valid or not? Reasoned remarks should be given in accordance with the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013.

[Jan- 2021]

Answer

Relevant Provision:

As per the provisions of sub-section (2) of section 42 of the Companies Act, 2013, private placement shall be made only to a select group of persons who have been identified by the Board (herein referred to as "identified persons"), whose number shall not exceed 50 or such higher number as may be prescribed, in a financial year subject to such conditions as may be prescribed.

It is also provided that any offer or invitation made to qualified institutional buyers, or to employees of the company under a scheme of employees' stock option as per provisions of section 62(1)(b) shall not be

considered while calculating the limit of two hundred persons.
According to Rule 14 (2) of the Companies (Prospectus and Allotment of Securities) Rules, 2014, an offer or invitation to subscribe securities under private placement shall not be made to persons more than two hundred in the aggregate in a financial year.

As per Explanation given in this Rule, it is clarified that the restrictions aforesaid would be reckoned individually for each kind of security that is equity share, preference share or debenture.

Referring to the above-mentioned provisions of sub-section (2) of section 42 of the Companies Act, 2013 and Rule 14 the Companies (Prospectus and Allotment of Securities) Rules, 2014, we can conclude as follows:

(i) The company is correct in proposing that private placement shall be made only to a select group of identified persons not exceeding 200 in a financial year. This part of the proposal is correct.

The company is also correct in proposing that the aforesaid ceiling of identified persons shall not apply to offer made to the qualified institutional buyers, but the company is not correct in saying that the said ceiling is applicable to employees covered under the Company's Employee Stock Option Scheme.

Hence, the second part of the proposal is only partially correct.

(ii) The Companies (Prospectus and Allotment of Securities) Rules, 2014 provides that an offer or invitation to subscribe securities under private placement shall not be made to persons more than 200 in aggregate in a financial year.

Keeping the ceiling of 200 persons in aggregate during a financial year, offer of private placement can be made more than once in a financial year. Therefore, the second statement is not fully correct.

Question 20:

The Board of Directors of P Limited are proposing to raise funds from the public through issue of equity shares. However due to volatile financial markets, the price per share and the number of shares to be issued are left open and to be decided post closure of the issue. As a financial advisor of the company, what would you suggest to the Board in this regard as per the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013?

[May 2022]

Answer

As a financial consultant the Board of Directors of ABC Limited would be advised to issue a Red Herring Prospectus. The expression "red herring prospectus" means a prospectus which does not include complete particulars of the quantum or price of the securities included therein. [Explanation to Section 32] Thus, ABC Limited may raise funds from public through red herring prospectus whereby the price per security and number of securities are left open to be decided post closure of the issue.

The company may follow the provisions of section 32 in issuing a red herring prospectus:

(1) Red Herring Prospectus is issued prior to issue of Prospectus: A company proposing to make an offer of securities may issue a red herring prospectus prior to the issue of a prospectus.
(2) Filing with the registrar: A company proposing to issue a red herring prospectus shall file it with the Registrar at least three days prior to the opening of the subscription list and the offer.
(3) Obligations under Red Herring Prospectus vis-à-vis Prospectus: A red herring prospectus shall carry the same obligations as are applicable to a prospectus and any variation between the red herring prospectus and a prospectus shall be highlighted as variations in the prospectus.
(4) Filing of Red Herring Prospectus with Registrar and SEBI upon closing of Offer: Upon the closing of the offer of securities under this section, the prospectus stating therein the total capital raised, whether by way of debt or share capital, and the closing price of the securities and any other details as are not included in the red herring prospectus shall be filed with the Registrar and the Securities and Exchange Board.

Chapter 4 – Share capital and Debentures

Question 1:
Can equity share with differential voting rights be issued? If yes, state the conditions under which such shares may be issued?

[May 2018]

Solution
Conditions for the issue of equity shares with differential rights (Rule 4 of the Companies (Share capital and Debenture) Rules, 2014): No company limited by shares shall issue equity shares with differential rights as to dividend, voting or otherwise, unless it complies with the following conditions, namely:-

a. the articles of association of the company authorizes the issue of shares with differential rights;
b. the issue of shares is authorized by an ordinary resolution passed at a general meeting of the shareholders.
   However, where the equity shares of a company are listed on a recognized stock exchange, the issue of such shares shall be approved by the shareholders through postal ballot;
c. the voting power in respect of shares with differential rights of the company shall not exceed 74% of total voting power including voting power in respect of equity shares with differential rights issued at any point of time;
d. omitted
e. the company has not defaulted in filing financial statements and annual returns for 3 financial years immediately preceding the financial year in which it is decided to issue such shares;
f. the company has no subsisting default in the payment of a declared dividend to its shareholders or repayment of its matured deposits or redemption of its preference shares or debentures that have become due for redemption or payment of interest on such deposits or debentures or payment of dividend;
g. the company has not defaulted in payment of the dividend on preference shares or repayment of any term loan from a public financial institution or State level financial institution or Scheduled Bank that has become repayable or interest payable thereon or dues with respect to statutory payments relating to its employees to any authority or default in crediting the amount in Investor Education and Protection Fund to the Central Government;
   However, a company may issue equity shares with differential rights upon expiry of five years from the end of the financial Year in which such default was made good.
h. the company has not been penalized by Court or Tribunal during the last three years of any offence under the Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934, the Securities and Exchange Board of India Act, 1992, the Securities Contracts Regulation Act, 1956, the Foreign Exchange Management Act, 1999 or any other special Act, under which such companies being regulated by sectoral regulators.

Question 2:
Mr. A was having 500 equity shares of Open Sky Aircrafts Limited. Mr. B acquired these shares of the company from Mr. A but the signature of Mr. A, the transferor on the transfer deed was forged. The company registered the shares in the name of Mr. B by issuing share certificate. Mr. B sold 100 equity shares to Mr. C on the basis of share certificate issued by Open Sky Aircrafts Ltd. Mr. B and Mr. C are not having the knowledge of forgery. State the rights of Mr. A, Mr. B and Mr. C under the Companies Act, 2013.

[MTP May 2020, RTP Nov 2021]

OR

500 equity shares of ABC Limited were acquired by Mr. Amit, but the signature of Mr. Manoj, the transferor, on the transfer deed was forged. Mr. Amit, after getting the shares registered by the company in his name, sold 250 equity shares to Mr. Abhi on the strength of the share certificate issued by ABC Limited. Mr. Amit and Mr. Abhi were not aware of the forgery. What are the liabilities/rights of Mr. Manoj, Amit and Abhi

against the company with reference to the aforesaid shares?

Answer

According to Section 46(1) of the Companies Act, 2013, a share certificate once issued under the common seal, if any, of the company or signed by two directors or by a director and the Company Secretary, wherever the company has appointed a Company Secretary", specifying the shares held by any person, shall be prima facie evidence of the title of the person to such shares. Therefore, in the normal course the person named in the share certificate is for all practical purposes the legal owner of the shares therein and the company cannot deny his title to the shares.

However, a forged transfer is a nullity. It does not give the transferee (Mr. B) any title to the shares. Similarly any transfer made by Mr. B (to Mr. C) will also not give a good title to the shares as the title of the buyer is only as good as that of the seller.

Therefore, if the company acts on a forged transfer and removes the name of the real owner (Mr. A) from the Register of Members, then the company is bound to restore the name of Mr. A as the holder of the shares and to pay him any dividends which he ought to have received *(Barton v. North Staffordshire Railway Co.).*

In the above case, 'therefore, Mr. A has the right against the company to get the shares recorded in his name. However, neither Mr. B nor Mr. C have any rights against the company even though they are bona fide purchasers.

However, since Mr. A seems to be the perpetrator of the forgery, he will be liable both criminally and for compensation to Mr. B and Mr. C

Author's Note – ICAI has assumed in the answer that Mr. A is the perpetrator in this forgery. Student may choose to assume otherwise i.e.; student may write that – Any person who is the perpetrator of the forgery will be liable both criminally and for compensation to Mr. B and Mr. C

Question 3:

Growmore Limited's share capital is divided into different classes. Now, Growmore Limited intends to vary the rights attached to a particular class of shares. Explain the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013 to Growmore Limited as to obtaining consent from the shareholders in relation to variation of rights.

[RTP Nov 2018]

Answer

According to section 48 of the Companies Act, 2013-

1) Variation in rights of shareholders with consent: Where a share capital of the company is divided into different classes of shares, the rights attached to the shares of any class may be varied with the consent in writing of the holders of not less than three-fourths of the issued shares of that class or by means of a special resolution passed at a separate meeting of the holders of the issued shares of that class:
   a. if provision with respect to such variation is contained in the memorandum or articles of the company; or
   b. in the absence of any such provision in the memorandum or articles, if such variation is not prohibited by the terms of issue of the shares of that class:

   Provided that if variation by one class of shareholders affects the rights of any other class of shareholders, the consent of three-fourths of such other class of shareholders shall also be obtained and the provisions of this section shall apply to such variation.

2) Cancellation of variation: Where the holders of not less than ten per cent of the issued shares of a class did not consent to such variation or vote in favour of the special resolution for the variation, they may apply to the Tribunal to have the variation cancelled, and where any such application is made, the variation shall not have effect unless and until it is confirmed by the Tribunal:

Provided that an application under this section shall be made within twenty-one days after the date on which the consent was given or the resolution was passed, as the case may be, and may be made on behalf of the shareholders entitled to make the application by such one or more of their number as they may appoint in writing for the purpose.

Question 4:

Walnut Limited has an authorized share capital of 1,00,000 equity shares of Rs. 100 per share and an amount of Rs. 3 crores in its Share Premium Account as on 31-3-2018. The Board of Directors seeks your advice about the application of share premium account for its business purposes. Please give your advice

[RTP May 2019, ICAI Module, MTP May 2019]

Answer

According to section 52 of the Companies Act, 2013, where a company issues shares at a premium, whether for cash or otherwise, a sum equal to the aggregate amount of the premium received on those shares shall be transferred to a "securities premium account" and the provisions of this Act relating to reduction of share capital of a company shall, except as provided in this section, apply as if the securities premium account were the paid-up share capital of the company.

The securities premium account may be applied by the company—

a) towards the issue of unissued shares of the company to the members of the company as fully paid bonus shares;
b) in writing off the preliminary expenses of the company;
c) in writing off the expenses of, or the commission paid or discount allowed on, any issue of shares or debentures of the company;
d) in providing for the premium payable on the redemption of any redeemable preference shares or of any debentures of the company; or
e) for the purchase of its own shares or other securities under section 68

The securities premium account may be applied by such class of companies, as may be prescribed and whose financial statement comply with accounting standards prescribed for such class of companies under section 133

a) in paying up unissued equity shares of the company to be issued to members of the company as fully paid bonus shares; or
b) in writing off the expenses of or the commission paid or discount allowed on any issue of equity shares of the company; or
c) for the purchase of its own shares or other securities under section 68.

Keeping the above points in view Walnut Foods Limited should proceed to utilise the amount of Securities Premium Account.

Question 5:

State the reasons for the issue of shares at premium or discount. Also write in brief the purposes for which the securities premium account can be utilized?

[Jan 2021, MTP 1 May'23]

Answer

When a company issues shares at a price higher than their face value, the shares are said to be issued at premium and the differential amount is termed as premium. On the other hand, when a company issues shares at a price lower than their face value, the shares are said to be issued at discount and the differential amount is termed as discount. However, as per the provisions of section 53 of the Companies Act, 2013, a company is prohibited to issue shares at a discount except in the case of an issue of sweat equity shares given under section 54 of the Companies Act, 2013.

As per the provisions of section 52(1) of the Companies Act, 2013, where a company issues shares at a premium, whether for cash or otherwise, a sum equal to the aggregate amount of the premium received on those shares shall be transferred to a "securities premium account".

Application of Securities Premium Account: Same as mentioned in previous question

Question 6

ABC Limited is a public company incorporated in New Delhi. The Board of Directors (BOD) of the company wants to bring a public issue of 100000 equity shares of Rs. 10 each. The BOD has appointed an underwriter for this issue for ensuring the minimum subscription of the issue. The underwriter advised the BOD that due to current economic situation of the Country it would be better if the company offers these shares at a discount of Rs. 1 per share to ensure full subscription of this public issue. The Board of Directors agreed to the suggestion of underwriter and offered the shares at a discount of Rs. 1 per share. The issue was fully subscribed, and the shares were allotted to the applicants in due course.

(1) Decide whether issue of shares as mentioned above is valid or not as per Section 53 of Companies Act 2013.

(2) What would be your answer in the above case if the shares are issued to employees as Sweat equity shares?

[Nov 2020, MTP Nov'22]

Answer

As per the provisions of section 53(1) read with section 54 of the Companies Act, 2013, a company shall not issue shares at a discount, except in the case of an issue of sweat equity shares.

As per the provisions of section 53(2) of the Companies Act, 2013, any share issued by a company at a discount shall be void.

In terms of the above provisions, issue of shares by ABC Limited at a discount of Rs. 1 per share is not valid.

In case the above shares have been issued to employees as Sweat equity shares, then the issue of shares at discount is valid. [Section 54(1) of the Companies Act, 2013]

Question 7

Trisha Data Security Limited was incorporated on 1st August, 2019 with a paid- up share capital of Rs. 200 crores. Within such a small period of about one year in operation, it has earned sizeable profits and has topped the charts for its high employee-friendly environment. The company wants to issue sweat equity to its employees. A close friend of the CEO of the company has told him that the company cannot issue sweat equity shares as minimum 2 years have not elapsed since the time company commenced its business. The CEO of the company has approached you to advise about the essential conditions to be fulfilled before the issue of sweat equity shares especially since their company is just about a year old.

[ICAI Module, MTP May 2019, May 2020, RTP May 2019,]

Answer

Relevant provision:

Sweat equity shares of a class of shares already issued.

According to section 54 of the Companies Act, 2013, a company may issue sweat equity shares of a class of shares already issued, if the following conditions are fulfilled, namely:

(i) the issue is authorised by a special resolution passed by the company;

(ii) the resolution specifies the number of shares, the current market price, consideration, if any, and the class or classes of directors or employees to whom such equity shares are to be issued;

(iii) where the equity shares of the company are listed on a recognised stock exchange, the sweat equity shares are issued in accordance with the regulations made by the Securities and Exchange Board in this behalf and if they are not so listed, the sweat equity shares are issued in accordance with such rules as prescribed under Rule 8 of the Companies (Share and Debentures) Rules, 2014

The rights, limitations, restrictions and provisions as are for the time being applicable to equity shares shall be applicable to the sweat equity shares issued under Section 54 and the holders of such shares shall rank pari passu with other equity shareholders.

Given case and analysis:

Trisha Data Security Limited can issue Sweat equity shares by following the conditions as mentioned above.

It does not make a difference that the company is just about a year old because no such minimum time limit of 2 years in operations is specified under Section 54.

Question 8:

Yellow Pvt Ltd. is an unlisted company incorporated in the year 2012. The company have share capital of rupees fifty crores. The company has decided to issue sweat equity shares to its directors and employees. The company decided to issue 10% sweat equity shares (which in total will add up to 30% of its paid up equity shares), with a locking period of five years, as it is a start-up company. How would you justify these facts in relation to the provision for issue of sweat equity shares by a start-up company, with reference to the provision of the Company Act, 2013. Explain?

[RTP May 2019, MTP March 19, May 2020]

Answer

Relevant provision:

Sweat Equity Shares is governed by Section 54 of the Companies Act, 2013 and Rule 8 of Companies (Share capital and debentures) Rules, 2014. According to Section 54 the company can issue sweat equity shares to its director and permanent employees of the company.

According to rule 8 (4) proviso, states that a start up company, is defined in a notification number Ministry of Commerce and industry Government of India, may issue sweat equity share not exceeding 50% of its paid up share capital up to 10 years from the date of its in incorporation or registration.

According to Rule 8(5), the sweat equity shares issued to directors or employees shall be locked in/ non transferable for a period of 3 years from the date of allotment and the fact that the share certificates are under lock-in too.

Analysis and conclusion:

Hence, in the above case the company can issue sweat equity shares by passing special resolution at its general meeting. The company as a startup company is right in issue of 10% sweat equity share as it is overall within the limit of 50% of its paid-up share capital. But the lock in period of the shares is limited to ~~maximum~~ three years period from the date of allotment.

Question 9:

Due to insufficient profits, Silver Robotics Limited is unable to redeem its existing preference shares amounting to Rs. 10,00,000 (10,000 preference shares of Rs. 100 each) though as per the terms of issue they need to be redeemed within next two months. It did not, however, default in payment of dividend as and when it became due. What is the remedy available to the company in respect of outstanding preference shares as per the Companies Act, 2013?

[ICAI Module]

OR

SKS Limited issued 8% ₹ 1,50,000; Redeemable Preference Shares of ₹ 100 each in the month of May, 2010, which are liable to be redeemed within a period of 10 years. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Company is neither in a position to redeem the preference shares nor to pay dividend in accordance with the terms of issue. The Company with the consent of Redeemable Preference Shareholders of 70% in value, made a petition to the Tribunal [NCLT] to accord approval to issue further redeemable preference shares equal to the amount due. Will the petition be approved by the Tribunal in the light of the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013? Can the company include the dividend unpaid in the above issue of redeemable preference shares?

[May 2022]

Answer

Relevant provision:

According to Section 55(3) of the Companies Act, 2013, where a company is not in a position to redeem any preference shares or to pay dividend, if any, on such shares in accordance with the terms of issue (such shares hereinafter referred to as unredeemed preference shares), it may:

- with the consent of the holders of three-fourths in value of such preference shares, and
- with the approval of the Tribunal on a petition made by it in this behalf,

issue further redeemable preference shares equal to the amount due, including the dividend thereon, in respect of the unredeemed preference shares, and on the issue of such further redeemable preference shares, the unredeemed preference shares shall be deemed to have been redeemed.

Provided that the Tribunal shall, while giving approval under this sub-section, order the redemption forthwith of preference shares held by such persons who have not consented to the issue of further redeemable preference shares.

Given case and conclusion:
In view of the provisions of Section 55 (3), Silver Robotics Limited can initiate steps for the issue of further redeemable preference shares equal to the amount due i.e., Rs. 10,00,000. For this purpose, it shall obtain the consent of the holders of three-fourths in value of such preference shares and also seek approval of the Tribunal by making a petition.

In case, there are certain preference shareholders who have not accorded their consent for the proposal of issuing further redeemable preference shares, the Tribunal may order the company to redeem forthwith such preference shares.

Accordingly, Silver Robotics Limited must be ready with sufficient funds for the redemption of preference shares held by those who have not consented. On the issue of such further redeemable preference shares by the company, the unredeemed preference shares shall be deemed to have been redeemed.

Question 10:
Ramesh, a resident of New Delhi, sent a transfer deed duly signed by him as transferee and his brother Suresh as transferor, for registration of transfer of shares to Ryan Entertainment Private Limited at its Registered Office in Mumbai. He did not receive the transferred shares certificates even after the expiry of four months from the date of dispatch of transfer deed. He lodged a criminal complaint in the Court at New Delhi. Decide, under the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013, whether the Court at New Delhi is competent to act in the said matter?

[ICAI Module]

Answer
Relevant provision
According to Section 56 (4) of the Companies Act, 2013 every company, unless prohibited by any provision of law or of any order of court, Tribunal or other authority, shall deliver the certificates of all shares transferred within a period of one month from the date of receipt by the company of the instrument of transfer.

Further, as per Section 56 (6), where any default is made in complying with the provisions of sub-sections (1) to (5), the company and every officer of the company who is in default shall be liable to a penalty of fifty thousand rupees.

In this case, the jurisdiction binding on the company is that of the State in which the registered office of the company is situated i.e., Mumbai. Hence, the Court at Delhi is not competent to act in the matter.

Question 11:
Mr. Nilesh has transferred 1000 equity shares of Perfect Vision Private Limited to his sister Ms. Mukta. The company did not register the transfer of shares and also did not send a notice of refusal to Mr. Nilesh or Ms. Mukta within the prescribed period. Discuss as per the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013, whether aggrieved party has any right(s) against the company?

OR

A company refuses to register transfer of shares made by Mr. X to Mr. Y. The company does not even send a notice of refusal to Mr. X. or Mr. Y respectively within the prescribed period. Has the aggrieved party any right(s) against the company for such refusal? Advise as per the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013.

OR

Harsh purchased 1000 shares of Singhania Ltd. from Pratik and sent those shares to the company for transfer in his name. The company neither transferred the shares nor sent any notice of refusal of transfer to any party within the period stipulated in the Companies Act, 2013. What is the time frame in which the company is supposed to reply to transferee? Does Harsh, the transferee have any remedies against the company for not sending any intimation in relation to transfer of shares to him?

[ICAI Module, MTP March, 2019, RTP May 2018, MTP May 2019]

Answer

The problem given in the question is governed by Section 58 of the Companies Act, 2013 dealing with the refusal to register transfer and appeal against such refusal.

In the present case, the company has committed the wrongful act of not sending the notice of refusal to register the transfer of shares.

Under section 58 (1), if a private company limited by shares refuses to register the transfer of, or the transmission by operation of law of the right to any securities or interest of a member in the company, then the company shall send notice of refusal to the transferor and the transferee or to the person giving intimation of such transmission, within a period of thirty days from the date on which the instrument of transfer, or the intimation of such transmission, was delivered to the company.

According to Section 58 (3), the transferee may appeal to the Tribunal against the refusal within a period of thirty days from the date of receipt of the notice or in case no notice has been sent by the company, within a period of sixty days from the date on which the instrument of transfer or the intimation of transmission, was delivered to the company.

In this case, as the company has not sent even a notice of refusal, Ms. Mukta being transferee can file an appeal before the Tribunal within a period of sixty days from the date on which the instrument of transfer was delivered to the company.

Question 12

The Directors of Mars Motors India Ltd. desire to alter Capital Clause of the Memorandum of Association of their company. Advise them about the ways in which the said clause may be altered under the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013.

[ICAI Module, MTP May 2020]

Answer

Alteration of Capital:

Under section 61 (1) a limited company having a share capital may, if authorised by its Articles, alter its Memorandum in its general meeting to:

(i) increase its authorized share capital by such amount as it thinks expedient;
(ii) consolidate and divide all or any of its share capital into shares of a larger amount than its existing shares; However, no consolidation and division which results in changes in the voting percentage of shareholders shall take effect unless it is approved by the Tribunal on an application made in the prescribed manner.
(iii) convert all or any of its paid- up shares into stock and reconvert that stock into fully paid shares of any denomination.
(iv) sub-divide its shares, or any of them, into shares of smaller amount than is fixed by the Memorandum;
(v) cancel shares which, at the date of the passing of the resolution in that behalf, have not been taken or agreed to be taken by any person, and diminish the amount of its share capital by the amount of the shares so cancelled.

Further, under section 64 where a company alters its share capital in any of the above-mentioned ways, the company shall file a notice in the prescribed form with the Registrar within a period of thirty days of such alteration, along with an altered memorandum.

The capital clause of memorandum, if authorised by the articles, shall be altered by passing an ordinary resolution as per Section 61 (1) of the Companies Act, 2013.

Question 13:
VRS Company Ltd. is holding 45% of total equity shares in SV Company Ltd. The Board of Directors of SV Company Ltd. (incorporated on January 1, 2019) decided to raise the share capital by issuing further equity shares. The Board of Directors resolved not to offer any shares to VRS Company Ltd., on the ground that it was already holding a high percentage of the total number of shares issued by SV Company Ltd. The Articles of Association of SV Company Ltd. provide that the new shares should first be offered to the existing shareholders of the company. On March 1, 2019 SV Company Ltd. offered new equity shares to all the shareholders except VRS Company Ltd.
Referring to the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013 examine the validity of the decision of the Board of Directors of SV Company Ltd. of not offering any further shares to VRS Company Limited.

[ICAI Module]

Answer
Relevant provision:
The legal issues involved herein are covered under Section 62 (1) of the Companies Act, 2013.
Section 62 (1) (a) of the Companies Act, 2013 provides that if, at any time, a company having a share capital proposes to increase its subscribed capital by issue of further shares, such shares should first be offered to the existing equity shareholders of the company as at the date of the offer, in proportion to the paid-up capital on those shares. Hence, the company cannot ignore a section of the existing shareholders and must offer the shares to the existing equity shareholders in proportion of their holdings.

Given case:
As per facts of the case, the Articles of SV Company Ltd. provide that the new shares should first be offered to the existing shareholders. However, the company offered new shares to all shareholders excepting VRS Company Ltd., which held a major portion of its equity shares. It is to be noted that under the Companies Act, 2013, SV Company Ltd. did not have any legal authority to do so.

Analysis and conclusion:
Therefore, in the given case, decision of the Board of Directors of SV Company Ltd. not to offer any further equity shares to VRS Company Ltd. on the ground that VRS Company Ltd. already held a high percentage of shareholding in SV Company Ltd. is not valid. Such a decision violates the provisions of Section 62 (1) (a) as well as Articles of the issuing company.

Question 14:
Shilpi Developers India Limited owed to Sunil Rs. 10,000. On becoming this debt payable, the company offered Sunil 100 shares of Rs. 100 each in full settlement of the debt. The said shares were allotted to Sunil as fully paid-up in lieu of his debt. Examine the validity of this allotment in the light of the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013.

[ICAI Module, MTP 1 May'23]

Answer
Relevant provision:
Under Section 62 (1) (c) of the Companies Act, 2013 where at any time, a company having a share capital proposes to increase its subscribed capital by the issue of further shares, either for cash or for a consideration other than cash, such shares may be offered to any persons, if it is authorised by a special resolution and if the price of such shares is determined by the valuation report of a registered valuer, subject to the compliance with the applicable provisions of Chapter III and any other conditions as may be prescribed.

In the present case, Shilpi Developers India Limited's allotment, to be classified as shares issued for consideration other than cash, must be approved by the members by a special resolution. Further, the valuation of the shares must be done by a registered valuer,
subject to the compliance with the applicable provisions of Chapter III and any other conditions as may be prescribed.

Question 15:

X Ltd. issued a notice on 1st Feb, 2018 to its existing shares holders offering to purchase one extra share for every five shares held by them.

The last date to accept the offer was 15th Feb, 2018 only. Mr. Kavi has given an application to renounce the shares offered to him in favour of Mr. Ravi, who is not a shareholder of the company. Examine the validity of application of Mr. Kavi under the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013. Would your answer differ if Mr. Ravi is a shareholder of X Ltd.?

[Nov 2019]

Answer

Relevant provision:

According to section 62 of the Companies Act, 2013, where at any time, a company having a share capital proposes to increase its subscribed capital by the issue of further shares, such shares shall be offered to persons who, at the date of the offer, are holders of equity shares of the company in proportion, as nearly as circumstances admit, to the paid-up share capital on those shares by sending a letter of offer subject to the following conditions, namely:-

(i) the offer shall be made by notice specifying the number of shares offered and limiting a time not being less than fifteen days and not exceeding thirty days from the date of the offer within which the offer, if not accepted, shall be deemed to have been declined;

(ii) unless the articles of the company otherwise provide, the offer aforesaid shall be deemed to include a right exercisable by the person concerned to renounce the shares offered to him or any of them in favour of any other person; and the notice referred to in clause (i) shall contain a statement of this right;

(iii) after the expiry of the time specified in the notice aforesaid, or on receipt of earlier intimation from the person to whom such notice is given that he declines to accept the shares offered, the Board of Directors may dispose of them in such manner which is not dis-advantageous to the shareholders and the company.

Given case:

In the instant case, X Ltd. issued a notice on 1st Feb, 2018 to its existing shares holders offering to purchase one extra share for every five shares held by them. The last date to accept the offer was 15th Feb, 2018 only. Mr. Kavi has given an application to renounce the shares offered to him in favour of Mr. Ravi, who is not a shareholder of the company.

Analysis and conclusion:

As nothing is specified related to the Articles of the company, it is assumed offer shall be deemed to include a right of renunciation. Hence, Mr. Kavi can renounce the shares offered to him in favour of Mr. Ravi, who is not a shareholder of the company.

In the second part of the question, even if Mr. Ravi is a shareholder of X Ltd. then also it does not affect the right of renunciation of shares of Mr. Kavi to Mr. Ravi.

Question 16

Dhyan Dairy Ltd., a dairy products manufacturing company wants to set-up a new processing unit at Udaipur. Due to paucity of funds, the existing shareholders are not willing to fund for expansion. Hence, the Company approached Shayam Ltd. for subscribing to the shares of the Company for expansion purposes. Can Dhyan Dairy Ltd. issue shares only to Shayam Ltd. under the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013? If so, state the conditions

[MTP March 2018]

OR

Earth Ltd., a Public Company offer the new shares (further issue of shares) to persons other than the existing shareholders of the Company. Explain the conditions when shares can be issued to persons other than existing shareholders. **Discuss whether these shares can be offered to the Preference Shareholders?**

[RTP Nov 2018]

Answer

Issue of Further Shares:

According to Section 62 (1) of the Companies Act, 2013 if at any time, a company having a share capital proposes to increase its subscribed capital by the issue of further shares, such shares should be offered to

(i) the existing equity shareholders of the company as at the date of the offer, in proportion to the capital paid up on those shares.

(ii) employees under a scheme of employees' stock option subject to a special resolution passed by the company and subject to such conditions as may be prescribed.

(iii) to any persons, if it is authorised by a special resolution, whether or not those persons include the persons referred to in clause (i) or clause (ii), either for cash or for a consideration other than cash, if the price of such shares is determined by the valuation report of a registered valuer subject to such conditions as may be prescribed.

Since, in the given case Dhyan Dairy Ltd. approached Shayam Ltd. for subscribing to the shares of the company for its expansion and Shayam Ltd. is neither an existing equity shareholder of the company nor an employee, Dhyan Dairy Ltd., if it is authorised by a special resolution, may issues shares to Shayam Ltd. either for cash or for a consideration other than cash, subject to the condition that the price of such shares is determined by the valuation report of a registered valuer.

About Preference Shareholders (check the alternative question above): From the wordings of Section 62 (1) (c), it is quite clear that these shares can be issued to any persons who may be preference shareholders as well, provided such issue is authorized by a special resolution of the company and are issued on such conditions as may be prescribed.

Question 17

ABC Ltd. has following balances in their Balance Sheet as on 31st March, 2018:

		Rs.
(1)	Equity shares capital (3.00 lakhs equity shares of Rs. 10 each)	30.00 lacs
(2)	Free reserves	5.00 lacs
(3)	Securities Premium Account	3.00 lacs
(4)	Capital redemption reserve account	4.00 lacs
(5)	Revaluation Reserve	3.00 lacs

Directors of the company seeks your advice in following cases:

(i) Whether company can give bonus shares in the ratio of 1:3?

(ii) What if company decide to give bonus shares in the ratio of 1:2?

[Nov 2018]

Answer

Relevant provision - Issue of bonus shares [Section 63]:

As per Section 63 of the Companies Act, 2013, a company may issue fully paid-up bonus shares to its members, in any manner whatsoever, out of—

a. its free reserves;

b. the securities premium account; or

c. the capital redemption reserve account

Provided that no issue of bonus shares shall be made by capitalising reserves created by the revaluation of assets.

Analysis and conclusion:

As per the given facts, ABC Ltd. has total eligible amount of INR 12 lakhs (i.e. 5.00+3.00+4.00) out of which bonus shares can be issued and the total share capital is INR 30.00 lakhs. Accordingly:

(i) For issue of 1:3 bonus shares, there will be a requirement of INR 10 lakhs (i.e., 1/3 x 30.00 lakh) which is well within the limit of available amount of INR 12 lakhs. So, ABC Limited can go ahead with the bonus issue in the ratio of 1:3.

(ii) In case ABC Limited intends to issue bonus shares in the ratio of 1:2, there will be a requirement of INR 15 lakhs (i.e., ½ x 30.00 lakh). Here in this case, the company cannot go ahead with the issue of bonus shares in the ratio of 1:2, since the requirement of INR 15 Lakhs is exceeding the available eligible amount of INR 12 lakhs

Question 18:

Shankar Portland Cement Limited is engaged in the manufacture of different types of cements and has got a good brand value. Over the years, it has built a good reputation and its Balance Sheet as at March 31, 2020 showed the following position:

1. Authorized Share Capital (25,00,000 equity shares of Rs. 10/- each) Rs. 2,50,00,000
2. Issued, subscribed & paid-up Share Capital (10,00,000 equity shares of Rs. 10/- each, fully paid-up) Rs. 1,00,00,000
3. Free Reserves Rs. 3,00,00,000

The Board of Directors are proposing to declare a bonus issue of 1 share for every 2 shares held by the existing shareholders. The Board wants to know the conditions and the manner of issuing bonus shares under the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013.

[ICAI Module, MTP Nov 2020, MTP 2 May'23]

Answer

According to Section 63 of the Companies Act, 2013, a company may issue fully paid-up bonus shares to its members, in any manner whatsoever, out of –

(i) its free reserves;

(ii) the securities premium account; or

(iii) the capital redemption reserve account.

Provided that no issue of bonus share shall be made by capitalising reserves created by revaluation of assets.

Conditions for issue of Bonus Shares: No company shall capitalise its profits or reserves for the purpose of issuing fully paid-up bonus shares, unless—

(i) it is authorised by its Articles;

(ii) it has, on the recommendation of the Board, been authorised in the general meeting of the company;

(iii) it has not defaulted in payment of interest or principal in respect of fixed deposits or debt securities issued by it;

(iv) it has not defaulted in respect of payment of statutory dues of employees, such as, contribution to provident fund, gratuity and bonus;

(v) the partly paid-up shares, if any, outstanding on the date of allotment, are made fully paid-up;

(vi) it complies with such conditions as are prescribed by Rule 14 of the Companies (Share Capital and debentures) Rules, 2014 which states that the company which has once announced the decision of its Board recommending a bonus issue, shall not subsequently withdraw the same.

Further, the company has to ensure that the bonus shares shall not be issued in lieu of dividend.

For the issue of bonus shares Shankar Portland Cement Limited will require reserves of Rs. 50,00,000 (i.e. half of Rs. 1,00,00,000 being the paid-up share capital), which is readily available with the company.

Hence, after following the above conditions relating to the issue of bonus shares, the company may proceed for a bonus issue of 1 share for every 2 shares held by the existing shareholders.

Question 19:

The Authorized share capital of SSP Limited is Rs. 5 crores divided into 50 Lakhs equity shares of Rs. 10 each. The Company issued 30 Lakhs equity shares for subscription which was fully subscribed. The Company called so far Rs. 8 per share and it was paid up. Later on the Company proposed to reduce the Nominal Value of equity share from Rs. 10 each to Rs. 8 each and to carry out the following proposals:

(i) Reduction in Authorized Capital from Rs. 5 crore divided into 50 Lakhs equity shares of Rs. 10 each to Rs. 4 crore divided into 50 Lakhs equity shares of Rs. 8 each.

(ii) Conversion of 30 Lakhs partly paid up equity shares of Rs. 8 each to fully paid up equity shares of Rs. 8 each there by relieving the shareholders from making further payment of Rs. 2 per share.

State the procedures to be followed by the Company to carry out the above proposals under the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013.

[Nov 2020]

Answer

(i) Procedure for reduction of share capital-

In order to carry out proposals by SSP Limited to reduce the nominal value of the equity share, the company has to comply with the procedure given under section 66 of the Companies Act, 2013 which deals with the Reduction of share capital.

Procedure

1) Reduction of share capital by special resolution: Subject to confirmation by the Tribunal on an application by the company, a company limited by shares or limited by guarantee and having a share capital may, by a special resolution, reduce the share capital in any manner and in particular, may:
   a) extinguish or reduce the liability on any of its shares in respect of the share capital not paid-up; or
   b) either with or without extinguishing or reducing liability on any of its shares,—
      (i) cancel any paid-up share capital which is lost or is unrepresented by available assets; or
      (ii) pay off any paid-up share capital which is in excess of the wants of the company, alter its memorandum by reducing the amount of its share capital and of its shares accordingly.
2) Issue of Notice from the Tribunal: The Tribunal shall give notice of every application made to it to the Central Government, Registrar and the creditors of the company and shall take into consideration the representations, if any, made to it by them within a period of three months from the date of receipt of the notice.
3) Order of tribunal: The Tribunal may, if it is satisfied that the debt or claim of every creditor of the company has been discharged or determined or has been secured or his consent is obtained, make an order confirming the reduction of share capital on such terms and conditions as it deems fit.
4) Publishing of order of confirmation of tribunal: The order of confirmation of the reduction of share capital by the Tribunal shall be published by the company in such manner as the Tribunal may direct.
5) Delivery of certified copy of order to the registrar: The company shall deliver a certified copy of the order of the Tribunal and of a minute approved by the Tribunal to the Registrar within thirty days of the receipt of the copy of the order, who shall register the same and issue a certificate to that effect.

(ii) Alteration of Share Capital:

SSP Limited proposes to alter its share capital. The Present authorized share capital Rs. 5 Crore will be altered to Rs. 4 Crore. According to Section 61 of the Companies Act, 2013, a limited company having a share capital may alter its capital part of the memorandum.

A limited company having a share capital may, if so authorized by its articles, alter its memorandum in its general meeting to -

1) Cancel shares which, at the date of the passing of the resolution in that behalf, have not been taken or agreed to be taken by any person, and diminish the amount of its share capital by the amount of the shares so cancelled. The cancellation of shares shall not be deemed to be reduction of share capital.
2) A company shall within 30 days of the shares having been consolidated, converted, sub-divided, redeemed, or cancelled or the stock having been reconverted, shall give a notice to the Registrar in the prescribed form along with an altered memorandum [Section 64 of the Companies Act, 2013].

The Company has to follow the above procedures to alter its authorized share capital.

Question 20:

OLAF Limited, a subsidiary of PQR Limited, decides to give a loan of Rs. 4,00,000 to its Human Resource Manager Mr. Surya Nayan, who does not fall in the category of Key Managerial Personnel and draws a salary of Rs. 40,000 per month, to buy 500 partly paid-up equity shares of Rs. 1000 each in OLAF Limited. Examine the validity of company's decision under the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013.

[ICAI Module, RTP May 2020, MTP Nov 2020]

Answer

Restrictions on purchase by company or giving of loans by it for purchase of its share:

As per section 67 (3) of the Companies Act, 2013 a company is allowed to give a loan to its employees subject to the following limitations:

(a) The employee must not be a director or Key Managerial Personnel;

(b) The amount of such loan shall not exceed an amount equal to six months' salary of the employee.

(c) The loan must be extended for subscribing fully paid-up shares.

In the given instance, Human Resource Manager Mr. Surya Nayan is not a Key Managerial Personnel of the OLAF Limited. Further, he is drawing a salary of Rs. 40,000 per month and wants to avail loan for purchasing 500 partly paid-up equity shares of Rs. 1000 each of OLAF Limited in which he is employed.

Keeping the above facts and legal provisions in view, decision of OLAF Limited in granting a loan of Rs. 4,00,000 for purchase of its partly paid-up shares to Human Resource Manager is invalid due to following reasons:

a. The amount of loan is more than 6 months' salary of Mr. Surya Nayan, the HR Manager. It should have been restricted to Rs. 2,40,000 only.
b. The loan to be given by OLAF Limited to its HR Manager Mr. Surya Nayan is meant for purchase of partly paid shares.

Question 21

Natraj Limited is engaged in the manufacturing of glass products. It wants to provide financial assistance to its employees to enable them to subscribe for fully paid shares of the company. Advise whether it amount to purchase of its own shares. If, in the instant case, the company itself purchasing to redeem its preference shares, does it amount to acquisition of its own shares?

[MTP April 2021]

Answer

Yes, the financial assistance to its employees by the company to enable them to subscribe for the shares of the company will amount to the company purchasing its own shares. However, section 67(3) of the Companies Act, 2013, permits a company to the give loans to its employees other than its directors or key managerial personnel, for an amount not exceeding their salary or wages for a period of six months with a view to enabling them to purchase or subscribe for fully paid -up shares in the company or its holding company to be held by them by way of beneficial ownership.

Section 68 of the Companies Act, 2013 however, allows a company to buy back its own shares under certain circumstances and subject to fulfilment of prescribed conditions.

Purchasing in order to redeem its preference shares, does amount to acquisition or purchase of its own shares. But this is allowed in terms of section 68 of the Companies Act, 2013 subject to the fulfilment of prescribed conditions, and upto specified limits and only after following the prescribed procedure.

Question 22

Heavy Metals Limited wants to provide financial assistance to its employees, to enable them to subscribe for certain number of fully paid shares. Considering the provision of the Companies Act, 2013, what advice would you give to the company in this regard?

[RTP Nov 2018]

Answers

Under section 67 (2) of the Companies Act, 2013 no public company is allowed to give, directly or indirectly and whether by means of a loan, guarantee, or security, any financial assistance for the purpose of, or in connection with, a purchase or subscription, by any person of any shares in it or in its holding company.

However, section 67 (3) makes an exception by allowing companies to give loans to their employees other than its directors or key managerial personnel, for an amount not exceeding their salary or wages for a period of six months with a view to enabling them to purchase or subscribe for fully paid-up shares in the company or its holding company to be held by them by way of beneficial ownership.

It is further provided that disclosures in respect of voting rights not exercised directly by the employees in respect of shares to which the scheme relates shall be made in the Board's report in such manner as may be prescribed.

Hence, Heavy Metals Ltd can provide financial assistance up to the specified limit to its employees to enable them to subscribe for the shares in the company provided the shares are purchased by the employees to be held for beneficial ownership by them.

However, the directors or key managerial personnel will not be eligible for such assistance.

Question 23

State the legal provisions in respect of 'Declaration of Solvency', which an unlisted public company needs to adhere to while taking steps to buy-back its own shares.

[ICAI Module]

Answer

According to Section 68 (6), where an unlisted public company has passed a special resolution under Section 68 (2) (b) or the Board has passed a resolution under item (ii) of the proviso to Section 68 (2) (b) to buy-back its own shares, it shall, before making such buy-back, file with the Registrar a 'Declaration of Solvency' in Form SH-9.

The declaration shall be verified by an affidavit to the effect that the Board has made a full inquiry into the affairs of the company as a result of which they have formed an opinion that it is capable of meeting its liabilities and will not be rendered insolvent within a period of one year from the date of declaration of solvency adopted by the Board.

The declaration shall be signed by at least two directors of the company, one of whom shall be the managing director, if any.

Question 24

Kavish Ltd., desirous of buying back of all its equity shares from the existing shareholders of the company, seeks your advice. Examining the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013 discuss whether the above buy back of equity shares by the company is possible. Also , state the sources out of which buy-back of shares can be financed?

[RTP May 2018]

Answers

In terms of section 68 (2) (c) of the Companies Act, 2013 a company is allowed to buy back a maximum of 25% of the aggregate of its paid- up capital and free reserves. Hence, the company in the given case is not allowed to buy back its entire equity shares.

Section 68 (1) of the Companies Act, 2013 specifies the sources of funding buy back of its shares and other specified securities as under:

a) Free reserves or
b) Security Premium account or
c) Proceeds of the issue of any shares or other specified securities

However, under the proviso to section 68 (1) no buy back of shares or any specified securities can be made out of the proceeds of an earlier issue of the same kind of shares or same kind of specified securities.

Question 25

London Limited, at a general meeting of members of the company, passed an ordinary resolution to buy-back 30 percent of its equity share capital. The articles of the company empower the company for buy-back of shares. Explaining the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013, examine:

A. Whether company's proposal is in order?
B. Would your answer be still the same in case the company instead of 30 percent, decides to buy-back only 20 per cent of its equity share capital?

[Jan 2021]

Answer

Relevant provision:

According to the provisions of section 68 (2) of the Companies Act, 2013, no company shall purchase its own shares or other specified securities under sub- section (1), unless—

(a) the buy-back is authorised by its articles;

(b) a special resolution has been passed at a general meeting of the company authorising the buy-back:
Provided that nothing contained in this clause shall apply to a case where—
  (i) the buy-back is, ten per cent or less of the total paid-up equity capital and free reserves of the company; and
  (ii) such buy-back has been authorised by the Board by means of a resolution passed at its meeting;

(c) the buy-back is 25% or less of the aggregate of paid-up capital and free reserves of the company:
Provided that in respect of the buy-back of equity shares in any financial year, the reference to twenty-five per cent in this clause shall be construed with respect to its total paid-up equity capital in that FY.

Given case:

In the instant case, London Limited, at a general meeting of members of the company, passed an ordinary resolution to buy back 30% of its equity share capital. The articles of the company empower the company for buy back of shares.

Conclusion

(A) the Company's proposal is not in order, since a special resolution as required by the above provision has not been passed, rather an ordinary resolution has only been passed.

> Author's Note: ICAI's answer seems to be incorrect. Even if SR was passed instead of OR, still 30% buy back exceeds the limit of 25% and hence is not allowed u/s 68.

(B) if the company instead of 30%, decides to buy back only 20% (even if it is within the specified limit of 25%) of its equity share capital, then also special resolution is required. Hence, our answer will not change. This proposal of the company will also be not in order.

Question 26:

Xgen Limited has a paid-up equity capital and free reserves to the extent of Rs. 50,00,000. The company is planning to buy-back shares to the extent of Rs. 4,50,000. The company approaches you for advice with regard to the following:

(a) Is special resolution required to be passed?
(b) What is the time limit for completion of buy-back?
(c) What should be ratio of aggregate debts to the paid-up capital-and free reserves after buy-back?

[May 2018]

Answer

According to the provisions of section 68 (2) of the Companies Act, 2013, no company shall purchase its own shares or other specified securities under sub- section (1), unless—

(a) the buy-back is authorised by its articles;

(b) a special resolution has been passed at a general meeting of the company authorising the buy-back:
Provided that nothing contained in this clause shall apply to a case where—
  (i) the buy-back is, ten per cent or less of the total paid-up equity capital and free reserves of the company; and
  (ii) such buy-back has been authorised by the Board by means of a resolution passed at its meeting;

Time limit for Completion of Buy Back: As per section 68(4), every buy-back shall be completed within a period of one year from the date of passing of the special resolution, or as the case may be, the resolution passed by the Board under sub-section (2).

Ratio of aggregate debts: Provision also specifies that ratio of the aggregate debts (secured and unsecured) owed by the company after buy back is not more than twice the paid up capital and its free reserves. However, Central Government may prescribe higher ratio of the debt for a class or classes of companies.

As per the stated facts, Xgen Ltd. has a paid up equity capital and free reserves to the extent of Rs. 50,00,000. The company planned to buy back shares to the extent of Rs. 4,50,000.

Referring to the above provisions, the answers will be as follows:

1. No, special resolution will not be required as the buyback is less than 10% of the total paid-up equity capital and free reserves (50,00,000x10/100= 5,00,000) of the company, but such buy back must be authorized by the Board by means of a resolution passed at its meeting.
2. Time limit for completion of buy back will be- within a period of one year from the date of passing of the resolution by the Board.
3. The ratio of the aggregate debts (secured and unsecured) owed by the company after buy back should not be more than twice the paid up capital and its free reserves.

The above buy-back is possible when backed by the authorization by the articles of the company.

Question 27

"The offer of buy-back of its own shares by a company shall not be made within a period of six months from the date of the closure of the preceding offer of buy-back, if any and cooling period to make further issue of same kind of shares including allotment of further shares shall be a period of one year from the completion of buy back subject to certain exceptions." Examine the validity of this statement by explaining the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013 in this regard.

[July 2021]

Answer

According to proviso to section 68(2) of the Companies Act, 2013, no offer of buy- back, shall be made within a period of one year from the date of the closure of the preceding offer of buy-back, if any.

Section 68 (8) casts an obligation that where a company completes a buy-back of its shares or other specified securities under this section, it shall not make further issue of same kind of shares including allotment of further shares under section 62 (1) (a) or other specified securities within a period of six months except by way of bonus issue or in the discharge of subsisting obligations such as conversion of warrants, stock option schemes, sweat equity or conversion of preference shares or debentures into equity shares.

Keeping in view of the above provisions, the statement "the offer of buy-back of its own shares by a company shall not be made within a period of six months from the date of the closure of the preceding offer of buy back, if any and cooling period to make further issue of same kind of shares including allotment of further shares shall be a period of one year from the completion of buy back subject to certain exceptions" is not valid.

Question 28:

Which fund may be utilized by a public limited company for purchasing (buy back) its own shares? Also explain the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013 regarding the circumstances in which a company is prohibited to buy back its own shares.

[May 2019]

Answers

Funds utilized for purchase of its own securities: Section 68 of the Companies Act, 2013 states that a company may purchase its own securities out of:

i) its free reserves; or
ii) the securities premium account; or
iii) the proceeds of the issue of any shares or other specified securities.

However, buy-back of any kind of shares or other specified securities cannot be made out of the proceeds of an earlier issue of the same kind of shares or same kind of other specified securities.

Prohibition for buy-back in certain circumstances [Section 70]

(1) The provision says that no company shall directly or indirectly purchase its own shares or other specified securities-
   (a) through any subsidiary company including its own subsidiary companies; or
   (b) through any investment company or group of investment companies; or
   (c) if a default is made by the company in repayment of deposits or interest payment thereon, redemption of debentures or preference shares or payment of dividend to any shareholder or repayment of any term loan or interest payable thereon, to any financial institutions or banking company;
   But where the default is remedied and a period of three years has lapsed after such default ceased to subsist, then such buy-back is not prohibited.

(2) No company shall directly or indirectly purchase its own shares or other specified securities in case such company has not complied with provisions of Sections 92 (Annual Report), 123 (Declaration of dividend), 127 (Punishment for failure to distribute dividends), and section 129 (Financial Statements).

Question 29:

XYZ unlisted company passed a special resolution in a general meeting on January 5th, 2019 to buy back 30% of its own equity shares. The Articles of Association empowers the company to buy back its own shares. Earlier the company has also passed a special resolution to buy back its own shares on January 15th, 2018. The company further decided that the payment for buyback be made out of the proceeds of the company's earlier issue of equity share. In the light of the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013,

(i) Decide, whether the company's proposal is in order.

(ii) What will be your answer if buy back offer date is revised from January 5 th, 2019 to January 25th 2019 and percentage of buyback is reduced from 30% to 25% keeping the source of purchase as above?

[Nov 2019]

Answer

(i) In the instant case, the company's proposal is not in order due to the following reasons:

a. Though XYZ unlisted company passed a special resolution but it proposed to buy back 30% of its own equity shares. But as per section 68(2)(c) of the Companies Act, 2013, buy-back of equity shares in any financial year shall not exceed 25% of its total paid up equity capital in that financial year.
b. The Articles of Association empowers the company to buy back its own shares. This condition is in order as per section 68(2)(a).
c. Earlier the company has also passed a special resolution to buy back its own shares on January 15th, 2018, now the company passed a special resolution on January 5th, 2019 to buy back its own shares. This is not valid as no offer of buy-back, shall be made within a period of one year from the date of the closure of the preceding offer of buy-back, if any. [proviso to section 68(2)]
d. The company further decided that the payment for buy back be made out of the proceeds of the company's earlier issue of equity share. This is not in order as according to proviso to section 68(1), buy-back of any kind of shares or other specified securities cannot be made out of the proceeds of an earlier issue of the same kind of shares or same kind of other specified securities.

(ii) If buy back offer date is revised from 5th January 2019 to January 25th 2019 and percentage of buy back is reduced from 30% to 25% keeping the source of purchase as above, then also the company's proposal is not in order as buy-back of any kind of shares or other specified securities cannot be made out of the proceeds of an earlier issue of the same kind of shares or same kind of other specified securities.

Question 30:

What are the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013 relating to the appointment of 'Debenture Trustee' by a company? Whether the following can be appointed as 'Debenture Trustee':

(i) A shareholder who has no beneficial interest.

(ii) A creditor whom the company owes Rs. 499 only.

(iii) A person who has given a guarantee for repayment of amount of debentures issued by the company?

[ICAI Module, Nov 2016, RTP Nov'22]

Answer

Appointment of Debenture Trustee: Under section 71 (5) of the Companies Act, 2013, no company shall issue a prospectus or make an offer or invitation to the public or to its members exceeding five hundred for the subscription of its debentures, unless the company has, before such issue or offer, appointed one or more debenture trustees and the conditions governing the appointment of such trustees shall be such as may be prescribed.

Rule 18 (2) of the Companies (Share Capital and Debentures) Rules, 2014, framed under the Companies Act for the issue of secured debentures provide that before the appointment of debenture trustee or trustees, a written consent shall be obtained from such debenture trustee or trustees proposed to be appointed and a statement to that effect shall appear in the letter of offer issued for inviting the subscription of the debentures.

Further according to the rules, no person shall be appointed as a debenture trustee, if he-

(i) beneficially holds shares in the company;
(ii) is promoter, director or key managerial personnel or any other officer or an employee of the company or its holding, subsidiary or associate company;
(iii) is beneficially entitled to moneys which are to be paid by the company otherwise than as remuneration payable to the debenture trustee;
(iv) is indebted to the company, or its subsidiary or its holding or associate company or a subsidiary of such holding company;
(v) has furnished any guarantee in respect of principal debts secured by the debentures or interest thereon;
(vi) Has any pecuniary relationship with the company amounting to two percent. or more of its gross turnover or total income or fifty lakh rupees or such higher amount as may be prescribed, whichever is lower, during the two immediately preceding financial years or during the current financial year;
(vii) is a relative of any promoter or any person who is in the employment of the company as director or key managerial personnel;

Thus, based on the above provisions answers to the given questions are as follows:

(i) A shareholder who has no beneficial interest, can be appointed as a debenture trustee.
(ii) A creditor whom company owes Rs. 499 cannot be appointed as a debenture trustee. The amount owed is immaterial.
(iii) A person who has given guarantee for repayment of principal and interest thereon in respect of debentures also cannot be appointed as a debenture trustee.

Question 31:

As per the financial statement as at 31.03.2021, the Authorized and Issued share capital of Manorama Travels Private Limited (the Company) is of ₹ 100 Lakh divided into 10 Lakh equity shares of ₹ 10 each. The subscribed and paid-up share capital on that date is ₹ 80 Lakh divided into 8 Lakh equity shares of ₹ 10 each. The Company has reduced its share capital by cancelling 2 Lakh issued but unsubscribed equity shares during the financial year 2021-22, without obtaining the confirmation from the National Company Law Tribunal (the Tribunal). It is noted that the Company has amended its Memorandum of Association by passing the requisite resolution at the duly convened meeting for the above purpose. While filing the relevant e-form the Practicing Company Secretary refused to certify the form for the reason that the action of the Company reducing the share capital without confirmation of the Tribunal is invalid.

In light of the above facts & in accordance with the provisions of Companies Act, 2013, you are requested to

(i) Examine the validity of the decision of Company and contention of the practicing Company Secretary and
(ii) State, the type of resolution required to be passed for amending the capital clause of the Memorandum of Association.

[May 2022]

Answer

According to section 61 of the Companies Act, 2013, a limited company having a share capital is empowered to alter its capital clause of the Memorandum of Association. The provisions are as under:

(1) According to the section, a limited company having a share capital may, if so authorised by its articles, alter its memorandum in its general meeting to cancel shares which, at the date of the passing of the resolution in that behalf, have not been taken or agreed to be taken by any person, and diminish the amount of its share capital by the amount of the shares so cancelled.

(2) It provides that the cancellation of shares shall not be deemed to be a reduction of share capital.

According to the given facts, in the said question, the company reduced its share capital without obtaining the confirmation from the NCLT. The Company amended its memorandum by passing the requisite resolution at the duly convened meeting. However, Company Secretary refused to certify stating that action of company reducing the share capital without confirmation of the Tribunal, is invalid.

Accordingly, in the light of the stated facts, following shall be the answers:

(i) Decision of the company is valid, as for alteration of share capital by cancellation of shares and diminishing of amount of share capital by the amount of the shares so cancelled, does not require confirmation of the Tribunal. As per the law, passing of the resolution in that behalf at the duly convened meeting by amending Memorandum of Association, is the sufficient compliance. Therefore, contention of practicing Company Secretary is not valid.

(ii) According to section 13, save as provided in section 61 of the Companies Act, 2013, company may alter the provisions of its memorandum with the approval of the members by a special resolution.

Question 32:

Following is the extract of the Balance sheet ABC Ltd. as on 31st March, 2022:

Particulars		Amount (₹)
Equity & Liabilities		
(1) Shareholder's Fund		
(a) Share Capital:		
Authorized Capital:		
10,000, 12% Preference Shares of ₹ 10 each	1,00,000	
1,00,000 equity shares of ₹ 10 each	10,00,000	11,00,000
Issued & Subscribed Capital:		
8000,12% Preference Shares of ₹ 10 each fully paid up		80,000
90,000 equity shares of ₹ 10 each, ₹ 8 paid up		7,20,000
(b) Reserve and Surplus		
General Reserve	1,20,000	
Capital Reserve	75,000	
Securities Premium	25,000	
Surplus in statement of P& L	2,00,000	4,20,000
(2) Non-Current Liabilities:		
Long-term borrowings:		
Secured Loan: 12% partly convertible		
Debenture @ ₹ 100 each		5,00,000

On 1st April 2022 the company has made final call at ₹ 2 each on 90,000 Equity Shares. The call money was received by 25th April 2022. Thereafter, the company decided to capitalize it's reserves by way of bonus @ 1 share for every 4 shares to existing shareholders.

Answer the following questions according to the Companies Act, 2013, in above case:

(a) Which of the above-mentioned sources can be used by company to issue bonus shares?

(b) Calculate the amount to be capitalized from free reserves to issue bonus shares?

[MTP Nov 22]

Answer

Issue of Bonus Shares

According to section 63 (1) of the Companies Act, 2013, a company may issue fully paid-up bonus shares to its members, in any manner whatsoever, out of—

(i) its free reserves;
(ii) the securities premium account; or
(iii) the capital redemption reserve account.

However, no issue of bonus shares shall be made by capitalising reserves created by the revaluation of assets.

Section 63 (2) provides that the company can issue bonus shares only when the partly paid -up shares, if any outstanding on the date of allotment, are made fully paid-up.

(a) The following sources can be used by the company to issue bonus shares:
1. General Reserve
2. Securities Premium
3. Surplus in statement of P&L

(b)

Particulars	Amount
Amount of bonus shares to be issued	90,000 shares x 1/4 = 22,500 shares
Amount that ought to be capitalized for issue of bonus shares	22,500 x ₹ 10 per share = ₹ 2,25,000
Total amount available to be capitalized from free reserves to issue bonus shares	= 1,20,000+ 25,000+ 2,00,000 = ₹ 3,45,000
Hence, the amount to be capitalized from free reserves to issue bonus shares will be	₹ 2,25,000

Question 33

The Board of Directors of SRD Limited, an unlisted public company, engaged in the business of manufacturing of two wheelers; intend to issue debentures in order to finance its project of electric scooter manufacturing. The company seeks your advice regarding the maximum amount of debentures it can issue to raise the desired funds. The company has provided the following abstracts from its financial statements ended on 31st March 2022:

Authorised Share Capital:	
1,00,000 Nos. of Equity Shares of ₹100 each	1,00,00,000
Subscribed and Paid-up Share Capital:	
40,000 Nos. of Equity Shares of ₹ 100 each, fully paid-up.	40,00,000
Share Premium Reserve	50,00,000
General Reserve	30,00,000
Balance in Profit and Loss Account	20,00,000
Capital Reserve (profit on sale of Fixed Assets)	30,00,000
8% Non-Convertible Debentures	30,00,000
9.5% Term Loan from XYZ Bank Limited for purchase of Plant and Machinery (Repayment starts after 1 year moratorium period)	20,00,000
Short-term Cash Credit Loan from XYZ Bank Limited (On hypothecation of stock and receivables of the Company, repayable on demand)	50,00,000

Referring to and analysing the relevant provisions of the Companies Act, 2013, advise the company presenting the necessary calculations:

(i) The amount that can be raised by the company by issuing debentures and the resolution, if any, is required to be passed in the General Meeting of the Company in respect of the same?

(ii) What will be your answer in case the above company desired to issue debentures with an option to convert such debentures into shares?

[Nov 22]

Answer

(i) The amount that can be raised by the Company by issuing Debentures:

Section 71 of the Companies Act, 2013 (the Act), deals with the manner in which a company may issue debentures. Before the issue of debentures, the Board of Directors of the Company in compliance with Section 180(1)(c) of the Act, shall obtain approval of the shareholders through special resolution if the borrowings by issuing debentures together with the amount already borrowed exceed the aggregate of company's paid-up share capital, free reserves and securities premium amount.

Temporary loans obtained from the company's bankers in the ordinary course of business are not to be included in the borrowings.

The Amount that can be raised by the Company by issuing Debentures:

In view of the above provisions, SRD Limited can raise money to the extent of the following amounts without the approval of the shareholders through a special resolution:

Particulars	Amount
Paid up Equity Share Capital	40,00,000
Share Premium Reserve	50,00,000
General Reserve*	30,00,000
Balance in Profit and Loss Account*	20,00,000
Aggregate of its paid-up share capital, free reserves and securities premium amount (A)	1,40,00,000

*General Reserve and Balance in Profit and Loss Account is in the capacity of Free Reserve.

Since in the question, no pre-condition, is provided for issue of debenture with an option to convert such debentures into shares, so accordingly, the amount that can be raised by the company by issuing debentures will be:

Particulars	Amount
8% Non- Convertible Debentures	30,00,000
9.5% Term Loan for Purchase of Plant and Machinery	20,00,000
Amount already Borrowed (B)	50,00,000

Here, Short– term Cash Credit loan from XYZ Bank Ltd. is a 'Temporary Loan' obtained from the company's bankers.

Debentures that can be issued by the Board of Directors in the Board Meeting without obtaining approval of the shareholders through special resolution passed in the General Meeting = (A) - (B) = ₹ 90,00,000.

Further, the Board of Directors of the company shall obtain approval of the shareholders through special resolution if the borrowings by issuing debentures exceed ₹ 90,00,000.

(ii) Issue of Debentures with an Option to Convert into Shares: According to Section 71(1) of the Companies Act, 2013 a company may issue debentures with an option to convert such debentures into shares, either wholly or partly at the time of redemption. It is also provided that the issue of debentures with an option to convert such debentures into shares, wholly or partly, shall be approved by a special resolution passed at a general meeting.

Thus, in case SRD Limited desires to issue debentures with an option to convert such debentures into shares, it has to pass the special resolution irrespective of the amount to be raised

Question 34:
Anika Limited has an Authorized Capital of 10,00,000 equity shares of the face value of ₹100 each. Some of the hides expressed their opinion in the Annual General Meeting that it is very difficult for them to trade in the shares of the company in the mock made and requested the company to reduce the face value of each share to ₹10 and increase the number of shares to 1,00,00,000. Examine, whether the request of the shareholders is considerable and if so, how the company can alter its share capital as per the provisions of the Companies Act 2013?

[Nov 22]

Answer
According to Section 61(1)(d) of the Companies Act, 2013 (the Act), a limited company having a share capital may, if so authorised by its articles, alter its memorandum in its general meeting to sub-divide its shares, or any of them, into shares of smaller amount than is fixed by the memorandum, so, however, that in the sub-division the proportion between the amount paid and the amount, if any, unpaid on each reduced share shall be the same as it was in the case of the share from which the reduced share is derived.

Section 64 of the Act states that a company shall, within 30 days of its share capital having been altered in the manner provided in Section 61 (1), give notice to the Registrar in the prescribed form along with an altered memorandum.

In the given situation, shareholders of Anika Limited, in the AGM requested the Company to reduce the face value of each share (from INR 100 to INR 10) and increase the number of shares than fixed by the memorandum (i.e. from 10 Lakh to 1 crore).

According to the above provision, Anika Limited, having authorized capital of 10,00,000 equity shares (face value ₹ 100 each) can reduce the face value of each share to ₹ 10 each and increase the shares to 1,00,00,000 [thereby keeping the total amount of authorized share capital to ₹ 10,00,00,000], if authorised by the articles of association. Hence, the request of the shareholders is considerable.

How the company can alter its Share Capital
The company has to alter its memorandum in its general meeting as per the procedure contained in Section 13 of the Companies Act, 2013 and give notice to the Registrar along with an altered memorandum.

Chapter 5 – Acceptance of Deposit by Company

Question 1:
Ashish Ltd. having a net-worth of ₹ 80 crores and turnover of ₹ 30 crores wants to accept deposits from public other than its members. Referring to the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013, state the conditions and the procedures to be followed by Ashish Ltd. for accepting deposits from public other than its members.
[RTP May'19]

Answer:
Acceptance of deposit from public:
Relevant Provisions: According to section 76 of the Companies Act, 2013, a public company, having net worth of not less than 100 crore rupees or turnover of not less than 500 crore rupees, can accept deposits from persons other than its members subject to compliance with the requirements provided in sub-section (2) of section 73 and subject to such rules as the Central Government may, in consultation with the Reserve Bank of India, prescribe.

Provided that such a company shall be required to obtain the rating (including its net-worth, liquidity and ability to pay its deposits on due date) from a recognised credit rating agency for informing the public the rating given to the company at the time of invitation of deposits from the public which ensures adequate safety, and the rating shall be obtained for every year during the tenure of deposits.

Provided further that every company accepting secured deposits from the public shall within thirty days of such acceptance, create a charge on its assets of an amount not less than the amount of deposits accepted in favour of the deposit holders in accordance with such rules as may be prescribed.

Conclusion
Since, Ashish Ltd. has a net worth of ₹ 80 crores and turnover of ₹ 30 crores, which is less than the prescribed limits, hence, it cannot accept deposit from public other than its members. If the company wants to accept deposits from public other than its members, it has to fulfill the eligibility criteria of net worth or Turnover or both and then the other conditions as stated above.

Crux:
Conditions to accept deposit from public (sec 76) - NW not < 100 cr or T/O not < 500 cr, obtain credit rating before invitation, within 30 days of acceptance, create charge of amount not < deposit.

Question 2:
State true or false

i. XYZ Private Limited may accept the deposits from its members to the extent of ₹ 60.00 Lakh, if the aggregate of its paid-up capital, free reserves and security premium account is ₹ 60.00 Lakh
ii. A Government Company, which is eligible to accept deposits under Section 76 of the Companies Act, 2013 cannot accept deposits from public exceeding 25% of the aggregate of its paid- up capital, free reserves and security premium account.

[RTP Nov'20, May'19, ICAI Module, MTP April 2022]

OR

NIM Private Limited is engaged in the business of manufacturing household plastic goods. The books of accounts of the company provides that aggregate of its paid-up capital, free reserves and security premium account is Rs. 35.00 lacs. The company intends to accept deposits from its members to the extent of Rs.

35.00 lacs. Advise the company whether it can do so. Support your answer as per the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013.

[MTP March 2021]

Answer:

i. Relevant Provisions: As per the provisions of Section 73(2) of the Companies Act, 2013 read with Rule 3 of the Companies (Acceptance of Deposits) Rules, 2014, as amended by the Companies (Acceptance of Deposits) Amendment Rules, 2016, a company shall accept any deposit from its members, together with the amount of other deposits outstanding as on the date of acceptance of such deposits not exceeding 35% of the aggregate of the Paid-up share capital, free Reserves and securities premium account of the company.

Provided that a private company may accept from its members monies not exceeding one hundred per cent of aggregate of the paid up share capital, free reserves and securities premium account and such company shall file the details of monies so accepted to the Registrar in such manner as may be specified.

Conclusion: Therefore, the given statement of eligibility of XYZ Private Ltd. to accept deposits from its members to the extent of ₹ 60.00 lakh is **True.**

ii. Relevant Provision: A Government company is not eligible to accept or renew deposits under section 76, if the amount of such deposits together with the amount of other deposits outstanding as on the date of acceptance or renewal exceeds thirty five per cent of the aggregate of its Paid-up share capital, free Reserves and securities premium account of the company.
Conclusion: Therefore, the given statement prescribing the limit of 25% to accept deposits is. **False**

Crux: Upper limit on acceptance of Deposit:
Sec 73 – Deposit from Members
Normal company – 35% of Limit
Private company - 100% of Limit

Sec 76 – Deposit from Public
Eligible non-government company – 25% of Limit
Eligible government company - 35% of Limit

Limit = PUSC + FR + Sec Prem A/c

Question 3:

Vrinda Limited is a company manufacturing orange and strawberry candies for kids. Now, the company wants to expand its business and start the manufacturing of 10 more types of candies. The company has raised ₹ 1 crore through the issue of non-convertible debentures not constituting a charge on the assets of the company and listed on a recognised stock exchange as per the applicable regulations made by the Securities and Exchange Board of India. Advise, whether the above amount of ₹ 1 crore will be considered as deposit?

[May-18/May-17 -Old]

Answer:

Relevant Provisions:

As per sub-clause (ixa) of Rule 2 (1) (c) of the Companies (Acceptance of Deposit) Rules, 2014, any amount raised by issue of non-convertible debentures not constituting a charge on the assets of the company and listed on recognised stock exchange as per the applicable regulations made by the Securities and Exchange Board of India, are not considered as deposit.

Conclusion:

₹ 1 crore raised by Vrinda Limited will not be considered as deposit in terms of Rule 2 (1) (c) (ixa)

Crux: Non-convertible debentures not to be considered as deposit if unsecured + listed

Question 4:

Enumerate the amounts which when received by a company in the ordinary course of business are not to be considered as deposits

[ICAI Module, MTP 1 May'23]

Answer:

According to Rule 2 (1) (c) (xii), following amounts if received by a company in the course of, or for the purposes of, the business of the company, shall not be considered as deposits:

(a) any amount received as an advance for the supply of goods or provision of services accounted for in any manner whatsoever to be appropriated within a period of 365 days from date of acceptance of such advance:
However, in case any advance is subject matter of any legal proceedings before any court of law, the time limit of three hundred and sixty-five days shall not apply.

(b) any amount received as advance in connection with consideration for an immovable property under an agreement or arrangement.
However, such advance is required to be adjusted against such property in accordance with the terms of agreement or arrangement;

(c) any amount received as security deposit for the performance of the contract for supply of goods or provision of services;

(d) any amount received as advance under long term projects for supply of capital goods except those covered under item (b) above;

(e) any amount received as an advance towards consideration for providing future services in the form of a warranty or maintenance contract as per written agreement or arrangement, if the period for providing such services does not exceed the period prevalent as per common business practice or five years, from the date of acceptance of such service whichever is less;

(f) any amount received as an advance and as allowed by any sectoral regulator or in accordance with directions of Central or State Government;

(g) any amount received as an advance for subscription towards publication, whether in print or in electronic to be adjusted against receipt of such publications;

However, if the amount received under items (a), (b) and (d) above becomes refundable (with or without interest) due to the reasons that the company accepting the money does not have necessary permission or approval, wherever required, to deal in the goods or properties or services for which the money is taken, then the amount received shall be deemed to be a deposit under these rules.

Further, for the purposes of this sub-clause the amount shall be deemed to be deposits on the expiry of fifteen days from the date they become due for refund.

Question 5:

State the procedure to be followed by companies for acceptance of deposits from its members according to the Companies Act, 2013. What are the exemptions available to a private limited company?

ICAI Module, Nov 2018]

Answer

Acceptance of deposits by a company from its members:

As per section 73 (2) of the Companies Act, 2013, a company may, subject to the passing of a resolution in general meeting and subject to such rules as may be prescribed in consultation with the Reserve Bank of India, accept deposits from its members on such terms and conditions, including the provision of security, if any, or for the repayment of such deposits with interest, as may be agreed upon between the company and its members, subject to the fulfilment of the following conditions, namely:

(a) Issuance of a circular to its members including therein a statement showing the financial position of the company, the credit rating obtained, the total number of depositors and the amount due towards deposits in respect of any previous deposits accepted by the company and such other particulars in such form and in such manner as may be prescribed;

(b) Filing a copy of the circular along with such statement with the Registrar within 30 days before the date of issue of the circular;

(c) Depositing, on or before the 30th day of April each year, such sum which shall not be less than twenty per cent of the amount of its deposits maturing during the following financial year and kept in a scheduled bank in a separate bank account to be called deposit repayment reserve account;
(d) Omitted
(e) Certifying that the company has not committed any default in the repayment of deposits accepted either before or after the commencement of this Act or payment of interest on such deposits and where a default had occurred, the company made good the default and a period of five years had lapsed since the date of making good the default; and
(f) Providing security, if any for the due repayment of the amount of deposit or the interest thereon including the creation of such charge on the property or assets of the company.

Every deposit accepted by a company shall be repaid with interest in accordance with the terms and conditions of the agreement. Where a company fails to repay the deposit or part thereof or any interest thereon, the depositor concerned may apply to the Tribunal for an order directing the company to pay the sum due or for any loss or damage incurred by him as a result of such non-payment and for such other orders as the Tribunal may deem fit.

Exemption to certain private companies:

Clauses (a) to (c) and (e) of sub-section (2) of section 73 with respect to issue of circular, filing the copy of such circular with the Registrar, depositing of certain amount and certification as to no default committed, shall not apply to a private company:

(A) which accepts from its members monies not exceeding one hundred per cent of aggregate of the paid-up share capital, free reserves and securities premium account; or
(B) which is a start-up, for five years from the date of its incorporation; or
(C) which fulfils all of the following conditions, namely:
    (a) which is not an associate or a subsidiary company of any other company;
    (b) if the borrowings of such a company from banks or financial institutions or any body corporate is less than twice of its paid-up share capital or fifty crore rupees, whichever is lower; and
    (c) such a company has not defaulted in the repayment of such borrowings subsisting at the time of accepting deposits under this section.

However, such a company [as referred to in clauses (A), (B) or (C)] shall file the details of monies accepted to the Registrar in the specified manner (i.e., in Form DPT-3).

Question 6:

Explain the provisions for 'Appointment of Trustee for Depositors' under the Companies Act, 2013 read with the 'Acceptance of Deposits' Rules, 2014.

[ICAI Module, May 2018]

Answer:

Appointment of Trustee for Depositors: In this respect following provisions are required to be observed as mentioned in Rule 7 of the Companies (Acceptance of Deposits) Rules, 2014:

- One or more trustees for depositors need to be appointed by the company for creating security for deposits.
- A written consent shall be obtained from the trustees before their appointment.
- A statement shall appear in the circular or advertisement with reasonable prominence to the effect that the trustees for depositors have given their consent to the company for such appointment.
- The company shall execute a deposit trust deed in Form DPT-2 at least seven days before issuing the circular or circular in the form of advertisement.

No person (including a company) that is in the business of providing trusteeship services shall be appointed as a trustee for the depositors, if the proposed trustee:

(a) is a director, key managerial personnel or any other officer or an employee of the company or of its holding, subsidiary or associate company or a depositor in the company;

(b) is indebted to the company, or its subsidiary or its holding or associate company or a subsidiary of such holding company;
(c) has any material pecuniary relationship with the company
(d) has entered into any guarantee arrangement in respect of principal debts secured by deposits or interest
(e) is related to any person specified in clause (a) above.

No trustee for depositors shall be removed from office after the issue of circular or advertisement and before the expiry of his term except with the consent of all the directors present at a meeting of the board. In case the company is required to have independent directors, at least one independent director shall be present in such meeting of the Board.

Question 7:
What are the provisions relating to 'Credit Rating' which an 'eligible company' must follow if it wants to raise public deposits?

[ICAI Module]

Answer
The provisions relating to obtaining of 'Credit Rating' to be followed by an 'eligible company' are contained in Section 76 (1) of the Companies Act, 2013 and Rule 3 (8) of the Companies (Acceptance of Deposits) Rules, 2014 as amended from time to time.

Accordingly, an 'eligible company' which desires to raise public deposits shall be required to obtain the rating (including its net-worth, liquidity and ability to pay its deposits on due date) from a recognised credit rating agency. The given rating which ensures adequate safety shall be informed to the public at the time of invitation of deposits from the public. Further, the rating shall be obtained every year during the tenure of deposits.

As per Rule 3 (8), copy of the credit rating which is being obtained at least once in a year shall be sent to the Registrar of Companies along with the Return of Deposits in Form DPT-3.

Further, the credit rating shall not be below the minimum investment grade rating or other specified credit rating for fixed deposits. It shall be obtained from any one of the approved credit rating agencies as specified for Non-Banking Financial Companies in the Non-Banking Financial Companies Acceptance of Public Deposits (Reserve Bank) Directions, 1998, as amended from time to time.

Question 8: *[Good question]*
Discuss the following situations in the light of 'deposit provisions' as contained in the Companies Act, 2013 and the Companies (Acceptance of Deposits) Rules, 2014, as amended from time to time.
(i) Samit, one of the directors of Zarr Technology Private Limited, a start-up company, requested his close friend Ritesh to lend to the company ₹ 30.00 lacs in a single tranche by way of a convertible note repayable within a period six years from the date of its issue. Advise whether it is a deposit or not.
(ii) Polestar Traders Limited received a loan of ₹ 30.00 lacs from Rachna who is one of its directors. Advise whether it is a deposit or not.
(iii) City Bakers Limited failed to repay deposits of ₹ 50.00 crores and interest due thereon even after the extended time granted by the Tribunal. Is the company or Swati, its officer-in-default, liable to any penalty?
(iv) Shringaar Readymade Garments Limited wants to accept deposits of ₹ 50.00 lacs from its members for a tenure which is less than six months. Is it a possibility?
(v) Is it in order for the Diamond Housing Finance Limited to accept and renew deposits from the public from time to time?

[ICAI Module, MTP May 20, Dec 2021]

Answer

(i) In terms of Rule 2 (1) (c) (xvii) if a start-up company receives rupees twenty-five lakh or more by way of a convertible note (convertible into equity shares or repayable within a period not exceeding ten years from the date of issue) in a single tranche, from a person, it shall not be treated as deposit.

In the given case, Zarr Technology Private Limited, a start-up company, received ₹ 30 lacs from Ritesh in a single tranche by way of a convertible note which is repayable within a period of six years from the date of its issue. In view of Rule 2 (1) (c) (xvii) which requires a convertible note to be repayable within a period of ten years from the date of its issue, the amount of ₹ 30 lacs shall not be considered as deposit.

(ii) In terms of Rule 2 (1) (c) (viii), any amount received from a person who is director of the company at the time of giving loan to the company shall not be treated as deposit if such director furnishes to the company at the time of giving money, a written declaration to the effect that the amount is not being given out of funds acquired by him by borrowing or accepting loans or deposits from others and further, the company shall disclose the details of money so accepted in the Board's report.

In the given case, it is assumed that Rachna was one of the directors of Polestar Traders Limited when the company received a loan of ₹ 30 lacs from her. Further, it is assumed that she had furnished to the company at time of giving money, a written declaration to the effect that the amount was not being given out of funds acquired by her by borrowing or accepting loans or deposits from others and in addition, the company had disclosed the details of money so accepted in the appropriate Board's report. If these conditions are satisfied ₹ 30.00 lacs shall not be treated as deposit.

(iii) By not repaying the deposit of ₹ 50.00 crores and the interest due thereon even after the extended time granted by the Tribunal, City Bakers Limited has contravened the conditions prescribed under Section 73 of the Act. Accordingly, following penalty is leviable:

- Punishment for the company: City Bakers Limited shall, in addition to the payment of the amount of deposit and the interest due thereon, be punishable with fine which shall not be less than rupees one crore or twice the amount of deposit accepted by the company, whichever is lower but which may extend to rupees ten crores.
- Punishment for officer-in-default: Swati, being the officer-in-default, shall be punishable with imprisonment which may extend to seven years and with fine which shall not be less than rupees twenty-five lakhs but which may extend to rupees two crores.

Further, if it is proved that Swati had contravened such provisions knowingly or wilfully with the intention to deceive the company or its shareholders or depositors or creditors or tax authorities, she will be liable for action under section 447 (Punishment for fraud).

(iv) According to Rule 3 (1), a company is not permitted to accept or renew deposits (whether secured or unsecured) which is repayable on demand or in less than six months. Further, the maximum period of acceptance of deposit cannot exceed thirty six months.

However, as an exception to this rule, for the purpose of meeting any of its short-term requirements of funds, a company is permitted to accept or renew deposits for repayment earlier than six months subject to the conditions that:

(i) such deposits shall not exceed ten per cent. of the aggregate of the paid-up share capital, free reserves and securities premium account of the company; and

(ii) such deposits are repayable only on or after three months from the date of such deposits or renewal.

In the given case of Shringaar Readymade Garments Limited, it wants to accept deposits of Rs 50 lacs from its members for a tenure which is less than six months. It can do so if it justifies that the deposits are required for the purpose of meeting any of its short-term requirements of funds but in no case such deposits shall exceed 10% ten per cent of the aggregate of its paid-up share capital, free reserves and

securities premium account and further, such deposits shall be repayable only on or after three months from the date of such deposits.

(v) According to section 73 (1) of the Act, no company can accept or renewal of deposits from public unless it follows the manner provided under Chapter V of the Act (contains provisions regarding acceptance of deposits by companies) for acceptance or renewal of deposits from public.

However, Proviso to Section 73 (1) states that such prohibition with respect to the acceptance or renewal of deposit from public, inter-alia, shall not apply to a housing finance company registered with the National Housing Bank established under the National Housing Bank Act, 1987.

In the given case, it is assumed that Diamond Housing Finance Limited is registered with the National Housing Bank and therefore the prohibition contained in section 73 (1) of the Act with respect to the acceptance renewal of deposit from public shall not apply to it. In other words, it being an exempted company, can accept deposits from the public from time to time without following the prescribed manner.

Question 9:

ABC Limited having a net worth of ₹ 120 crores wants to accept deposit from its members. The directors of the company have approached you to advise them as to what special care has to be taken while accepting such deposit from the members in case their company falls within the category of an 'eligible company'.

[ICAI Module, Jan 2021]

Answer

Relevant Provisions

According to section 76 (1) of the Act, an "eligible company" means a public company, having a net worth of not less than one hundred crore rupees or a turnover of not less than five hundred crore rupees and which has obtained the prior consent of the company in general meeting by means of a special resolution and also filed the said resolution with the Registrar of Companies before making any invitation to the public for acceptance of deposits.

However, an 'eligible company', which is accepting deposits within the limits specified under section 180 (1) (c), may accept deposits by means of an ordinary resolution.

According to Rule 4 (a), an 'eligible company' shall accept or renew any deposit from its members, if the amount of such deposit together with the amount of deposits outstanding as on the date of acceptance or renewal of such deposits from members does not exceed ten per cent. of the aggregate of the paid-up share capital, free reserves and securities premium account of the company.

ABC Limited is having a net worth of 120 crore rupees. Hence, it falls in the category of 'eligible company'. Thus, ABC Limited has to ensure that acceptance of deposits from its members together with the amount of deposits outstanding as on the date of acceptance or renewal of such deposits from the members, in no case, exceeds 10% of the aggregate of the paid-up share capital, free reserves and securities premium account of the company.

Question 10:

Define the term 'deposit' under provisions of the Companies Act, 2013 and comment quoting relevant provisions whether the following amounts received by a company will be considered as deposits or not:

(i) ₹ 5,00,000 raised by Rishi Confectionaries Limited through issue of non-convertible debentures not constituting a charge on the assets of the company and listed on a recognised stock exchange as per the applicable regulations made by the Securities and Exchange Board of India.

(ii) ₹ 2,00,000 received by Raja Yarns Limited from its employee Mr. T, who draws an annual salary of ₹ 1,50,000, as a non-interest bearing security deposit under a contract of employment.

(iii) ₹ 3,00,000 received by a private company from one of the relatives of a Director. The said relative has furnished a declaration that the amount was received by him from his mother as a gift.

[ICAI Module, Nov 19, May 2022]

Answer

Deposit: According to Section 2 (31) of the Companies Act, 2013, the term 'deposit' includes any receipt of money by way of deposit or loan or in any other form, by a company, but does not include such categories of amount as may be prescribed in consultation with the Reserve bank of India.

Rule 2 (1) (c) of the Companies (Acceptance of Deposit) Rules, 2014 states various amounts received by a company which will not be considered as deposits. In terms of this Rule the answers to the given situations shall be as under:

(i) ₹ 5,00,000 raised by Rishi Confectionaries Limited through issue of non-convertible debentures not constituting a charge on the assets of the company and listed on recognised stock exchange as per the applicable regulations made by the SEBI, will not be considered as deposit in terms of sub-clause (ixa) of Rule 2 (1) (c).

(ii) ₹ 2,00,000 received by Raja Yarns Limited from its employee Mr. T, who draws an annual salary of ₹ 1,50,000, as a non-interest bearing security deposit under a contract of employment will be considered as deposit in terms of sub-clause (x) of Rule 2 (1) (c), for the amount received is more than his annual salary of ₹ 1,50,000.

(iii) ₹ 3,00,000 received by a private company from one of the relatives of a Director. When the relative furnishes a declaration that the said amount was received by him from his mother as a gift, then it will not be considered as deposit in terms of sub-clause (viii) of Rule 2 (1) (c).

In fact, the preceding sub-clause requires that any amount given by a relative of a director of a private company shall not be considered as deposit if the relative furnishes a declaration in writing to the effect that the amount is not being given out of funds acquired by him by borrowing or accepting loans or deposits from others.

Thus, the amount given to the private company out of gifted money by one of the relatives of a director is not a 'deposit'. As an additional requirement, the company shall disclose details of money so accepted in Board's report.

Question 11:

The Promoters of Green Limited contributed in the form of unsecured loan to the company in fulfilment of the margin money requirements stipulated by State Industries Development Corporation Ltd. (SIDCL) for granting loan. In the light of the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013 and Rules made thereunder whether the unsecured loan will be regarded as Deposit or not ?

[MTP March 2022, July 2021]

Answer

According to Rule 2 (1) (c) of the Companies (Acceptance of Deposits) Rules, 2014, the following amount is not considered as deposit:

Any amount brought in by the promoters of the company by way of unsecured loan in pursuance of the stipulation of any lending financial institution or a bank subject to the fulfilment of following conditions:

a) the loan is brought because of the stipulation imposed by the lending institutions on the promoters to contribute such finance;
b) the loan is provided by the promoters themselves or by their relatives or by both; and
c) such exemption shall be available only till the loans of financial institution or bank are repaid and not thereafter.

Hence, in the instant case, the unsecured loan contributed by promoters of Green Limited will not be regarded as deposit as the unsecured loan is brought because of the stipulation imposed by the SIDCL and the loan is provided by the promoters themselves.

Question 12:

Viki Limited engaged in the business of consumer durables. It is managed by a team of professional managers. The Company has not made default in payment of statutory dues, and repayment of debenture/ Institutional loan with interest. The Company advertised a circular in the newspaper dated 20th September 2020 inviting the deposits from the members and public for the first time.

The latest audited financial statement of the Company revealed the following data, as on 31.3.2020:

Paid up share capital	Rs. 70 Crores
Securities Premium	Rs. 20 Crores
Free Reserves	Rs. 20 Crores,
Long-term borrowings	Rs. 50 Crores

The Company in the advertisement invited public deposit for a period of 4 Months Plan A & Plan B for 36 Months.

(i) Explain the term 'eligible company' and calculate the Maximum amount of Deposit that can be accepted from Public (Non-Member) for Plan A and Plan B based on latest audited Financial Statement under the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013.

(ii) Calculate the maximum amount of deposit Viki Limited can accept from the public under Plan B in case it is a wholly owned Government Company under the provisions of the said Act

[Nov 2020]

Answer

(i) According to Rule 2(1)(e) of the Companies (Acceptance of Deposits) Rules, 2014 "eligible company" means a public company as referred to in sub-section (1) of section 76 of the Companies Act, 2013, having a net worth of not less than one hundred crore rupees or a turnover of not less than five hundred crore rupees and which has obtained the prior consent of the company in general meeting by means of a special resolution and also filed the said resolution with the Registrar of Companies before making any invitation to the Public for acceptance of deposits. Provided that an eligible company, which is accepting deposits within the limits specified under clause (c) of sub-section (1) of section 180, may accept deposits by means of an ordinary resolution.

Net worth of Viki Limited as per section 2(57) of the Companies Act, 2013 can be calculated as follows:

Paid up share capital:	Rs. 70 crores
Free Reserves:	Rs. 20 crores
Securities premium:	Rs. 20 crores
Total:	Rs. 110 crores

Hence, Viki Limited is an eligible company, since its Net worth is in excess of Rs. 100 crores.

Tenure for which Deposits can be Accepted: As per Rule 3(1)(a) of the Companies (Acceptance of Deposits) Rules, 2014, a company is not permitted to accept or renew deposits (whether secured or unsecured) which is repayable on demand or in less than six months. Further, the maximum period of acceptance of deposit cannot exceed thirty six months.

Exception to the rule of tenure of six months: As per the proviso to the above rule, for the purpose of meeting any of its short-term requirements of funds, a company may accept or renew deposits for repayment earlier than six months subject to the condition that such deposits shall not exceed ten per cent. of the aggregate of the paid-up share capital, free reserves and securities premium account of the company. As per Rule 3(1)(b) of the Companies (Acceptance of Deposits) Rules, 2014, such deposits are repayable not earlier than three months from the date of such deposits or renewal thereof.

Maximum Amount of Deposits: As per Rule 3(4)(b) of the Companies (Acceptance of Deposits) Rules, 2014, an eligible company is permitted to accept or renew deposits from persons other than its members. As per the law the amount of such deposit together with the amount of outstanding deposits (excluding deposits from members) on the date of acceptance or renewal can be maximum twenty-five per cent. of the aggregate of its paid-up share capital, free reserves and securities premium account of the company.

For Plan A: Since the maximum period of deposits is 4 months, the maximum amount of deposits shall not exceed ten per cent. of the aggregate of the paid-up share capital, free reserves and securities premium account of the company. Maximum amount of deposits: 10% of 110 crores (70 + 20 + 20) = 11 crores.
For Plan B: Maximum amount of deposits: 25% of 110 crores (70 + 20 + 20) -11 crores (outstanding deposit under plan A) = 16.5 crores.

(ii) In terms of Rule 3(5) of the Companies (Acceptance of Deposits) Rules, 2014, in case Viki Limited is a wholly owned Government Company, so it can accept deposit together with the amount of other outstanding deposits as on the date of acceptance or renewal maximum up to thirty-five per cent. of the aggregate of its paid-up share capital, free reserves and securities premium account. For Plan B: Maximum amount of deposits: 35% of 110 crores (70 + 20 + 20) = 38.5 crores.

Question 13:
RS Ltd. received share application money of Rs. 50 Lakh on 01.06.2019 but failed to allot shares within the prescribed time limit. The share application money of Rs. 5 Lakh received from Mr. Khanna, a customer of the Company, was refunded by way of book adjustment towards the dues payable by him to the company on 30.07.2019. The Company Secretary of RS Ltd. reported to the Board that the entire amount of Rs. 50 Lakh shall be deemed to be 'Deposits' as on 31.07.2019 and the Company is required to comply with the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013 applicable to acceptance of deposits in relation to this amount. You are required to examine the validity of the reporting of the Company Secretary in the light of the relevant provisions of the Companies Act, 2013.

[Jan 2021, MTP Nov'22]

Answer
According to Rule 2(1)(c) of the Companies (Acceptance of Deposits) Rules, 2014, the following category of receipt is not considered as deposit:
Any amount received and held pursuant to an offer made in accordance with the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013 towards subscription to any securities, including share application money or advance towards allotment of securities, pending allotment, so long as such amount is appropriated only against the amount due on allotment of the securities applied for;

It is clarified by way of Explanation that if the securities for which application money or advance for such securities was received cannot be allotted within 60 days from the date of receipt of the application money or advance for such securities and such application money or advance is not refunded to the subscribers within 15 days from the date of completion of 60 days, such amount shall be treated as a deposit under these rules.

Further, it is clarified that any adjustment of amount for any other purpose shall not be treated as refund.

In the given question, RS Limited has received Rs. 50 Lakhs as share application money on 01.06.2019. It failed to allot shares within the prescribed limit. Further, on 30.07.2019 the company adjusted the amount of Rs. 5 Lakhs received from Mr. Khanna (a customer of the company), by way of book adjustment towards the dues payable by him to the company.

In the light of the facts of the question and provisions of Law:
(1) If such application money or advance is not refunded to the subscribers within 15 days from the date of completion of 60 days, such amount shall be treated as a deposit.

In the question, the prescribed limit of 60 days will end on 31.07.2019 and the company has 15 more days to refund such application money to the subscribers. Otherwise, after lapse of such 15 days, the amount not so refunded will be treated as deposit.

Hence, the Company Secretary of RS Limited is not correct in treating the entire amount of Rs. 50 Lac as 'Deposits' on 31.07.2019.

(2) Any adjustment of the amount for any other purpose shall not be treated as refund. Thus, the amount of Rs. 5 Lakhs adjusted against payment due to be received from Mr. Khanna, cannot be treated as refund.

Question 14:

Answer the following citing relevant provisions of the Companies Act, 2013:

(a) Wire Electricals Limited having paid-up capital of ₹ 1.00 crore availed a term loan of ₹ 10,00,000 from ABC Bank Limited to purchase electrical items. Mr. Taar, one of the directors of the company, is of the opinion that it shall be considered as 'deposit'. Is his contention correct?

(b) A Government Company, which is eligible to accept deposits under Section 76 of the Companies Act, 2013, cannot accept deposits from public exceeding 25% of the aggregate of its paid-up capital, free reserves and security premium account. Is this correct?

[RTP May 23]

Answer

(a) In terms of Rule 2 (1) (c) (iii) of the Companies (Acceptance of Deposits) Rules, 2014, any amount received as a loan or facility from any banking company shall not be considered as 'deposit'.

In view of the above, the contention of Mr. Taar that the term loan of ₹ 10,00,000 availed by the company from ABC Bank Limited shall be considered as 'deposit' is not correct.

(b) As per Rule 3 (5) of the Companies (Acceptance of Deposits) Rules 2014, a Government Company is not eligible to accept or renew deposits under section 76, if the amount of such deposits together with the amount of other deposits outstanding as on the date of acceptance or renewal exceeds thirty five per cent of the aggregate of its paid-up share capital, free reserves and securities premium account.

Therefore, the given statement where the limit of 25% has been stated for acceptance of deposits is not correct.

Chapter 6 – Registration of Charges

Question 1:
How will a copy of an instrument evidencing creation of charge and required to be filed with the Registrar be verified?

[ICAI Module]

Answer
A copy of every instrument evidencing any creation or modification of charge and required to be filed with the Registrar shall be verified as follows:
a) in case property is situated outside India: where the instrument or deed relates solely to the property situated outside India, the copy shall be verified by a certificate issued either under the seal, if any, of the company, or under the hand of any director or company secretary of the company or an authorised officer of the charge holder or under the hand of some person other than the company who is interested in the mortgage or charge;

b) in case property is situated in India (whether wholly or partly): where the instrument or deed relates to the property situated in India (whether wholly or partly), the copy shall be verified by a certificate issued under the hand of any director or company secretary of the company or an authorised officer of the charge holder.

Question 2:
Briefly explain the provisions enforced by the Companies (Amendment) Second Ordinance, 2019 when a charge created before 02-11-2018 is not registered within the prescribed period of thirty days as provided in Section 77 (1)

[ICAI Module]

Answer
As per section 77(1) of the companies Act, 2013 every company creating a charge:
a) within or outside India,
b) on its property or assets or any of its undertakings,
c) whether tangible or otherwise, and
d) situated in or outside India,
is required to register the particular of the charge with the registrar within thirty days of its creation.

In case the charge was created before 02-11-2018 and it was not registered within the prescribed period of thirty of its creation, clause (a) of the first Proviso to Section 77 (1) states that the Registrar may, on an application by the company, allow such registration to be made within a period of 300 days of such creation.

Question 3:
Define the term "charge" and also explain what is the punishment for default with respect to registration of charge as per the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013.

[ICAI Module, MTP May 2019]

Answer
The term charge has been defined in section 2 (16) of the Companies Act, 2013 as an interest or lien created on the property or assets of a company or any of its undertakings or both as security and includes a mortgage.

According to section 86 of the Companies Act, 2013, if any company is in default in complying with any of the provisions of this Chapter, the company shall be liable to a penalty of five lakh rupees and every officer of the company who is in default shall be liable to a penalty of fifty thousand rupees.

Further, if any person willfully furnishes any false or incorrect information or knowingly suppresses any material information which is required to be registered under section 77, he shall be liable for action under section 447 (punishment for fraud).

Crux: Default in Registration:
Company – Rs. 5 Lakh
Officer – Rs. 50K
Willful default – u/s 447

Question 4:
Renuka Soaps and Detergents Limited realised on 2nd May, 2019 that particulars of charge created on 12th March, 2019 in favour of a Bank were not registered with the Registrar of Companies. What procedure should the company follow to get the charge registered? Would the procedure be different if the company realised its mistake of not registering the charge on 7th June, 2019 instead of 2nd May, 2019? Explain with reference to the relevant provisions of the Companies Act, 2013.

[ICAI Module, MTP Nov 2019]

Answer

Relevant Provisions

The charge in the present case was created after 02-11-2018 (i.e. the date of commencement of the Companies (Amendment) Second Ordinance, 2019) to which another set of provisions is applicable. These provisions are different from a case where the charge was created before 02-11-2018.
Initially, the prescribed particulars of the charge together with the instrument, if any, by which the charge is created or evidenced, or a copy thereof, duly verified by a certificate, are to be filed with the Registrar within 30 days of its creation. [Section 77 (1)].

In this case particulars of charge were not filed within the prescribed period of 30 days.
However, the Registrar is empowered under clause (b) of first proviso to section 77 (1) to extend the period of 30 days by another 30 days (i.e., sixty days from the date of creation) on payment of prescribed additional fee.

Analysis

Taking advantage of this provision, Renuka Soaps and Detergents Limited should immediately file the particulars of charge with the Registrar after satisfying him through making an application that it had sufficient cause for not filing the particulars of charge within 30 days of its creation.

If the company realises its mistake of not registering the charge on 7th June, 2019 instead of 2nd May, 2019, it shall be noted that a period of sixty days has already expired from the date of creation of charge. However, Clause (b) of Second Proviso to Section 77 (1) provides another opportunity for registration of charge by granting a further period of sixty days but the company is required to pay ad valorem fees. Since the first sixty days from creation of charge have expired on 11th May, 2019, Renuka Soaps and Detergents Limited can still get the charge registered within a further period of sixty days from 11th May, 2019 after paying the prescribed ad valorem fees.

Conclusion

The company is required to make an application to the Registrar in this respect giving sufficient cause for non-registration of charge.

Question 5:
(i) The Registrar of Companies is not bound to issue notice to the holder of charge, if the company gives intimation of satisfaction of charge in the specified form and signed by the holder of charge.
(ii) The Registrar of Companies may allow the company or holder of charge to file intimation within a period of 300 days of the satisfaction of charge on payment of fee and additional fees as may be prescribed.

[May 2019]

Answer

(i) According to the proviso to section 82(2) of the Companies Act, 2013, no notice shall be required to be sent, in case the intimation to the Registrar in this regard is in the specified form and signed by the holder of charge. Hence, the given statement is True.

(ii) As per section 77 of the Companies Act, 2013, it shall be duty of the company creating a charge within or outside India, on its property or assets or any of its undertakings, whether tangible or otherwise and situated in or outside India, to register the particulars of the charge signed by the company and the charge holder together with the instruments, if any, creating such charge in such form, on payment of such fees and in such manner as may be prescribed, with the registrar within 30 days of creation. The Registrar may, on an application by the company, allow such registration to be made within a period of 300 days of such creation on payment of such additional fees as may be prescribed.

According to clause (a) of the Second Proviso to Section 77 (1), if the registration is not made within the extended period of 300 days, it shall be made within six months 02/11/2018 on payment of prescribed additional fees. It is provided that different fees may be prescribed for different classes of companies.
Hence, the given statement is True.

Question 6:

Mr Antriksh entered into an agreement for purchasing a commercial property in Delhi belonging to NRT Ltd. At the time of registration, Mr Antriksh comes to know that the title deed of the company is not free and the company expresses its inability to get the title deed transferred in the name of Mr Antriksh saying that he ought to have had the knowledge of charge created on the property of the company. Explain with the help of 'Notice of a charge', whether the contention of NRT LTD. is correct?

[ICAI Module, MTP Nov 2019]

Answer

Notice of Charge: According to section 80 of the Companies Act, 2013, where any charge on any property or assets of a company or any of its undertakings is registered under section 77 of the Companies Act, 2013, any person acquiring such property, assets, undertakings or part thereof or any share or interest therein shall be deemed to have notice of the charge from the date of such registration.

Thus, the section clarifies that if any person acquires a property, assets or undertaking for which a charge is already registered, it would be deemed that he has complete knowledge of charge from the date the charge is registered.

Thus, the contention of NRT Ltd. is correct.

Question 7:

DN Limited hypothecated its plant to a Nationalised Bank and availed a term loan. The Company registered the charge with the Registrar of Companies. The Company settled the term loan in full, The Company requested the Bank to issue a letter confirming the settlement of the term loan. The Bank did not respond to the request. State the relevant provisions of the Companies Act, 2013 to register the satisfaction of charge in the above circumstance. State the time frame up to which the Registrar of Companies may allow the Company to intimate satisfaction of charges.

[Nov 19, Nov 22]

Answer

Intimation regarding Satisfaction of Charge

Section 82 of the Companies Act, 2013, requires a company to give intimation of payment or satisfaction in full of any charge earlier registered, to the Registrar in the prescribed form. The intimation needs to be given within a period of 30 days from the date of such payment or satisfaction.

Extended period of intimation: Proviso to Section 82 (1) extends the period of intimation from thirty days to three hundred days. Accordingly, it is provided that the Registrar may, on an application by the company or the charge holder, allow such intimation of payment or satisfaction to be made within a period of 300 days of such payment or satisfaction on payment of prescribed additional fees

Question 8:

What are the powers of Registrar to make entries of satisfaction and release of charges in absence of intimation from company? Discuss as per the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013

[ICAI Module, RTP Nov 19]

OR

Ranjit acquired a property from ABC Limited which was mortgaged to OK Bank. He settled the dues to Ok Bank in full and the same was registered with the sub-registrar who has noted that the mortgage has been settled. But neither the company nor OK Bank has filed particulars of satisfaction of charge with the Registrar of Companies. Can Mr. Ranjit approach the Registrar and seek any relief in this regard? Discuss this matter in the light of the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013.

[ICAI Module, MTP Nov 20, MTP Nov'22]

Answer

Section 83 of the Companies Act, 2013 provides powers to the registrar to make entries with respect to the satisfaction and release of charges where no intimation has been received by him from the company.

Accordingly, with respect to any registered charge if an evidence is shown to the satisfaction of Registrar that the debt secured by charge has been paid or satisfied in whole or in part or that the part of the property or undertaking charged has been released from the charge or has ceased to form part of the company's property or undertaking, then he may enter in the register of charges a memorandum of satisfaction that:

- the debt has been satisfied in whole or in part; or
- the part of the property or undertaking has been released from the charge or has ceased to form part of the company's property or undertaking.

This power can be exercised by the Registrar despite the fact that no intimation has been received by him from the company.

Information to affected parties: The Registrar shall inform the affected parties within 30 days of making the entry in the register of charges.

Issue of certificate: As per rule 8 (2), in case the registrar enters a memorandum of satisfaction of charge in full, he shall issue a certificate of registration of satisfaction of charge in form no. CHG-5.

Therefore, Mr. Ranjit can approach the Registrar and show evidence to his satisfaction that the charge has been duly settled and satisfied and request the Registrar to enter a memorandum of satisfaction noting the release of charge.

Question 9:

ABC Limited created a charge in favour of OK Bank. The charge was duly registered. Later, the Bank enhanced the facility by another Rs 20 crores. Due to inadvertence, this modification in the original charge was not registered. Advise the company as to the course of action to be pursued in this regard.

[MTP Nov 20]

Answer

The company is advised to immediately file an application for rectification of the Register of Charges in Form No CHG- 8 to the Central Government under Section 87 of the Companies Act, 2013

Section 87 of the Act of 2013 and Rule 12 empowers the Central Government to order rectification of Register of Charges in the following cases of default:

a. when there was omission in giving intimation to the Registrar with respect to payment or satisfaction of charge within the specified time;

b. when there was omission or mis-statement of any particulars in any filing previously made to the Registrar. Such filing may relate to any charge or any modification of charge or with respect to any memorandum of satisfaction or other entry made under Section 82 (Company to report satisfaction of charge) or Section 83 (Power of Registrar to make entries of satisfaction and release).

Question 10:

Beauty Limited obtained a working capital loan from a Nationalized Bank against the hypothecation of Stocks & Accounts receivable of the Company. An instrument creating the charge was duly signed by the Company and the Bank. The Company is not willing to register the charges with the Registrar of Companies. In the light of the provisions, if the Companies Act, 2013, discuss:

(1) Is there any provision empowering the Nationalized Bank (charge holder) to get the charges registered?

(2) When can the Registrar refuse to register the charges the present scenario?

[May 2022]

Answer

(1) Registration by charge holder: Section 78 of the Companies Act, 2013, empowers the holder of charge to get the charge registered in case the company creating the charge on its property fails to do so. Accordingly, if a charge is created, the company is primarily responsible for registering the charge however it fails to do so within the prescribed period of 30 days [as provided in section 77 (1)], the person in whose favour the charge is created (i.e. charge-holder) may apply to the Registrar for registration of the charge along with the instrument of charge within the prescribed time, form and manner. In light of above provisions, the Nationalized Bank can get the charges registered.

(2) Registrars refuse to register the charges: However, the Registrar shall not allow such registration by the charge-holder if the company itself registers the charge or shows sufficient cause why such charge should not be registered.

Question 11:

Krish (Private) Limited on 7th May 2022 obtained ₹ 25 lakhs working capital loan by offering its Stock and Accounts Receivables as security and ₹ 5 Lakhs adhoc overdraft on the personal guarantee of a Director of Krish (Private) Limited, from a financial institution. Is the company required to create charge for working capital loan and adhoc overdraft in accordance with the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013?

[MTP Nov 22]

Answer

As per the provisions of section 2(16) of the Companies Act, 2013, "charge" means an interest or lien created on the property or assets of a company or any of its undertakings or both as security and includes mortgage.

Whenever a company borrows money by way of loans including term loans or working capital loans from financial institutions or banks or any other persons, by offering its property or assets, as security a charge is created on such property or assets in favour of the lender. Such a charge is compulsorily registrable under the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013 in accordance with Chapter VI and the rules made in this regard.

Thus, when Krish (Private) Limited obtains working capital loans from financial institutions by offering stock and Accounts Receivables as security, it is required to create a charge on such property or assets in favour of the lender.

Hence, for Rs. 25 Lakh working capital loan, it is required to create a charge on it. Krish (Private) Limited is not required to create a charge for Rs. 5 Lakh adhoc overdraft on the personal guarantee of a director. Since, charge is always created on the property or assets of a company and personal guarantee of director is not a property or asset of company.

Question 12:

Bows Limited is required to create a charge on one of its assets. However, the above charge could not be registered within the required period of 30 days. State the provisions related to extension of time and procedure for registration of charges, in case when the charge was not registered within 30 days of its creation.

[MTP Nov 22]

Answer

As per the provisions of Section 77 of the Companies Act, 2013, in case the charge was not registered within 30 days of creation of the charge, the Registrar may, on an application by the company, allow such registration

to be made within a period of 60 days of such creation (i.e. another 30 days are granted after the expiry of original 30 days), on payment of additional fees as prescribed.

Procedure for Extension of Time Limit: For seeking extension of time, the company is required to make an application to the Registrar in the prescribed form. It should be supported by a declaration from the company signed by its company secretary or a director that such belated filing shall not adversely affect the rights of any other intervening creditors of the company.

The application so made must satisfy the Registrar that the company had sufficient cause for not filing the particulars and the instrument of charge, if any, within the original period of thirty days. Only then he will allow registration of charge within the extended period. Further, requisite additional fee or advalorem fee, as applicable, must also be paid.

Question 13

Star Ltd. is having its establishment in Canada. It obtained a loan there creating a charge on the assets of the foreign establishment. The company received a notice from the Registrar of Companies for not filing the particulars of charge created by the company on the property or assets situated outside India. The company wants to defend the notice on the ground that it shall not be the duty of the company to register the particulars of the charge created on the assets not located in India. Do you agree with the stand taken by the Star Ltd.? Give your answer with respect to the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013.

[MTP-2 May 23]

Answer

According to section 77 of the Companies Act, 2013, it shall be duty of the company creating a charge within or outside India, on its property or assets or any of its undertakings, whether tangible or otherwise and situated in or outside India, to register the particulars of the charge.

Thus, charge may be created within India or outside India. Also, the subject-matter of the charge i.e., the property or assets or any of the company's undertakings, may be situated within India or outside India.

In the given question, the company has obtained a loan by creating a charge on the assets of the foreign establishment.

As per the above provisions, it is the duty of the company creating a charge within or outside India, on its property or assets or any of its undertakings, whether tangible or otherwise and whether situated in or outside India, to register the particulars of the charge.

Hence, the stand taken by Star Ltd. not to register the particulars of charge created on the assets located outside India is not correct.

Question 14:

Perfect Limited Company raised the secured deposit of₹100 crores an 30th June, 2021 from the public on interest @ 12% p.a. repayable after 3 years. The charges has been created within prescribed time in favour of trustee of depositors against the deposit taking following assets of the company as security:

Land and Building	Rs. 60 crores
Plant and Machinery	Rs. 20 crores
Factory Shed	Rs. 20 crores
Trade Mark	Rs. 20 crores
Goodwill	Rs. 25 crores

Explain the validity of the charges created with reference to the Companies (Acceptance of Deposit) Rules, 2014.

[Nov 22]

Answer

As per second proviso to Section 76(1) of the Companies Act, 2013, every company which accepts secured deposits from the public shall within 30 days of such acceptance, create a charge on its assets. The amount of charge shall not be less than the amount of deposits accepted. The charge shall be created in favour of

the deposit holders in accordance with the prescribed rules.

In respect of creation of security, Rule 6 of the Companies (Acceptance of Deposit) Rule, 2014, states that the company accepting secured deposits shall create security by way of charge on its tangible assets only.

The other notable points are:

- The company cannot create charge on intangible assets (i.e., goodwill, trade-marks, etc.).
- Total value of security should not be less than the amount of deposits accepted and interest payable thereon.
- The market value of assets subject to charge shall be assessed by a registered valuer.
- The security shall be created in favour of a trustee for the depositors on specific movable and immovable property of the company.

In the given question,

Particulars	Amount (in ₹)
Total value of security (value of assets on which charge can be created)	60+20+20 [Land and Building, Plant & machinery and Factory Shed] = 100 crore
Total deposits accepted and interest payable thereon	100+ [(100*12%)*3 years] = 136 crore

Since, the total value of security is less than the amount of deposits accepted and interest payable thereon, hence the charge is not validly created.

Chapter 7 – Management and Administration

Question 1

Nutty Buddy Limited is manufacturing premium quality milk based ice cream in two flavors- first chocolate and second butter scotch. The company called its Annual General Meeting (AGM) in order to lay down the financial statements for Shareholders' approval. However, due to want of quorum, the meeting was cancelled. Also, the Directors of the company did not file the Annual Return with the Registrar. The directors were of the idea that the time for filing of returns within 60 days from the date of AGM would not apply, as AGM was cancelled. Has the company contravened the provisions of Companies Act, 2013? If the company has contravened the provisions of the Act, how will it be penalized?

[RTP Nov 21]

OR

Bazaar Limited called its AGM in order to lay down the financial statements for Shareholders' approval. Due to want of Quorum, the meeting was cancelled. The directors did not file the annual returns with the Registrar. The directors were of the idea that the time for filing of returns within 60 days from the date of AGM would not apply, as AGM was cancelled. Has the company contravened the provisions of Companies Act, 2013? If the company has contravened the provisions of the Act, how will it be penalized?

[May 2018, MTP Oct 2020]

OR

Due to heavy rains and floods Chennai Handloom Limited was unable to convene annual general meeting upto 30th September, 2017. The company has not filed the annual financial statements, or the annual return as the directors of the company are of the view that since the annual general meeting did not take place, the period of 60 days for filing of annual return is not applicable and thus, there is no contravention of Section 92 of the Companies Act, 2013. Discuss whether the contention of directors is correct.

Answer

Relevant provision:

According to section 92(4) of the Companies Act, 2013, every company shall file with the Registrar a copy of the annual return, within sixty days from the date on which the annual general meeting is held or where no annual general meeting is held in any year within sixty days from the date on which the annual general meeting should have been held together with the statement specifying the reasons for not holding the annual general meeting.

Section 92(5) also states that if any company fails to file its annual return under sub-section (4), before the expiry of the period specified therein, such company and its every officer who is in default shall be liable to a penalty of ten thousand rupees and in case of continuing failure, with further penalty of one hundred rupees for each day during which such failure continues, subject to a maximum of two lakh rupees in case of a company and fifty thousand rupees in case of an officer who is in default.

Given case:

In the instant case, the idea of the directors that since the AGM was cancelled, the provisions requiring the company to file annual returns within 60 days from the date of AGM would not apply, is incorrect.

Analysis and conclusion:

In the above case, the annual general meeting of Nutty Buddy Limited should have been held within a period of six months, from the date of closing of the financial year but it did not take place. Thus, the company has contravened the provisions of section 92 of the Companies Act, 2013 for not filing the annual return and shall attract the penal provisions along with every officer of the company who is in default as specified in Section 92(5) of the Act.

Question 2

M/s. Techno Ltd. maintains its Register of Members at its registered office in Mumbai. A group of members residing in Kolkata want to keep the register of members at Kolkata.

i. Explain with provisions of Companies Act, 2013, whether the company can keep the Registers and Returns at Kolkata.
ii. Does Mr. Ranjit, Director (but not a shareholder) of the company have the right to inspect the Register of Members?

[May 2018]

OR

Mr. Bheem is holding 500 shares (of ZYZ Limited) of total worth Rs. 5000 only. Advise, whether he has the right to inspect the Register of Members?

[MTP Mar 19]

Answer

i. **Maintenance of the Register of Members etc.:**
As per section 94(1) of the Companies Act, 2013, the registers required to be kept and maintained by a company under section 88 and copies of the annual return filed under section 92 shall be kept at the registered office of the company.

Provided that such registers or copies of return may also be kept at any other place in India in which more than one-tenth of the total number of members entered in the register of members reside, if approved by a special resolution passed at a general meeting of the company.

So, Techno Ltd. can also keep the registers and returns at Kolkata after compliance with the above provisions, provided more than one-tenth of the total number of members entered in the register of members reside in Kolkata.

ii. **Inspection of Register of Members:** As per section 94(2) of the Companies Act, the inspection of the records, i.e., registers and indices, and annual return can be done by members, debenture- holders, other security holders or beneficial owners of the company without payment of any fees and by any other person on payment of such fees as may be prescribed.

Accordingly, a director Mr. Ranjit, who is not a shareholder of the company, has no right to inspect the Register of Members of company, as per the provisions of this section.

Author's Note: As per Sec 94(2), it is clear that person other than shareholders also may inspect such registers but it can be done only after payment of prescribed fees. Here, ICAI has mentioned that the director has NO right. The answer seems to be unclear. Still, please stick to ICAI's answer unless we come across any similar question in future.

Question 3

As per the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013, every company is required to file with the Registrar of Companies, the Annual Return as prescribed in section 92, in Form MGT -7. Explain the particulars required to be contained in it.

[May 2018]

Answer

Every company is required to file with the Registrar of Companies, the annual return as prescribed in section 92, in Form MGT – 7 as per Rule 11(1) of the Companies (Management & Administration) Rules, 2014. The particulars contained in an annual return, to be filed by every company are as follows–

1. Its registered office, principal business activities, particulars of its holding, subsidiary and associate companies;
2. Its shares, debentures and other securities and shareholding pattern
3. Its indebtedness;
4. Its members and debenture-holders along with the changes therein since the close of the previous financial year;

5. Its promoters, directors, key managerial personnel along with changes therein since the close of the previous financial year;
6. Meetings of members or a class thereof, Board and its various committees along with attendance details;
7. Remuneration of directors and key managerial personnel;
8. Penalty or punishment imposed on the company, its directors or officers and details of compounding of offences and appeals made against such penalty or punishment;
9. Matters relating to certification of compliances, disclosures;
10. Details in respect of shares held by or on behalf of the Foreign Institutional Investors including their names, addresses, countries of incorporation, registration and percentage of shareholding held by them;
11. Such other matters as may be prescribed.

Question 4

Shambhu Limited was incorporated on 1.4.2018. The company did not have much to report to its shareholders, so no general meeting of the company has been held till 30.4.2020. The company has recently appointed a new accountant. The new accountant has pointed out that the company required to hold the Annual General Meeting. The company has approached you a senior Chartered Accountant. Please advise the company regarding the time limit for holding the first annual general meeting of the Company and the power of the Registrar to grant extension of time for the First Annual General Meeting.

[MTP March 21]

Answer

According to Section 96 of the Companies Act, 2013, every company shall be required to hold its first annual general meeting within a period of 9 months from the date of closing of its first financial year.

The first financial year of Shambhu Ltd is for the period 1st April 2018 to 31st March 2019, the first annual general meeting (AGM) of the company should be held on or before 31st December 2019.

The section further provides that the Registrar may, for any special reason, extend the time within which any annual general meeting, other than the first annual general meeting, shall be held, by a period not exceeding three months.

Thus, the first AGM should have been held on or before 31st December, 2019. Further, the Registrar does not have the power to grant extension to time limit for the first AGM of the company.

Question 5

Rijwan Limited, a listed company, is in the business of garment manufacturing and has its registered office at 123, N Tower, Commercial Beta Complex, Biwadi, Rajasthan. The company has called its 6th Annual General Meeting at 3 PM on 22nd August, 2019 at Ansal Plaza, Biwadi. Some of the members of the company have opposed to calling of the meeting at Ansal Plaza. The company has approached you to advise them in this regard. Suppose, Rijwan Limited is an unlisted company and wants to call their 6th AGM at Jaipur, will your answer differ.

[RTP Nov 19]

Answer

According to section 96(2) of the Companies Act, 2013, every annual general meeting shall be called during business hours, that is, between 9 a.m. and 6 p.m. on any day that is not a National Holiday and shall be held either at the registered office of the company or at some other place within the city, town or village in which the registered office of the company is situate.

Provided that annual general meeting of an unlisted company may be held at any place in India if consent is given in writing or by electronic mode by all the members in advance.

Thus, in the first case, the company is rightful in calling the Annual General meeting at Ansal Plaza.

In the second scenario, in case of an unlisted company, annual general meeting may be held at any place in India if consent is given in writing or by electronic mode by all the members in advance.

Hence, if consent is given in writing or by electronic mode by all the members in advance, the AGM can be called at Jaipur, otherwise not.

Question 6

Examine the validity of the following statements in respect of Annual General Meeting (AGM) as per the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013:

i. The first AGM of a company shall be held within a period of six months from the date of closing of the first financial year.
ii. The Registrar may, for any special reason, extend the time within which the first AGM shall be held.
iii. Subsequent (second onwards) AGMs should be held within 6 months from closing of the financial year.
iv. There shall be a maximum interval of 15 months between two AGMs.

[July 2021]

Answer

(i) According to section 96 of the Companies Act, 2013, first annual general meeting of the company should be held within 9 months from the closing of the first financial year.
Hence, the statement that the first AGM of a company shall be held within a period of six months from the date of closing of the first financial year is incorrect.

(ii) According to proviso to section 96(1), the Registrar may, for any special reason, extend the time within which any annual general meeting, other than the first annual general meeting, shall be held, by a period not exceeding three months.
Thus, the Registrar cannot extend (for any reason) the time period within which the first AGM shall be held. Given statement is incorrect.

(iii) According to section 96, subsequent AGM (i.e. second AGM onwards) of the company should be held within 6 months from the closing of the financial year.
Hence, the given statement is correct.

(iv) According to section 96, the gap between two annual general meetings should not exceed 15 months.
Hence, the given statement is correct, that there shall be a maximum interval of 15 months between two AGMs.

Question 7:

Primal Limited is a company incorporated in India. It owns two subsidiaries- Privy Limited (in which it holds 75% shares) and Malvy Limited (a wholly owned subsidiary). Both the subsidiaries are incorporated outside India. The Board of Directors of Primal Limited intends to call an Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) of Primal Limited on urgent basis. Advise the Board of Directors on the following:

(i) EGM be held in India
(ii) EGM be held in Netherlands

[RTP May 19]

Answer

According to section 100 of the Companies Act, 2013, the Board may, whenever it deems fit, call an extraordinary general meeting of the company.
Provided that an extraordinary general meeting of the company, other than of the wholly owned subsidiary of a company incorporated outside India, shall be held at a place within India.
In the light of the above provisions:

(i) The Board of Directors can call the EGM in India.
(ii) The Board of Directors cannot call the EGM of Primal Limited outside India as it is a company incorporated in India.

Question 8

Madurai Ltd. issued a notice for holding of its Annual general meeting on 7th November 2018. The notice was posted to the members on 16th October 2018. Some members of the company allege that the company had not complied with the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013 with regard to the period of notice and as such the meeting was valid. Referring to the provisions of the Act, decide:

a. Whether the meeting has been validly called?
b. If there is a shortfall, state and explain by how many days does the notice fall short of the statutory requirement?
c. Can the delay in giving notice be condoned?

[May 19, RTP Nov 20]

OR

Best Limited has decided to conduct its Annual General Meeting on 28th September 2021. They have sent the notice of the meeting on 9th September 2021 (for which they have taken consent from 90% of the members entitled to vote thereat). Comment on the Validity of the notice of the Annual General Meeting as per the Companies Act, 2013

Answer

According to section 101(1) of the Companies Act, 2013, a general meeting of a company may be called by giving not less than clear twenty-one days' notice either in writing or through electronic mode in such manner as may be prescribed.

Also, it is to be noted that 21 clear days mean that the date on which notice is served and the date of meeting are excluded for sending the notice.

Further, Rule 35(6) of the Companies (Incorporation) Rules, 2014, provides that in case of delivery by post, such service shall be deemed to have been effected - in the case of a notice of a meeting, at the expiration of forty eight hours after the letter containing the same is posted.

Hence, in the given question:

(i) A 21 days' clear notice must be given. In the given question, only 19 clear days' notice is served (after excluding 48 hours from the time of its posting and the day of sending and date of meeting). Therefore, the meeting was not validly called.
(ii) As explained in (i) above, notice falls short by 2 days.
(iii) The Companies Act, 2013 does not provide anything specific regarding the condonation of delay in giving of notice. Hence, the delay in giving the notice calling the meeting cannot be condoned.

Question 9

Om Limited served a notice of General Meeting upon its members. The notice stated that the following resolutions will be considered at such meeting:

(i) Resolution to increase the Authorised share capital of the company.
(ii) Appointment and fixation of the remuneration of Mr. Prateek as the auditor.

A shareholder complained that the amount of the proposed increase and the remuneration was not specified in the notice. Is the notice valid under the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013.

[Nov 19]

Answer

Under section 102(2)(b) of the Companies Act, 2013, in the case of any meeting other than an Annual General Meeting, all business transacted thereat shall be deemed to be special business.

Further, under section 102(1), an explanatory a statement setting out the following material facts concerning each item of special business to be transacted at a general meeting, shall be annexed to the notice calling such meeting., namely:-

(a) the nature of concern or interest, financial or otherwise, if any, in respect of each items, of:
    (i) every director and the manager, if any;

(ii) every other key managerial personnel; and
(iii) relatives of the persons mentioned in sub-clauses (i) and (ii);

(b) any other information and facts that may enable members to understand the meaning, scope and implications of the items of business and to take decision thereon.

The information about the amount is also a material fact that may enable members to understand the meaning and implication of items of business to be transacted and to take decision thereon.
Section 102 also prescribes ordinary businesses for which explanatory statement is not required.

Part (i) of the question relating to increase in the Authorized Capital falls under special business and hence in the absence of amount of proposed increase of share capital, the notice will be treated as invalid.

Part(ii) is an ordinary business and hence explanatory statement is not required. However, considering the two resolutions mentioned in the question are to be passed in the same meeting, notice of the meeting is invalid.

Thus, the objection of the shareholder is valid since the details on the item to be considered are lacking. The information about the amount is a material fact with reference to the proposed increase of authorized share capital and remuneration of Mr. Prateek as the auditor.

The notice is, therefore, not a valid notice under Section 102 of the Companies Act, 2013.

Question 10

P Limited had called its Annual General Meeting on 30th August 2019. Mr. Pawan has filed a complaint against the company, that he could attend the meeting as the company did not serve the notice to him for attending the annual general meeting. The company, in turn, provided the proof that they had sent the notice, by way of an email to Mr. Pawan, inviting him to attend the annual general meeting of the company. Mr. Pawan alleged that he never received the email.
In the light of the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013, advise the whether the company has erred in serving the notice of Annual General Meeting to Mr. Pawan.

[MTP Apr 21]

Answer

As per Rule 18 of the Companies (Management & Administration) Rules, 2014, sending of notices through electronic mode has been statutorily recognized. A notice may be sent through e-mail as a text or as an attachment to e-mail or as a notification providing electronic link or Uniform Resource Locator for accessing such notice. The e-mail shall be addressed to the person entitled to receive such e-mail as per the records of the company as provided by the depository. Also, the company shall provide an advance opportunity at least once in a financial year, to the member to register his e-mail address and the changes therein and such request may be made by only those members who have not got their email id recorded or to update a fresh email id and not from the members whose email id s are already registered.

In the light of the above provisions of the Act, the company's obligation shall be satisfied when it transmits the e-mail, and the company shall not be held responsible for a failure in transmission beyond its control. Also, if the member entitled to receive the notice fails to provide or update relevant e-mail address to the company, or to the depository participant as the case may be, the company shall not be in default for not delivering notice via e-mail.

Hence, the company has not erred in serving notice of Annual General Meeting to Mr. Pawan.

Question 11

Kurt Limited is a company engaged in the business of manufacturing papers. The company has approached you to explain them the following as per the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013:
(a) Quorum for the general meeting if the company has 800 members.
(b) Quorum for the general meeting if the company has 6500 members.

(c) Quorum for the general meeting if the company has 5500 members. The articles of association has prescribed the quorum for the meeting to be 50.

[MTP April 2022]

Answer

According to section 103(1) of the Companies Act, 2013, unless the articles of the company provide for a larger number, in case of a public company:

(1) five members personally present if the number of members as on the date of meeting is not more than one thousand,
(2) fifteen members personally present if the number of members as on the date of meeting is more than one thousand but up to five thousand,
(3) thirty members personally present if the number of members as on the date of the meeting exceeds five thousand.

The term 'members personally present' as mentioned above refers to the members entitled to vote in respect of the items of business on the agenda of the meeting.

Thus,

(a) If the company has 800 members, quorum shall be 5 members personally present.
(b) If the company has 6500 members, quorum shall be 30 members personally present.
(c) If the company has 5500 members, quorum shall be 30 members personally present. However, since the articles of association has prescribed the quorum for the meeting to be 50, the quorum shall be 50 (higher of 30 and 50).

Question 12

(i) The Articles of Association of DJA Ltd. require the personal presence of 7 members to constitute quorum of General Meetings. The company has 965 members as on the date of meeting. The following persons were present in the extra-ordinary meeting to consider the appointment of Managing Director:
   (1) A, the representative of Governor of Uttar Pradesh.
   (2) D, representing Y Ltd. and Z Ltd.
   (3) E, F, G and H as proxies of shareholders.

   Determine whether the quorum was present in the meeting?

(ii) Sirhj, a shareholder, gives a notice for inspecting proxies, five days before the meeting is scheduled and approaches the company two days before the scheduled meeting for inspecting the same. What is the legal position relating to his actions (as per the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013)?

[MTP Aug 2018, RTP May 20]

OR

The Articles of Association of ABC Limited require the personal presence of 7 members to constitute quorum of General Meetings. The company has 870 members as on the date of meeting. The following persons were present in the extra-ordinary meeting to consider the appointment of Managing Director:

(i) A, the representative of Governor of Karnataka.
(ii) B and C, shareholders of preference shares,
(iii) D, representing Green Limited and Blue Limited
(iv) E, F, G and H as proxies of shareholders.

Can it be said that the quorum was present in the meeting?

[MTP Nov 22]

Answer

(i) According to section 103 of the Companies Act, 2013, unless the articles of the company provide for a larger number in case of a public company, five members personally present if the number of members as on the date of meeting is not more than one thousand, shall be the quorum.

   In this case the quorum for holding a general meeting is 7 members to be personally present (higher of 5 or 7). For the purpose of quorum, only those members are counted who are entitled to vote on resolution proposed to be passed in the meeting.

Again, only members present in person and not by proxy are to be counted. Hence, proxies whether they are members or not will have to be excluded for the purposes of quorum.

If a company is a member of another company, it may authorize a person by resolution to act as its representative at a meeting of the latter company, then such a person shall be deemed to be a member present in person and counted for the purpose of quorum

Where two or more companies which are members of another company, appoint a single person as their representative then each such company will be counted as quorum at a meeting of the latter company.

Further the President of India or Governor of a State, if he is a member of a company, may appoint such a person as he thinks fit, to act as his representative at any meeting of the company. A person so appointed shall be deemed to be a member of such a company and thus considered as member personally present.

In view of the above there are only three members personally present. 'A' will be included for the purpose of quorum. D will have two votes for the purpose of quorum as he represents two companies 'Y Ltd.' and 'Z Ltd.' E, F, G and H are not to be included as they are not members but representing as proxies for the members.

Thus, it can be said that the requirements of quorum has not been met and it shall not constitute a valid quorum for the meeting.

(ii) Under section 105 (8) of the Companies Act, 2013 every member entitled to vote at a meeting of the company, or on any resolution to be moved thereat, shall be entitled during the period beginning twenty-four hours before the time fixed for the commencement of the meeting and ending with the conclusion of the meeting, to inspect the proxies lodged, at any time during the business hours of the company, provided not less than three days' notice in writing of the intention so to inspect is given to the company.

In the given case, Sirhj has given proper notice. However, such inspection can be undertaken only during the period beginning 24 hours before the time fixed for the commencement of the meeting and ending with the conclusion of the meeting.

So, Sirhj can undertake the inspection only during the above mentioned period and not two days prior to the meeting.

Question 13

The Board of Directors of Shrey Ltd. called an extraordinary general meeting upon the requisition of members. However, the meeting was adjourned on the ground that the quorum was not present at the meeting. Advise the company.

[RTP Nov 18, MTP Mar 19, April 21]

Answer

According to section 100 (2) of the Companies Act 2013, the Board of directors must convene a general meeting upon requisition by the stipulated minimum number of members.

As per Section 103 (2) (b) of the Companies Act, 2013, if the quorum is not present within half an hour from the appointed time for holding a meeting of the company, the meeting, if called on the requisition of members, shall stand cancelled. Therefore, the meeting stands cancelled and the stand taken by the Board of Directors to adjourn it, is not proper.

Question 14

KMN Ltd. scheduled its annual general meeting to be held on 11th March, 2018 at 11:00 A.M. The company has 900 members. On 11th March, 2018 following persons were present by 11:30 A.M.

- P1, P2 & P3 shareholders
- P4 representing ABC Ltd.
- P5 representing DEF Ltd.
- P6 & P7 as proxies of the shareholders

(1). Examine with reference to relevant provisions of the Companies Act, 2013, whether quorum was present in the meeting.
(2). What will be your answer if P4 representing ABC Ltd., reached in the meeting after 11:30 A.M.?
(3). In case lack of Quorum, discuss the provisions as applicable for an adjourned meeting in terms of date, time & place.
(4). What happens if there is no Quorum in the Adjourned meeting?

[Nov 18, MTP Nov 21]

Answer

According to section 103 of the Companies Act, 2013, unless the articles of the company provide for a larger number, the quorum for the meeting of a Public Limited Company shall be 5 members personally present, if number of members is not more than 1000.

- P1, P2 and P3 will be counted as three members.
- If a company is a member of another company, it may authorize a person by resolution to act as its representative at a meeting of the latter company, then such a person shall be deemed to be a member present in person and counted for the purpose of quorum. Hence, P4 and P5 representing ABC Ltd. and DEF Ltd. respectively will be counted as two members.
- Only members present in person and not by proxy are to be counted. Hence, proxies whether they are members or not will have to be excluded for the purposes of quorum. Thus, P6 and P7 shall not be counted in quorum.

1) In the light of the provision of the Act and the facts of the question, it can be concluded that the quorum for Annual General Meeting of KMN Ltd. is 5 members personally present. Total 5 members (P1, P2, P3, P4 and P5) were present. Hence, the requirement of quorum is fulfilled.

2) The section further states that, if the required quorum is not present within half an hour, the meeting shall stand adjourned for the next week at the same time and place or such other time and place as decided by the Board of Directors.
   Since, P4 is an essential part for meeting the quorum requirement, and he reaches after 11:30 AM (i.e. half an hour after the starting of the meeting), the meeting will be adjourned as provided above.
   (1). In case of lack of quorum, the meeting will be adjourned as provided in section 103. In case of the adjourned meeting or change of day, time or place of meeting, the company shall give not less than 3 days' notice to the members either individually or by publishing an advertisement in the newspaper.
   (2). Where quorum is not present in the adjourned meeting also within half an hour, then the members present shall form the quorum.

Question 15

PQ Limited is a public company having its registered office in Mumbai. It has 3680 members. The company sent notice to all its members for its Annual general Meeting to be held on 2nd September 2019 (Monday) at 11 :00 AM at its registered office. On the day of meeting there were only 12 members personally present upto 11:30 AM. The Chairman adjourned the meeting to same day in next week at the same time and place.

On the day of adjourned meeting only 10 members were personally present. The Chairman initiated the meeting after 11:30 AM and passed the resolutions after discussion as per the agenda of the meeting given in the notice. Comment whether the AGM conducted after adjournment is valid or not as per the provisions of section 103 of Companies Act 2013 by explaining the relevant provisions in this regard.

What would be your answer in the above case, if PQ Limited is a Private company?

[Nov 20]

Answer

According to section 103 of the Companies Act, 2013, unless the articles of the company provide for a larger number, in case of a public company, fifteen members personally present may fulfil the requirement of quorum, if the number of members as on the date of meeting is more than one thousand but up to five thousand.

If the specified quorum is not present within half-an-hour from the time appointed for holding a meeting of the company, the meeting shall stand adjourned to the same day in the next week at the same time and place, or to such other date and such other time and place as the Board may determine.

If at the adjourned meeting also, a quorum is not present within half-an-hour from the time appointed for holding meeting, the members present shall be the quorum.

In the instant case, there were only 12 members personally present on the day of meeting of PQ Limited upto 11:30 AM. This was not in compliance with the required quorum as per the law. In the adjourned meeting also, the required quorum was not present but in the adjourned meeting, the members present shall be considered as quorum in line with the provisions of section 103.

Hence, the AGM conducted by PQ Limited after adjournment is valid.

As per the provisions of section 103(1)(b), in case of a private company, two members personally present, shall be quorum for the meeting of a company. Therefore, in case, PQ Limited is a private company, then only two members personally present shall be the quorum for AGM and there was no need for adjournment.

Question 16

A General Meeting was scheduled to be held on 15th April, 2019 at 3.00 P.M. As per the notice the members who are unable to attend a meeting in person can appoint a proxy and the proxy forms duly filled should be sent to the company so as to reach at least 48 hours before the meeting. Mr. X, a member of the company appoints Mr. Y as his proxy and the proxy form dated 10-04-2019 was deposited by Mr. Y with the company at its registered Office on 11-04-2019. Similarly, another member Mr. W also gives two separate proxies to two individuals named Mr. M and Mr. N. In the case of Mr. M, the proxy dated 12-04-2019 was deposited with the company on the same day and the proxy form in case of Mr. N was deposited on 14-04-2019. All the proxies viz., Y, M and N were present before the meeting.
According to the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013, who would be the persons allowed to represent as proxies for members X and W respectively?

[MTP Oct 18, April 19, RTP May 21]

Answer

A Proxy form is an instrument in writing executed by a shareholder authorizing another person to attend a meeting and to vote thereat on his behalf and in his absence. As per the provisions of Section 105 of the Companies Act, 2013, every shareholder who is entitled to attend and vote has a statutory right to appoint another person as his proxy.

It is not necessary that the proxy be a member of the company. Further, any provision in the articles of association of the company requiring instrument of proxy to be lodged with the company more than 48 hours before a meeting shall have effect as if 48 hours had been specified therein. The members have a right to revoke the proxy's authority by voting himself before the proxy has voted but once the proxy has voted the member cannot retract his authority.

Where two proxy instruments by the same shareholder are lodged of in such a manner that one is lodged before and the other after the expiry of the date fixed for lodging proxies, the former will be counted.

Thus, in case of member X, the proxy Y will be permitted to vote on his behalf as form for appointing proxy was submitted within the permitted time.

However, in the case of Member W, the proxy M (and not Proxy N) will be permitted to vote as the proxy authorizing N to vote was deposited in less than 48 hours before the meeting.

Question 17

Explain the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013 relating to quorum for general meeting of a public company having total 30 members, of which, two members are bodies corporate and one member is the President of India.

OR

Whether the representatives appointed by body corporate and President of India to participate in the general meeting shall be counted for quorum and can such representatives cast vote at that general meeting?

[May 2019]

Answer

According to section 103(1)(a)(i) of the Companies Act, 2013, unless the articles of the company provide for a larger number, in case of public company, if the number of members as on the date of meeting is not more than one thousand, five members personally present shall be the quorum for a meeting of the company.

In the instant case, the quorum for the public company will be 5 members personally present.

In the said company, two members are bodies corporate and one member is the President of India.

Only members present in person and not by proxy are to be counted. Hence, proxies whether they are members or not will have to be excluded for the purposes of quorum.

As per section 113 of the Companies Act, 2013, if a company is a member of another company, it may authorize a person by resolution to act as its representative at a meeting of the latter company, then such a person shall be deemed to be a member present in person and counted for the purpose of quorum and shall be entitled to vote.

As per section 112 of the Companies Act, 2013, the President of India, if he is a member of a company, may appoint such a person as he thinks fit, to act as his representative at any meeting of the company. A person so appointed shall be deemed to be a member of such a company and thus considered as member personally present and shall be entitled to vote.

Question 18

A company received a proxy form 54 hours before the time fixed for the start of the meeting. The company refused to accept the proxy form on the ground that the Articles of the company provided that a proxy form must be filed 60 hours before the start of the meeting. Define proxy and decide under the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013, whether the proxy holder can compel the company to admit the proxy in this case?

[Jan 2021, MTP 1 May'23]

Answer

Section 105 of the Companies Act, 2013 deals with the provisions of proxy for meetings.

Section 105(1) of the Act provides that any member of a company entitled to attend and vote at a meeting of the company shall be entitled to appoint another person as a proxy to attend and vote at the meeting on his behalf.

Further, Section 105(4) of the Act provides that a proxy form received 48 hours before the meeting will be valid even if the articles provide for a longer period.

In the given case, the company received a proxy form 54 hours before the time fixed for start of the meeting. The Company refused to accept proxy on the ground that articles of the company provides filing of proxy before 60 hours of the meeting. In the said case, in line with requirement of the above stated legal provision, a proxy received 48 hours before the meeting will be valid even if the articles provide for

a longer period. Accordingly, the proxy holder can compel the company to admit the proxy.

Question 19

Examine the validity of the following decisions of the Board of Directors with reference of the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013.

(i) In an Annual General Meeting of Vrinda Ltd. having share capital, 80 members present in person or by proxy holding more than 1/10th of the total voting power, demanded for poll. The chairman of the meeting rejected the request on the ground that only the members present in person can demand for poll.

(ii) In an annual general meeting, during the process of poll, the members who earlier demanded for poll want to withdraw it. The chairman of the meeting rejected the request on the ground that once poll started, it cannot be withdrawn.

[MTP Mar 18, May 20, RTP Nov 18]

Answer

Section 109 of the Companies Act, 2013 provides for the demand of poll before or on the declaration of the result of the voting on any resolution on show of hands. Accordingly law says that:-

Order of demand for poll by the chairman of meeting:

Before or on the declaration of the result of the voting on any resolution on show of hands, a poll may be ordered to be taken by the Chairman of the meeting on his own motion, and shall be ordered to be taken by him on a demand made in that behalf:

(a) In the case a company having a share capital, by the members present in person or by proxy, where allowed, and having not less than one-tenth of the total voting power or holding shares on which an aggregate sum of not less than five lakh rupees or such higher amount as may be prescribed has been paid-up; and

(b) in the case of any other company, by any member or members present in person or by proxy, where allowed, and having not less than one tenth of the total voting power.

Withdrawal of the demand: The demand for a poll may be withdrawn at any time by the persons who made the demand.

Hence, on the basis on the above provisions of the Companies Act, 2013:

(i) The chairman cannot reject the demand for poll as poll can be demanded by the members present in person or by proxy. Subject to provision in the articles of company.

(ii) The chairman cannot reject the request of the members for withdrawing the demand of the Poll.

Question 20

Mr. Pink held 100 partly paid up shares of Red Limited. The company asked him to pay the final call money on the shares. Due to some unavoidable circumstances, he was unable to pay the amount of call money to the company. At a general meeting of the shareholders, the chairman disallowed him to cast his vote on the ground that the articles do not permit a shareholder to vote if he has not paid the calls on the shares held by him. Mr. Pink contested the decision of the Chairman. Referring to the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013 decide whether the contention of Mr. Pink is valid

[RTP Nov 19]

Answer

Section 106 (1) of the Companies Act, 2013 states that the articles of a company may provide that no member shall exercise any voting right in respect of any shares registered in his name on which any calls or other sums presently payable by him have not been paid, or in regard to which the company has exercised any right of lien.

In the present case the articles of the company do not permit a shareholder to vote if he has not paid the calls on the shares held by him. Therefore, the chairman at the meeting is well within its right to refuse him the right to vote at the meeting and Mr. Pink's contention is not valid.

Question 21

'X' a member of LKM Ltd. is holding 250 shares, which are partly paid. The company held its general meeting where voting right was denied to 'X' claiming he has not paid the calls on the shares held by him. Examine the validity of company's denial to 'X' with reference to the relevant provisions of the Companies Act, 2013, assuming that Articles of association of the Company do not restrict the voting right of such members.

[Nov 18]

Answer

Restriction on voting rights [Section 106 of the Companies Act, 2013] According to the said Section:

(1) Notwithstanding anything contained in this Act, **the articles of a company may provide** that no member shall exercise any voting right in respect of any shares registered in his name on which any calls or other sums are presently payable by him have not been paid, or in regard to which the company has exercised any right of lien.

(2) A company shall not, except on the grounds specified in sub-section (1), prohibit any member from exercising his voting right on any other ground.

In the given question, Mr. X (member) holding 250 shares of LKM Ltd. has not paid certain calls on the shares. The company has denied his voting rights in the general meeting though the Articles of association of the company does not contain any restriction in the voting rights of such members.

On examination of the above provisions of the Act and the facts of the case, LKM Ltd.'s denial to 'X' for exercising his voting rights is not valid.

Question 22

If a member of a listed company who has casted his vote through electronic voting can attend general meeting of the company and change his vote subsequently and can he appoint a proxy?

[May 2019]

Answer

According to Rule – 20(4)(iii)(C) of the Companies (Management and Administration) Rules, 2014, the notice of the meeting shall clearly state that the members who have cast their vote by remote e-voting prior to the meeting may also attend the meeting but shall not be entitled to cast their vote again.

In the instant case, a member of a listed company who has casted his vote through electronic voting can attend general meeting of the company but cannot change his vote subsequently and is not permitted to appoint a proxy.

Question 23

Miraj Limited issued a notice with the agenda for nine businesses to be transacted in the Annual General Meeting (two businesses were regarding appointment of Mr. S and Mr. P as directors). The chairman decided to move the resolutions for all the nine businesses together to save the time of the members present. Examine the validity of the resolutions.

[May 18, MTP Oct 18, ICAI Module]

Answer:

For the sake of avoiding confusion and mixing up each resolution in the general meeting should be moved separately. However, it would not be illegal if the company decides to move multiple resolutions together.

As per section 162, each director of the Company shall be appointed by a separate resolution. However, where the shareholder agree by the way of unanimous resolution has multiple directors can be appointed by a single resolution.

In the given case, the company proposes to move nine resolutions together, out of which two relates to appointment of directors.

Considering the above provision, the company will have to appoint each director by a separate resolution. Besides the store resolutions, the other seven resolutions can be moved together.

Question 24

At a General meeting of a XYZ Limited, a matter was to be passed by a special resolution. Out of 40 members present, 20 voted in favour of the resolution, 5 voted against it and 5 votes were found invalid. The remaining 10 members abstained from voting. The Chairman of the meeting declared the resolution as passed. With reference to the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013, examine the validity of the Chairman's declaration.

[MTP Oct 2019]

Answer

Under Section 114(2) of the Companies Act, 2013, for a valid special resolution to be passed at a meeting of members of a company, the following conditions need to be satisfied:

1) The intention to propose the resolution, as a special resolution must have been specified in the notice calling the general meeting or other intimation given to the members;
2) The notice required under the Companies Act must have been duly given of the general meeting;
3) The votes cast in favour of the resolution (whether by show of hands or electronically or on a poll, as the case may be) by members present in person or by proxy or by postal ballot are not less than 3 times the number of votes, if any, cast against the resolution by members so entitled and voting.

Thus, in terms of the requisite majority, votes cast in favour have to be compared with votes cast against the resolution. Abstentions or invalid votes, if any, are not to be taken into account.

Accordingly, in the given problem, the votes cast in favour (20) being more than 3 times of the votes cast against (5), and presuming other conditions of Section 114(2) are satisfied, the decision of the Chairman is in order.

Question 25

Members of ZA Ltd. holding less than 1% of total voting power want the company to give a special notice to move a resolution for appointment of an auditor other than retiring auditor. Explain whether members have complied with relevant provisions of the Companies Act, 2013 in making their request.

[Nov 18]

Answer

Section 115 of the Companies Act, 2013 states that where any provision of this Act specifically requires or Articles of Association of a company so require that a special notice is required for passing any resolution, then the notice of the intention to move such resolution shall be given to the company by such number of members holding not less than 1% of the total voting power, or holding shares on which such aggregate sum of not less than Rs. 5,00,000/- has been paid-up.

In such a case, the company shall give its members notice of the resolution in the manner as prescribed in Rule 22 of the Companies (Management & Administration) Rules, 2014. Further, Section 115 of the Act specifies that special notice is required to appoint as auditor a person other than a retiring auditor under Section 140 of the Act.

According to the given facts in the question, there is non-compliance of requirement of section 115 as stated above i.e., the notice of the intention to move such resolution as to appointment of auditor other than retiring auditor was given by members of ZA Ltd. holding less than 1% of the total voting power.

Question 26

Give the points of distinction between ordinary resolution and special resolution

[May 2019]

Answer

Difference between ordinary resolution and Special resolution Ordinary Resolution:

Section 114(1) of the Companies Act, 2013 states that a resolution shall be ordinary resolution, if the

notice required under this Act has been duly given and it is required to be passed by the votes cast, whether on a show of hands, or electronically or on a poll, as the case may be, in favour of the resolution, including the casting vote of the Chairman, if any, of the Chairman, by members, who, being entitled so to do, vote in person, or where proxies are allowed, by proxy or by postal ballot, exceed the votes, if any cast against the resolution by members, so entitled and voting.

Simply put, the votes cast in the favour of the resolution, by any mode of voting should exceed the votes cast against it.

Special Resolution:

As per Section 114(2) of the Act, a resolution shall be a special resolution, when–

(a) The intention to propose the resolution as a special resolution has been duly specified in the notice calling the general meeting or other intimation given to the members of the resolution;

(b) The notice required under this Act has been duly given; and

(c) The votes cast in favour of the resolution, whether on a show of hands, or electronically or on a poll, as the case may be, in favour of the resolution, including the casting vote of the Chairman, if any, of the Chairman, by members, who, being entitled so to do, vote in person, or where proxies are allowed, by proxy or by postal ballot, are required to be not less than 3 times the number of the votes, if any, cast against the resolution by members so entitled and voting.

Question 27

In a General Meeting of Amit Limited, the Chairman directed to exclude certain matters detrimental to the interest of the company from the minutes. Manoj, a shareholder contended that the minutes must contain fair and correct summary of the proceedings thereat. Decide, whether the contention of Manoj is maintainable under the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013?

[RTP May 18, MTP Oct, 19]

Answer

Under Section 118 (5) of the Companies Act, 2013, there shall not be included in the Minutes of a meeting, any matter which, in the opinion of the Chairman of the meeting:

(i) is or could reasonably be regarded as defamatory of any person;

(ii) is irrelevant or immaterial to the proceeding; or

(iii) is detrimental to the interests of the company;

Further, under section 118(6) the chairman shall exercise absolute discretion in regard to the inclusion or non-inclusion of any matter in the Minutes on the grounds specified in sub- section (5) above.

Hence, in view of the above, the contention of Manoj, a shareholder of Amit Limited is not valid because the Chairman has absolute discretion on the inclusion or exclusion of any matter in the minutes for aforesaid reasons.

Question 28

Veena Ltd. held its Annual General Meeting on September 15, 2018. The meeting was presided over by Mr. Mohan Rao, the Chairman of the Company's Board of Directors. On September 17, 2018, Mr. Mohan Rao, the Chairman, without signing the minutes of the meeting, left India to look after his father who fell sick in London. Referring to the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013, state the manner in which the minutes of the above meeting are to be signed in the absence of Mr. Mohan Rao and by whom?

[MTP Oct 18, April 19, Jan 21, MTP 2 May'23]

Answer

Section 118 of the Companies Act, 2013 provides that every company shall prepare, sign and keep minutes of proceedings of every general meeting, including the meeting called by the requisitionists and all proceedings of meeting of any class of shareholders or creditors or Board of Directors or committee of the Board and also resolution passed by postal ballot within thirty days of the conclusion of every such meeting concerned. Minutes kept shall be evidence of the proceedings recorded in a meeting.

By virtue of Rule 25 of the Companies (Management and Administration) Rules, 2014 read with section 118 of the Companies Act, 2013, each page of every such book shall be initialled or signed and the last page of the record of proceedings of each meeting or each report in such books shall be dated and signed by, in the case of minutes of proceedings of a general meeting, by the chairman of the same meeting within the aforesaid period of thirty days or in the event of the death or inability of that chairman within that period, by a director duly authorized by the Board for the purpose.

Therefore, the minutes of the meeting referred to in the case of Veena Ltd. can be signed in the absence of Mr. Mohan Rao, by any director, authorized by the Board in this respect.

Question 29

Mr. Laurel, a shareholder in Hardly Limited, a listed company, desires to inspect the minutes book of General Meetings and to have copy of some resolutions. In the light of the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013 answer the following:

(i) Whether he can inspect the minutes book and to have copies of the minutes at free of cost?

(ii) Whether he can authorize his friend to inspect the minutes book on behalf of him by signing a power of authority?

[July 21]

OR

Mr. Ram, a shareholder of PQR Ltd., has made a request to the company for providing a copy of minutes book of general meeting. Whether the shareholder of a company is entitled to receive a copy of minutes book? Explain, provisions of the Companies Act, 2013.

[May 2022, MTP-2 May'23]

Answer

As per section 119 of the Companies Act, 2013, the books containing the minutes of the proceedings of any general meeting of a company shall be open for inspection, during business hours, by any member, without charge, subject to such reasonable restrictions as specified in the articles of the company or as imposed in the general meeting.

Any member shall be entitled to be furnished, within seven working days after he has made a request in that behalf to the company, and on payment of such fees as may be prescribed, with a copy of any minutes

Accordingly, following are the answers:

(i) As in given case, Mr. Laurel, in requirement with law, he can inspect the minutes book and so to have soft copies of the same up to last three years.

(ii) As provision does not specify anything on authorizing anyone else to inspect the minutes book. Therefore, Mr. Laurel cannot authorize his friend to inspect the minutes book on behalf of him.

Question 30

Pristine Limited, a listed public company, conducted its Annual General Meeting on 31st August, 2020. However, 10 days have passed since 31st August 2020, but it has still not filed report on Annual General Meeting. The Accountant of the company has approached you to advise them whether Pristine Limited is required to file report on Annual General Meeting?

[RTP May 21, MTP 2 May'23]

Answer

According to Section 121, every listed public company shall prepare a report on each annual general meeting including the confirmation to the effect that the meeting was convened held and conducted as per the provisions of the Act and the rules made thereunder.

A copy of the report is to be filed with the Registrar in Form No. MGT. 15 within thirty days of the conclusion of AGM along with the prescribed fee. If the company does not file such report on Annual General Meeting within 30 days of the conclusion of the Annual General Meeting then the company and defaulting officers are liable for prescribed penalties.

Since, Pristine Ltd. is a listed company, hence it has to file a copy of 1annual Report with the Registrar within 30 days from 31st August, 2020.

Question 31

State with reason whether the following statement is correct or incorrect:

(i) An annual general meeting can be held on a national holiday.

(ii) A company should file its annual return within six months of the closing of the financial year

[MTP April 21]

Answer

(i) An annual general meeting cannot be held on a national holiday. Under section 96 (2) of the Companies Act, 2013 every annual general meeting shall be called during business hours, that is, between 9 a.m. and 6 p.m. on any day that is not a National Holiday.

A national holiday has been defined in the explanation to section 96 as a day declared as National Holiday by the Central Government.

Thus, the statement 'An annual general meeting can be held on a national holiday' is incorrect.

(ii) The statement is incorrect in terms of section 92 (4) of the Companies Act, 2013.

Section 92 (4) states that every company shall file with the Registrar a copy of the annual return, within sixty days from the date on which the annual general meeting is held or where no annual general meeting is held in any year within sixty days from the date on which the annual general meeting should have been held together with the statement specifying the reasons for not holding the annual general meeting, with such fees or additional fees as may be prescribed.

Question 32:

ABC Limited is an unlisted company, having its registered office at Kolkata. The Annual General Meeting was held at Goa on 1st July 2021 at 3.00 PM and concluded at 8.00 PM. Consent of all the members to conduct AGM at Goa were received by 24th June 2021 by Email.

(i) Examine the validity of the meeting as per the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013.

(ii) State, the consequences if a resolution has passed in such meeting, without sufficient disclosure regarding interest of a director.

[May 2022]

Answer

(i) Section 96(2) of the Companies Act, 2013, states that every annual general meeting shall be called during business hours, that is, between 9 a.m. and 6 p.m. on any day that is not a National Holiday and shall be held either at the registered office of the company or at some other place within the city, town or village in which the registered office of the company is situated.

Provided that annual general meeting of an unlisted company may be held at any place in India if consent is given in writing or by electronic mode by all the members in advance.

In the given question, ABC Limited is an unlisted company and consent of all members to conduct the AGM at Goa has been received in advance (24th June, 2021). Also, the meeting was started well within the prescribed time i.e. at 3.00 PM. Hence, the meeting was validly called.

(ii) Section 102 of the Companies Act, 2013 mentions that where any special business is to be transacted at the company's general meeting, then an 'Explanatory Statement' should be annexed to the notice calling such general meeting, which must specify, the nature of concern or interest, financial or otherwise, if any, in respect of each item of every director and the manager, if any.

Effect of non-disclosure: As per section 102(4), if as a result non-disclosure or insufficient disclosure in explanatory statement, any benefit accrues to a director such director shall hold such benefit in trust for the company, and shall be liable to compensate the company to the extent of the benefit received by him. If any default is made in complying with the provisions of this section, every such director who is in default, shall be liable for such contravention with penalty [Section 102(5)].

Question 33

'A' and his wife 'B' has joint Demat Account in Vrinda Limited. The company's Annual General Meeting is to be held on 28.08.2022. In such a case, who will cast the vote in the Annual General Meeting? Give your answer as per the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013.

[RTP Nov 22]

Answer

The voting in case of joint shareholders is done in the order of seniority, which is determined on the basis of the order in which their names appear in the register of members/ shareholders. The joint- holders have a right to instruct the company as to the order in which their names are to appear in the register.

As per Rule 21 of the Companies (Management and Administration) Rules, 2014, the Scrutinizers shall arrange for Polling papers and distribute them to the members and proxies present at the meeting; in case of joint shareholders, the polling paper shall be given to the first named holder or in his absence to the joint holder attending the meeting as appearing in the chronological order in the folio.
Thus, in the given case, 'A' or his wife 'B', whosoever names appears first in chronological order in the register of members/ shareholders shall be entitled to vote.

Question 34

Prabhas Limited is a company having its shares listed on a recognised stock exchange. The company has 5,000 members. The Annual General Meeting of the company is to be held on 07-09-2022. As per the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013, advise the company, the remote e- voting period and the time of closing of remote e-voting.

[RTP Nov 22]

Answer

Rule 20 of the Companies (Management & Administration) Rules, 2014, provides that:
Every company which has listed its equity shares on a recognised stock exchange and company having not less than one thousand members shall provide to its members facility to exercise their right to vote on resolutions proposed to be considered at a general meeting by electronic means.

The facility for remote e-voting shall remain open for not less than three days and shall close at 5.00 p.m. on the date preceding the date of the general meeting.

In the question, Prabhas Limited has its shares listed on recognised stock exchange and has 5,000 members, hence, it has to provide to its members facility to exercise their right to vote on resolutions proposed to be considered at a general meeting by electronic means. Thus, if the Annual General Meeting of Prabhas Limited is going to be held on 7.9.2022, the facility for remote e- voting shall open on 4.9.2022 and close at 5.00 p.m. on 6.9.2022.

Question 35

With a view to transact some urgent business, Ratna, Rimpi and Ratnesh, the three directors of Shilpkaar Constructions Limited are desirous of calling a general meeting of shareholders by giving shorter notice than 21 days' clear notice. The fourth director, Nilesh is of the opinion that such an action will attract penalty provisions since there is contravention. The paid-up share capital of the company is ₹ 30 crores divided into 3 crores shares of ₹ 10 each. Keeping in view the applicable provisions of the Companies Act, 2013, discuss the possibility of calling a general meeting by giving shorter notice.

[MTP-1 May 23]

Answer

Normally, general meetings are to be called by giving at least 21 clear days' notice as required by section

101 (1) of the Companies Act, 2013.

As an exception, first proviso to Section 101 (1) states that a general meeting may be called after giving shorter notice than that specified in sub-section (1) of section 101, if consent, in writing or by electronic mode, is accorded thereto in the case of any other general meeting (i.e. other than annual general meeting), by members of the company—

(a) holding, if the company has a share capital, majority in number of members entitled to vote and who represent not less than ninety-five per cent. of such part of the paid-up share capital of the company as gives a right to vote at the meeting; or

(b) having, if the company has no share capital, not less than ninety-five per cent. of the total voting power exercisable at that meeting.

Second proviso to section 101 (1) clarifies that where any member of a company is entitled to vote only on some resolution or resolutions to be moved at a meeting and not on the others, those members shall be taken into account for the purposes of sub section (1) of section 101 in respect of the former resolution or resolutions and not in respect of the latter.

In view of the above provisions, Shilpkaar Constructions Limited is permitted to call the requisite general meeting by giving a shorter notice. However, the members holding at least ninety-five per cent of the paid-up share capital of the company which gives them a right to vote at the meeting must consent to the shorter notice.

Thus, if the meeting is called after obtaining the consent from members holding at least ninety- five per cent of the paid-up share capital of the company, the meeting can be validly called at shorter notice.

Question 36

TST Limited has Equity Share Capital of 10000 shares @ ₹10 each. The Company has received a requisition from Mr. A & Mr. B each holding 1500 equity shares to call an Extraordinary General Meeting to remove Managing Director of the company who has been found to be involved in some malpractices. The company failed to call the said meeting. The requisitionists desires to call the meeting by themselves to pass the resolution to remove the Managing Director. Explain the validity of such resolution passed in the said meeting referring the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013.

[Nov 22]

Answer

Validity of Resolution passed in the EGM called by the Requisitionists

As per Section 100(2) of the Companies Act, 2013, read with Rule 17 of the Companies (Management and Administration) Rules, 2014, the Board shall on the requisition of, in the case of company having a share capital, such number of members who hold, on the date of receipt of requisition, at least 1/10th of such paid-up capital of the company as on that date carries the right of voting, shall call for the meeting.

The requisition made u/ss 2 shall set out the matters for the consideration of which the meeting is to be called and shall be signed by the requisitionists and sent to the registered office of the company.

The Board must, within 21 days of the date of receipt of a valid requisition, proceed to call a meeting on a day not later than 45 days from the date of receipt of such requisition.

If the Board does not, within 21 days from the date of receipt of a valid requisition in regard to any matter, proceed to call a meeting for the consideration of that matter on a day not later than 45 days from the date of receipt of such requisition, the meeting may be called and held by the requisitionists themselves within a period of three months from the date of the requisition. [Sub-Section 4].

Sub-section 5 of Section 100 provides that the requisitionists shall call and hold the meeting in the same manner as called and held by the Board and such meeting shall comply with all the requirements of the Act.

Sub-section 6 of Section 100 any reasonable expenses incurred by the requisitionists in calling a meeting under sub-section (4) shall be re-imbursed to the requisitionists by the company.

In the given case, meeting called by requisitionists to pass the resolution to remove the Managing Director in the said meeting can be said to be valid as the requisition moved from Mr. A and Mr. B holding ₹ 30,000 (each holding ₹ 15,000) equity share capital (1/10th of 1,00,000) is in compliance with the legal requirement and will be binding on the company, its officers and members provided if all the conditions for a valid meeting are satisfied.

Question 37

Upkaar Nidhi Ltd., was about to hold an AGM on 25th August, 2022, for which the notice of AGM along with relevant documents, as prescribed, was sent to all its members including the following:-

Sr. No.	Particulars
1	A member individually holding shares with face value of ₹ 800 which amounted to 0.16% of the total paid-up share capital.
2	Two members jointly holding shares with face value of ₹ 1,600 which amounted to 0.32% of the total paid-up share capital.
3	Forty-two members each holding individually shares with face value of ₹ 600 which amounted to holding 0.12% of the total paid-up share capital for each such member.
4	All the remaining members holding individually more than 1.2% of the total paid- up share capital of the company.

In the AGM held on 25th August, 2022, the members were not provided with the facility to vote by electronic means.

In the context of aforesaid case-scenario, please answer whether Upkaar Nidhi Ltd. was required to send the notice of AGM along with relevant documents to all its members as aforesaid?

[RTP May 23]

Answer

In case of Nidhi company:

Section 136 (1) of the Companies Act, 2013, shall apply, subject to the modification that, in the case of members who do not individually or jointly hold shares of more than one thousand rupees in face value or more than one per cent, of the total paid-up share capital, whichever is less, it shall be sufficient compliance with the provisions of the section if an intimation is sent by public notice in newspaper circulated in the district in which the Registered Office of the company is situated stating the date, time and venue of AGM and the financial statement with its enclosures can be inspected at the registered office of the company and the financial statement with enclosures are affixed in the notice board of the company and a member is entitled to vote either in person or through proxy.

Here, Upkaar Nidhi Ltd. was only required to send such notice of AGM and other relevant documents to members who individually or jointly hold shares of more than ₹ 1,000 in face value or more than 1%, of the total paid-up share capital, whichever is less. Accordingly, Upkaar Nidhi Ltd. would have send notice and other relevant documents to only following category of members:-

(i) Two members jointly holding shares with face value of ₹ 1,600 which amounted to 0.32% of the total paid-up share capital

(ii) All the remaining members holding individually more than 1.2% of the total paid -up share capital of the company.

For the category of members mentioned in Sr. no. 1 & 3, of the aforesaid table given in case scenario, it would have been sufficient compliance if an intimation for the AGM was sent in the newspaper as per the provisions, as aforesaid, and there was no need to send the notice of AGM along with relevant documents to such category of members personally.

Chapter 8 – Declaration and Payment of Dividend

Question 1:

(i) YZ Medical Instruments Limited is a manufacturing company & has proposed a dividend @ 10% for the year 2018-19 out of the profits of current year. The company has earned a profit of Rs. 910 crores during 2018-19. The company does not intend to transfer any amount to the general reserves out of the profits. Is YZ Medical Instruments Limited allowed to do so? Comment.

(ii) Karan, holder of 5,000 equity shares of Rs. 100 each of M/s. Rachit Leather Shoes Limited did not pay final call of Rs. 10 per share. M/s. Rachit Leather Shoes Limited declared dividend of 10%. Examine with reference to relevant provisions of the Companies Act, 2013, the amount of dividend Karan should receive.

[ICAI Module, RTP May 21, MTP Oct 20,MTP Oct 19, Nov 18, RTP Nov'22]

OR

ABC Ltd. has declared dividend of ₹ 2/- per equity share in the general meeting. Mr. Suresh is holding 5000 equity shares of ₹ 10 face value each, on which ₹ 10,000 towards call money is due. Whether the dividend amount payable to him be adjusted against such dues as per the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013? Give reasons for your answer.

[May 2022]

Answer:

(i) According to section 123 of the Companies Act, 2013 a company may, before the declaration of any dividend in any financial year, transfer such percentage of its profits for that financial year as it may consider appropriate to the reserves of the company. Such transfer is not mandatory and the percentage to be transferred to reserves is at the discretion of the company.

As per the given facts, YZ Medical Instruments Limited has earned a profit of Rs. 910 crores for the financial year 2018-19. It has proposed a dividend @ 10%. However, it does not intend to transfer any amount to the reserves of the company out of the profits of current year.

As per the provisions stated above, the amount to be transferred to reserves out of profits for any financial year is at the discretion of the company acting through its Board of Directors.

Therefore, at its discretion, if YZ Medical Instruments Limited decides not to transfer any profit to reserves before the declaration of dividend at 10%, it is legally allowed to do so.

(ii) As per the proviso to section 127 of the Companies Act, 2013, no offence will be deemed to have been committed by a director for adjusting the calls in arrears remaining unpaid or any other sum due from a member against the dividend declared by the company.

Thus, as per the given facts, M/s. Rachit Leather Shoes Limited can adjust the unpaid call money of Rs. 50,000 against the declared dividend of 10%, i.e., 5,00,000 x 10/100 = 50,000.

Hence, call money of Rs. 50,000 not paid by Karan can be adjusted fully from the entitled dividend amount of Rs. 50,000 payable to him.

Crux:

i) Whether or not profits is to be transferred to reserves & how much is to be trfd. is discretion of co.
ii) Calls in arrears can be adjusted against dividends payable.

Question 2:

MNP Ltd. has a paid-up share capital of Rs. 10 crore and free reserves of Rs. 50 crore, as on 31st March, 2019. The company made a loss of Rs. 40 lakh after providing for depreciation for the year ended 31st March, 2019 and as a result, the company was not in a position to declare any dividend for the said year out of profits. However, the Board of directors of the company announced the declaration of dividend of 20% on the equity shares payable out of free reserves. The average dividend declared by the company in the last three years is 25%. Referring to the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013, examine the validity of declaration of dividend.

[ICAI Module]

OR

Whether a Company can declare dividend for the financial year in which it incurred loss.

[Nov 19]

Answer:

As per Second Proviso to Section 123 (1), in the event of inadequacy or absence of profits in any financial year, a company may declare dividend out of the accumulated profits of previous years which have been transferred to the free reserves.

However, such declaration shall be subject to the following conditions as per Rule 3 of Companies (Declaration and Payment of Dividend) Rules, 2014

(i) The rate of dividend declared shall not exceed the average of the rates at which dividend was declared by the company in the immediately preceding three years.

As per facts of the question the present rate of dividend is 20% and average dividend declared in the last three years is 25%. So, this condition is fulfilled.

(ii) The total amount to be drawn from free reserves shall not exceed one-tenth i.e., 10% of its paid-up share capital and free reserves as per the latest audited financial statement.

Amount of dividend proposed: Rs. 2 Crores (20% of Rs. 10 Crore i.e., on paid up capital)
10% of paid up share capital and free reserves: 10% of (10 crore + 50 crore) = Rs. 6 Crore.

This condition is fulfilled as amount of dividend is not exceeding 10% of its paid-up share capital and free reserves.

(iii) The amount so drawn shall first be utilized to set off the losses incurred in the financial year in which dividend is declared and only thereafter, any dividend in respect of equity shares shall be declared.

(iv) After such withdrawal from free reserves, the residual reserves shall not fall below 15% of its paid-up share capital as per the latest audited financial statement.

Balance of reserves after payment of dividend: Rs. 48 crore (50 crore – 2 crore) 15% of paid up share capital: 1.5 crore (15% of 10 crore) This condition is fulfilled.

Taking into account all the conditions, it can be said that declaration of dividend by MNP Limited is valid.

Question 3:

Alex limited is facing loss in business during the financial year 2018-2019. In the immediately preceding three financial years, the company had declared dividend at the rate of 7%, 11% and 12% respectively. The Board of Directors has decided to declare 12% interim dividend for the current financial year at least to be in par with the immediately preceding year. Is the act of the Board of Directors valid?

[ICAI Module, MTP May 18, MTP May 19, MTP May 20 and MTP May 22, MTP April 21, May 19, May 18]

Answer:
As per Section 123(3) of the Companies Act, 2013, the Board of Directors of a company may declare interim dividend during any financial year out of the surplus in the profit and loss account and out of profits of the financial year in which such interim dividend is sought to be declared.

Provided that in case the company has incurred loss during the current financial year up to the end of the quarter immediately preceding the date of declaration of interim dividend, such interim dividend shall not be declared at a rate higher than the average dividends declared by the company during the immediately preceding three financial years.

Conclusion:
According to the given facts, Alex Ltd. is facing loss in business during the financial year 2018-2019. In the immediate preceding three financial years, the company declared dividend at the rate of 7%, 11% and 12% respectively.

Accordingly, the rate of dividend declared shall not exceed 10%, the average of the rates (7+11+12= 10%) at which dividend was declared by it during the immediately preceding three financial years.

Therefore, the act of the Board of Directors as to declaration of interim dividend at the rate of 12% during the F.Y 2018-2019 is not valid.

CRUX: When the company has loss in the current year, it cannot declare dividend higher than the average dividend of the immediate 3 preceding PY.

Question 4:
Referring to the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013, examine the validity of the following:
The Board of Directors of ABC Tractors Limited proposes to declare dividend at the rate of 20% to the equity shareholders, despite the fact that the company has defaulted in repayment of public deposits accepted before the commencement of this Act

[ICAI Module, Nov 19]

Answer:
Section 123(6) of the Companies Act, 2013, specifically provides that a company which fails to comply with the provisions of section 73 (Prohibition of acceptance of deposits from public) and section 74 (Repayment of deposits, etc., accepted before the commencement of this Act) shall not, so long as such failure continues, declare any dividend on its equity shares.

Conclusion:
In the given instance, the Board of Directors of ABC Tractors Limited proposes to declare dividend at the rate of 20% to the equity shareholders, in spite of the fact that the company has defaulted in repayment of public deposits accepted before the commencement of the Companies Act, 2013.

Hence, according to the above provision, declaration of dividend by the ABC Tractors Limited is not valid.

CRUX: Company cannot declare dividends if it has failed to comply section 73 and 74 (i.e., acceptance of deposit or repayment od deposit)

Question 5:
The Board of Directors of Future Fashions Limited at its meeting recommended a dividend on its paid-up equity share capital which was later on approved by the shareholders at the Annual General Meeting. Thereafter, the directors at another meeting of the Board passed a board resolution for diverting the total dividend to be paid to the shareholders for purchase of certain short-term investments in the name of the company. As a result, dividend was paid to shareholders after 45 days.
Examining the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013, state whether the act of directors is in violation of the provisions of the Act and if so, state the consequences that shall follow for the above violative act.

[ICAI Module, RTP Nov 21, MTP Nov 21, Dec 21]

Answer:
According to section 124 of the Companies Act, 2013, where a dividend has been declared by a company but has not been paid or claimed within 30 days from the date of the declaration, the company shall, within 7 days from the date of expiry of the said period of 30 days, transfer the total amount of dividend which remains unpaid or unclaimed to a special account to be opened by the company in any scheduled bank to be called the Unpaid Dividend Account.

Further, according to section 127 of the Companies Act, 2013, where a dividend has been declared by a company but has not been paid or the warrant in respect thereof has not been posted within 30 days from the date of declaration to any entitled shareholder, every director of the company shall, if he is knowingly a party to the default, be liable for punishment.

In the present case, the Board of Directors of Future Fashions Limited at its meeting recommended a dividend on its paid-up equity share capital which was later on approved by the shareholders at the Annual General Meeting.

Thereafter, the directors at another meeting of the Board decided by passing a board resolution for diverting the total dividend to be paid to the shareholders for purchase of certain short-term investments in the name of the company. As a result, dividend was paid to shareholders after 45 days.

1. Since, declared dividend has not been paid within 30 days from the date of the declaration to any shareholder entitled to the payment of dividend, the company shall, within 7 days from the date of expiry of the said period of 30 days, transfer the total amount of dividend which remains unpaid or unclaimed to a special account to be opened by the company in any scheduled bank to be called the Unpaid Dividend Account.

2. The Board of Directors of Future Fashions Limited has violated section 127 of the Companies Act, 2013 as it failed to pay dividend to shareholders within 30 days due to its decision to divert the total dividend to be paid to shareholders for purchase of certain short-term investments in the name of the company.

Consequences: The following are the consequences for violation of the above provisions:
a) Every director of the company shall, if he is knowingly a party to the default, be punishable with maximum imprisonment of two years and shall also be liable for a minimum fine rupees one thousand for every day during which such default continues.
b) The company shall also be liable to pay simple interest at the rate of 18% p.a. during the period for which such default continues.

Question 6:
RST Ltd. declared dividend at the rate of 20% for the financial year 2017-2018 in the AGM scheduled on 15th June 2018. As RST Ltd. is left with certain unpaid and unclaimed dividend, it transferred amount of unpaid and unclaimed dividend to UDA (unpaid dividend account). After remaining unpaid and unclaimed for more than 2 years in the UDA, some of the entitled shareholders made RST Ltd. liable for noncompliance of section 124, and claimed for their unpaid dividend amount. RST Ltd. denies saying that there were certain legal issues on the entitlement of the dividend amount to the respective shareholders.

[RTP May 2019]

Answer:
As per section 124 of the Companies Act, 2013, where a dividend has been declared by a company but has not been paid/claimed to/by shareholder within 30 days from the date of the declaration, the company shall, within 7 days from the date of expiry of the said period of 30 days, transfer the total amount of dividend which remains unpaid/unclaimed to the Unpaid Dividend Account.

The company shall, within a period of 90 days of making any transfer of an amount, prepare a statement containing the names, their last known addresses and the unpaid dividend to be paid to each person and

place it on the web-site of the company, if any, and also on any other web-site approved by the Central Government for this purpose, in such form, manner and other particulars as may be prescribed.
Accordingly, in the given situation, RST Ltd. failed to give statement of Unpaid/unclaimed dividend and so liable for the said noncompliance of section 124 of the Companies Act, 2013.

Any person claiming to be entitled to any money transferred under section 124(1) to the Unpaid Dividend Account of the company may apply to the company for payment of the money claimed.

Since RST Ltd. failed to comply with the requirements of this section as to the preparing of a statement of unpaid dividend, so such company shall be liable to a penalty of one lakh rupees and in case of continuing failure, with a further penalty of five hundred rupees for each day after the first during which such failure continues, subject to a maximum of ten lakh rupees and every officer of the company who is in default shall be liable to a penalty of twenty-five thousand rupees and in case of continuing failure, with a further penalty of one hundred rupees for each day after the first during which such failure continues, subject to a maximum of two lakh rupees.

Question 7:
PQ Ltd. declared and paid 10% dividend to all its shareholders except Mr. Kumar, holding 500 equity shares, who instructed the company to deposit the dividend amount directly in his bank account. The company accordingly remitted the dividend, but the bank returned the payment on the ground that the account number as given by Mr. Kumar doesn't tally with the records of the bank. The company, however, did not inform Mr. Kumar about this discrepancy. Comment on this issue with reference to the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013 regarding failure to distribute dividend.

[ICAI Module, MTP March 21, MTP Oct 19, May 19]

Answer:
Section 127 of the Companies Act, 2013 provides for punishment for failure to distribute dividend on time.

One of such situations is where a shareholder has given directions to the company regarding the payment of the dividend and those directions cannot be complied with and the same has not been communicated to the shareholder.

In the instant case, PQ Ltd. has failed to communicate to the shareholder Mr. Kumar about non-compliance of his direction regarding payment of dividend. Hence, the penal provisions under section 127 will be attracted.

Crux: Failure to distribute dividend on time attracts Section 127. However, sec 127 will not be attracted if directions issued by SH + cannot be compiled by co. + Communicated to SH. If not communicated, sec 127 will be attracted.

Question 8:
Star Computers Limited declared and paid dividend in time to all its equity holders for the financial year 2018-19, except in the following two cases:

(i) Mrs. Sheela Bhatt, holding 250 shares had mandated the company to directly deposit the dividend amount in her bank account. The company, accordingly remitted the dividend but the bank returned the payment on the ground that there was difference in surname of the payee in the bank records. The company, however, did not inform Mrs. Sheela Bhatt about this discrepancy.

(ii) Dividend amount of Rs. 50,000 was not paid to the successor of Late Mr. Mohan, in view of the court order restraining the payment due to family dispute about succession.

You are required to analyse these cases with reference to provisions of the Companies Act, 2013 regarding failure to distribute dividends.

[ICAI Module, MTP Nov 19]

Answer:
i. Sec 127 of the Companies Act, 2013 provides for punishment for failure to distribute dividend on time.

One of such situations is where a shareholder has given directions to the company regarding the payment of the dividend and those directions could not be complied with but the non-compliance was not communicated to him.

In the given situation, the company has failed to communicate to the shareholder Mrs. Sheela Bhatt about non-compliance of her direction regarding payment of dividend. Hence, the penal provisions under section 127 will be applicable.

ii. Section 127, inter-alia, provides that no offence shall be deemed to have been committed where the dividend could not be paid by reason of operation of law.

In the present case, the dividend could not be paid because it was not allowed to be paid by the court until the matter was resolved about succession. Hence, there will not be any liability on the company and its directors, etc.

Question 9:

The Annual General Meeting of ABC Bakers Limited held on 30th May 2019, declared a dividend at the rate of 30% payable on its paid-up equity share capital as recommended by Board of Directors. However, the Company was unable to post the dividend warrant to Mr. Ranjan, an equity shareholder, up to 25th July 2019. Mr. Ranjan filed a suit against the Company for the payment of dividend along with interest at the rate of 20 percent per annum for the period of default. Decide in the light of provisions of the Companies Act, 2013, whether Mr. Ranjan would succeed? Also, state the directors' liability in this regard under the Act.

[ICAI Module, MTP May 19, MTP Oct 19, Nov 20, RTP Nov'22, MTP 1 May'23]

Answer:

Section 127 of the Companies Act, 2013 lays down the penalty for non-payment of dividend within the prescribed time period of 30 days.

According to this section where a dividend has been declared by a company but has not been paid or the warrant in respect thereof has not been posted within 30 days from the date of declaration of dividend to any shareholder entitled to the payment of dividend:

(a) every director of the company shall, if he is knowingly a party to the default, be punishable with imprisonment maximum up to two years and with minimum fine of rupees one thousand for every day during which such default continues; and

(b) the company shall be liable to pay simple interest at the rate of 18% per annum during the period for which such default continues.

Therefore, in the given case Mr. Ranjan will not succeed if he claims interest at 20% interest as the limit under section 127 is 18% per annum.

Crux: If dividend is declared and not paid in 30 days then the company shall pay interest @18% p.a and every director shall be punishable with jail of 2 yrs and fine of 1k/day.

Question 10:

Alpha Herbals, a Section 8 company is planning to declare dividend in the Annual General Meeting for the Financial Year ended 31-03-2019. Mr. Chopra is holding 800 equity shares as on date. State whether the act of the company is according to the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013.

[ICAI Module, RTP May 21, MTP Oct 20,Nov 20, May 19, May 18]

Answer:

According to Sec 8(1) of the Companies Act, 2013, the companies licenced under Sec 8 of the Act (Formation of companies with Charitable Objects, etc.) are prohibited from paying any dividend to their members.

Their profits are intended to be applied only in promoting the objects for which they are formed.

Hence, in the instant case, the proposed act of Alpha Herbals, a company licenced under Section 8 of the Companies Act, 2013, which is planning to declare dividend, is not according to the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013.

CRUX: Section 8 companies cannot declare dividends.

Question 11:

The Director of Happy Limited proposed dividend at 12% on equity shares for the financial year 2016-17. The same was approved in the annual general meeting of the company held on 20th September, 2017. The Directors declared the approved dividends.

Analysing the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013, give your opinion on the following matters:

i. Mr. A, holding equity shares of face value of Rs. 10 lakhs has not paid an amount of 1 lakh towards call money on shares. Can the same be adjusted against the dividend amount payable to him?

ii. Ms. N was the holder of 1,000 equity shares on 31st March, 2017, but she has transferred the shares to Mr. R, whose name has been registered on 20th May, 2017. Who will be entitled to the above dividend?

[RTP May 2018, MTP Oct 21, MTP Nov 18, May 19]

Answer

i. The given problem is based on the proviso provided in the section 127 (d) of the Companies Act, 2013.

As per the law where the dividend is declared by a company and there remains calls in arrears and any other sum due from a member, in such case no offence shall be deemed to have been committed where the dividend has been lawfully adjusted by the company against any sum due to it from the shareholder

As per the facts given in the question, Mr. A is holding equity shares of face value of 10 Lakhs and has not paid an amount of 1 lakh towards call money on shares.

Referring to the above provision, Mr. A is eligible to get Rs. 1.20 lakh towards dividend, out of which an amount of 1 lakh can be adjusted towards call money due on his shares. Rs. 20,000 can be paid to him in cash or by cheque or in any electronic mode.

According to the above mentioned provision, company can adjust sum of Rs. 1 lakh due towards call money on shares against the dividend amount payable to Mr. A.

ii. According to section 123(5), dividend shall be payable only to the registered shareholder of the share or to his order or to his banker.

Facts in the given case state that Ms. N, the holder of equity shares transferred the shares to Mr. R whose name has been registered on 20th May 2017.

Since, he became the registered shareholder before the declaration of the dividend in the Annual general meeting of the company held on 20th September 2017, so, Mr. Raj will be entitled to the dividend.

Question 12:

Sun Light Limited was incorporated on 22nd January 2019 with the objects of providing software services. The Company adopted its first financial year as from 22nd January 2019 to 31st March 2020. The financial statement for the said period, after providing for depreciation in accordance with Schedule II of the Companies Act, 2013 revealed net profit. The Board of Directors declared 20% interim dividend at their meeting held on 7th July 2020, before holding its first Annual General Meeting. In the light of the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013 and Rules made thereunder:

(i) Whether the Company has complied due diligence in declaring interim dividend?

[Nov 2020]

Answer:

According to section 123(3) of the Companies Act, 2013, the Board of Directors of a company may declare interim dividend during any financial year or at any time during the period from closure of financial year till holding of the annual general meeting out of the surplus in the profit and loss account or out of profits of the financial year for which such interim dividend is sought to be declared or out of profits generated in the financial year till the quarter preceding the date of declaration of the interim dividend.

In the instant case, Sun Light Limited has complied due diligence in declaring interim dividend as the Interim Dividend was declared by Board of Directors at their meeting held on 7th July, 2020 before holding its first Annual General Meeting.

Also, the financial statement revealed net profit so the interim dividend can be paid out of profits of the financial year ending 31st March, 2020.

CRUX: Interim dividend can be declared at any time during the year before close of the FY out of profits generated in the financial year till the quarter preceding the date of declaration of the interim dividend..

Question 13:

ASR Limited declared dividend at its Annual General Meeting held on 31-12-2020. The dividend warrant to Mr. A, a shareholder was posted on 22nd January, 2021. Due to postal delay Mr. A received the warrant on 5th February, 2021 and encashed it subsequently. Can Mr. A initiate action against the company for failure to distribute the dividend within 30 days of declaration under the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013?

[July 2021]

Answer:

Section 127 of the Companies Act, 2013, requires that the declared dividend must be paid to the entitled shareholders within the prescribed time limit of thirty days from the date of declaration of dividend.
In case dividend is paid by issuing dividend warrants, such warrants must be posted at the registered addresses within the prescribed time.

Once posted, it is immaterial whether the same are received within thirty days by the shareholders or not. In the given question, the dividend was declared on 31.12.2020 and the dividend warrant was posted within 30 days from date of declaration of dividend (posted on 22nd January, 2021).

It is immaterial if Mr. A has received it on 5th February 2021 (i.e., post 30 days from 31.12.2020). Hence, Mr. A cannot initiate action against the company for failure to distribute the dividend within 30 days of declaration.

Question 14:

Mr. R, holder of 1000 equity shares of Rs. 10 each of AB Ltd. approached the Company in the last week of September, 2019 with a claim for the payment of dividend of Rs. 2000 declared @ 20% by the Company at its Annual General Meeting held on 31.08.2011 with respect to the financial year 2010-11. The Company refused to accept the request of R and informed him that his shares on which dividend has not been claimed till date, have also been transferred to the Investor Education And Protection Fund. Examine, in the light of the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013, the validity of the decision of the Company and suggest the remedy, if available, to him for obtaining the unclaimed amount of dividend and re-transfer of corresponding shares in his name.

[Jan 2021, MTP 2 May'23]

Answer:

According to section 124 of the Companies Act, 2013:

(1) **Unpaid or Unclaimed Dividend to be transferred to the Unpaid Dividend Account** - Where a dividend has been declared by a company but has not been paid or claimed within thirty (30) days from the date of declaration, the company shall, within seven (7) days from the expiry of the said period of 30 days, transfer the total amount of unpaid or unclaimed dividend to a special account called the Unpaid Dividend Account (UDA). The UDA shall be opened by the company in any scheduled bank.

(2) **Transfer of Unclaimed Amount to Investor Education and Protection Fund (IEPF)** - Any money transferred to the Unpaid Dividend Account which remains unpaid or unclaimed for a period of seven (7) years from the date of such transfer shall be transferred by the company along with interest accrued thereon to the Investor Education and Protection Fund.

(3) **Transfer of Shares to IEPF**- All shares in respect of which dividend has not been paid or claimed for 7 consecutive years or more shall be transferred by the company in the name of Investor Education and Protection Fund along with a statement containing the prescribed details.

(4) **Right of Owner of 'transferred shares' to Reclaim** - Any claimant of shares so transferred to IEPF shall be entitled to reclaim the 'transferred shares' from Investor Education and Protection Fund in accordance with the prescribed procedure and on submission of prescribed documents.

As per the provisions of section 125(3) of the Companies Act, 2013, read with rule 7 of Investor Education and Protection Fund Authority (Accounting, Audit, Transfer and Refund) Rules, 2016, any person, whose unclaimed dividends have been transferred to the Fund, may apply for refund, to the Authority, by submitting an online application.

In the given question, Mr. R did not claim the payment of dividend on his shares for a period of more than 7 years (i.e., expiry of 30 days from 31.08.2011 to last week of September 2019).

As a result, his unclaimed dividend (Rs. 2,000) along with such shares (1,000 equity shares) must have been transferred to Investor Education and Protection Fund Account.

Therefore, the company is justified in refusing to accept the request of Mr. R for the payment of dividend of Rs. 2,000 (declared in Annual General Meeting on 31.8.2011).

In terms of the above stated provisions, Mr. R should be advised as under:
(i) If Mr. R wants to reclaim the transferred shares, he should apply to IEPF authorities along with the necessary documents in accordance with the prescribed procedure.
(ii) He is also entitled to get refund of the dividend amount, which was transferred to the above fund; in accordance with the prescribed rules.

Question 15:
AB Limited is a public company having its registered office in Coimbatore. The company has incurred a net loss of Rs. 20 lakhs in the Financial Year (FY) 2019-20. The Board of Directors (BOD) wants to declare dividend for the FY 2019-20. The balances of the company as per the latest audited financial statements are as follows:
1. Equity Share Capital (Rs. 10 each) - 100 lakhs
2. General Reserve - 150 lakhs
3. Debenture redemption Reserve - 50 lakhs
The company has not declared any dividend in the preceding three financial years. Decide whether AB Limited is allowed to declare dividend or not for the FY 2019-20 by explaining the relevant provisions of the Companies Act in this regard. If allowed to declare dividend then state the maximum amount of dividend that can be paid by AB Limited as per the Section 123 of Companies Act 2013.

[Nov 20]

Answer:
In the given case, AB Limited has not made adequate profits during the current year ending on 31st March, 2020, but it still wants to declare dividend. Therefore, Rule 3 of the Companies (Declaration and Payment of Dividend) Rules, 2014 will be applied.

According to the said rule, the required conditions are:
Condition I: The rate of dividend declared shall not exceed the average of the rates at which dividend was declared by the company in the three years immediately preceding that year.

Since the company has not declared any dividend in the preceding three financial years, hence condition I is not applicable in this case.

Condition II: The total amount to be drawn from such accumulated profits shall not exceed 10% of its paid-up share capital and free reserves as appearing in the latest audited financial statement.

Paid-up capital + Free reserves = Rs. (100+150) Lakhs (General reserves are free reserves) = Rs. 250 Lakhs
10% thereof = Rs. 25 Lakhs

Condition III: The amount so drawn shall first be utilized to set off the losses incurred in the financial year in which dividend is declared before any dividend in respect of equity shares is declared.

The amount drawn as stated above = Rs. 25 Lakhs Less: loss for the financial year 2019-2020 = Rs. 20 Lakhs

Amount available = Rs. 5 Lakhs. Hence, the quantum of dividend is further restricted to Rs. 5 lakhs.

Condition IV: The balance of reserves after such withdrawal shall not fall below 15% of its paid up share capital as appearing in the latest audited financial statement.

Accumulated Reserves Rs. 150 Lakhs
Proposed withdrawal declaration of dividend Rs. 5 Lakhs
Balance of Reserves Rs. 145 Lakhs.
This is more than 15% of paid-up capital (i.e. 15% of Rs. 100 Lakhs) i.e. Rs. 15 lakhs.
Thus, the company can declare a dividend of Rs. 5 lakhs.

Hence, by following above provisions, AB Limited is allowed to declare dividend for the FY 2019-2020 and the maximum amount of dividend that can be paid is Rs. 5 Lakhs

Author's Note:
In condition IV, note that - the proposed withdrawal declaration of dividend amount is considered as Rs. 5 lakhs and not Rs. 25 lakhs. (i.e., consider the amount after set off of current losses)

Question 16:
A Limited declared and paid 10% dividend to all its shareholders except Mr. B, holding 500 equity shares, who instructed the company to deposit the dividend amount directly in his bank account. The company accordingly remitted the dividend, but the bank returned the payment on the ground that the account number as given by Mr. B doesn't tally with the records of the bank. The company, however, did not inform Mr. B about this discrepancy. Comment on this issue with reference to the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013 regarding failure to distribute dividend.

[MTP Nov 22]

Answer
Section 127 of the Companies Act, 2013 provides for punishment for failure to distribute dividend on time. One of such situations is where a shareholder has given directions to the company regarding the payment of the dividend and those directions cannot be complied with and the same has not been communicated to the shareholder.

In the instant case, A Ltd. has failed to communicate to the shareholder Mr. B about the discrepancy (as per bank, account number as given by Mr. B doesn't tally with the records of the bank) which led to non-compliance of his direction regarding payment of dividend. Hence, the penal provisions under section 127 will be attracted.

Question 17

A company has accumulated Free Reserves of ₹75 lakhs during last five years. It has not declared any dividend during these years. Now, the company proposes to appropriate a part of this amount for making payment of dividend for current year in which it has earned a profit of ₹ 12 lakhs. The Board proposes a payment of dividend of ₹30 lakhs i.e. 30% of the paid up capital. Examine, as per the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013, whether, the proposal of the company is valid?

[Nov 22]

Answer

In the given question, the company is intending to declare dividend out of current year profits and past year's profits. As per provisions of Section 123 of the Companies Act, 2013, where in any year, there are no adequate profits for declaring dividend, the company may declare dividend out of the profits of any previous year transferred by it to the free reserves only in accordance with the procedure laid down in Rule 3 of the Companies (Declaration and Payment of Dividend) Rules, 2014.

Conditions of Rule 3:

- Condition 1: The rate of dividend declared shall not exceed the average of the rates at which dividend was declared by the company in the immediately preceding three years.
- Condition 2: The total amount to be drawn from such accumulated profits shall not exceed 10% of its paid-up share capital and free reserves as appearing in the latest audited financial statement.
- Condition 3: The balance of reserves after such withdrawal shall not fall below 15% of its paid up share capital as appearing in the latest audited financial statement.

Calculations For Each Condition

- Condition 1: This condition shall not apply if the company has not declared any dividend in each of the three preceding financial year. Thus, condition 1 shall not be applicable on the company in question as it has not declared dividend in last 5 years.

- Condition 2: As per the facts, the Board proposes a payment of dividend of ₹ 30 lakhs i.e., 30% on the paid up capital.
  So, the Paid up Share Capital of the company = Paid-up Capital + Free Reserves
  = 100+ 75 = ₹ 175 Lakh 10% thereof
  = ₹ 17.5 Lakh
  Hence the dividend to be declared is to be restricted to ₹ 17.5 Lakh.

- Condition 3:
  Here, Free Reserves = ₹ 75 Lakh
  Proposed withdrawal for declaration of dividend ₹ 17.5 Lakh
  Balance of Reserves = ₹75 Lakh- 17.5 Lakh = ₹ 57.5 Lakh
  This (balance of reserve) is more than 15% of paid-up capital (i.e 15% of ₹ 100 Lakh) i.e. ₹ 15 Lakh.
  Thus, the company can declare a dividend of ₹ 17.5 lakh i.e. at a rate of 17.5% on its paid-up capital of ₹ 100 lakh.

  Hence, the proposal of company for payment of dividend of ₹ 30 lakh i.e., 30% on the paid up capital in the current year in which it has earned a profit of ₹ 12 lakh, is invalid.

Chapter 9 – Accounts of Companies

Question 1

(a) Ravi Limited maintained its books of accounts under Single Entry System of Accounting. Is it permitted under the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013?

(b) State the person responsible for complying with the provisions regarding maintenance of Books of Accounts of a Company.

(c) Whether a Company can keep books of Accounts in electronic mode accessible only outside India.

[MTP March 21, Oct. 20, Nov 19, MTP Oct 20, RTP Nov'22]

OR

Green Limited is a company dealing in trading of spices. It has maintained its books of accounts under Single Entry System of Accounting. The company has recently hired a new account. The new accountant, Mr. Dubey, is doubtful that the accounts can be maintained under Single Entry System. Advise the company whether it is allowed to do so?

[MTP March 21, MTP March 2022]

Answer

(i) According to Section 128(1) of the Companies Act, 2013, every company shall prepare "books of account" and other relevant books and papers and financial statement for <u>every financial year</u>.
These books of accounts should give a <u>true and fair view</u> of the state of the affairs of the company, including that of its branch office(s).

These books of accounts must be kept on <u>accrual basis</u> and according to the <u>double entry system</u> of accounting.

Hence, maintenance of books of account under Singly Entry System of Accounting by Ravi Limited is <u>not permitted.</u>

(ii) <u>Persons responsible to maintain books</u>
As per Section 128 (6) of the Companies Act, 2013, the person responsible to take all reasonable steps to secure compliance by the company with the requirement of maintenance of books of accounts etc. shall be:
(a) Managing Director,
(b) Whole-Time Director, in charge of finance
(c) Chief Financial Officer
(d) Any other person of a company charged by the Board with duty of complying with provisions of sec 128.

(iii) A Company have has the option of keeping such books of account or other relevant papers in electronic mode as per Rule 3 of the Companies (Accounts) Rules, 2014. According to such Rule,
(a) such books of accounts or other relevant books or papers maintained in electronic mode shall remain <u>accessible in India</u> so as to be usable for subsequent reference.
(b) There shall be a <u>proper system for storage, retrieval</u>, display or printout of the electronic records as the Audit Committee, if any, or the Board may deem appropriate and such records shall not be disposed of or rendered unusable, unless permitted by law.
(c) The <u>back-up</u> of the books of account and other books and papers of the company maintained in electronic mode, including at a place outside India, if any, shall be <u>kept in servers physically located in India</u> on a daily basis.

Hence, a company cannot keep books of Account in electronic mode accessible only outside India.

Question 1A

Adil is a student of CA Intermediate. His friend (who is also in CA Intermediate) has approached him to explain to him the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013, on the following:

(i) Inspection of books of account and other books and papers of the company.

(ii) Period of preservation of books of accounts

[MTP April 2022]

Answer

(i) Inspection by Directors

As per Section 128(3) of the Companies Act, 2013, any director can inspect the books of account and other books and papers of the company during business hours. Such inspection may be done by any type of director - nominee, independent, promoter or whole time.

The proviso to sub-section 3 provides that a person can inspect the books of account of the subsidiary, only on authorisation by way of the resolution of Board of Directors.

Assistance by officers and Employees

As per Section 128(4), where an inspection is made under sub-section (3), the officers and other employees of the company shall give to the person making such inspection all assistance in connection with the inspection which the company may reasonably be expected to give.

(ii) Period for preservation of books

According to section 128(5) of the Companies Act, 2013, the books of accounts, together with vouchers relevant to any entry in such books, are required to be preserved in good order by the company for a period of not less than eight years immediately preceding the relevant financial year.

In case of a company incorporated less than eight years before the financial year, the books of accounts for the entire period preceding the financial year together with the vouchers shall be so preserved.

As per proviso to sub-section 5, where an investigation has been ordered in respect of a company under Chapter XIV of the Act related to inspection, inquiry or investigation, the Central Government may direct that the books of account may be kept for such period longer than 8 years, as it may deem fit and give directions to that effect.

Question 2:

The Income Tax Authorities in the current financial year 2019-20 observed, during the assessment proceedings, a need to re-open the accounts of Chetan Ltd. for the financial year 2008-09 and, therefore, filed an application before the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) to issue the order to Chetan Ltd. for re-opening of its accounts and recasting the financial statements for the financial year 2008-09. Examine the validity of the application filed by the Income Tax Authorities to NCLT.

[May 19, MTP Oct 20, MTP 2 May'23]

OR

The Tribunal has ordered the re-opening of the accounts of MIT Ltd. The directors of the company has approached you to explain to them the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013 in respect of the re- opening of accounts on court's or Tribunal's order.

[MTP Oct 2018]

Answer

As per section 130 of the Companies Act, 2013, a company shall not re-open its books of account and not recast its financial statements, unless an application in this regard is made by the Central Government, the Income-tax authorities, the Securities and Exchange Board, any other statutory body or authority or any person concerned and an order is made by a court of competent jurisdiction or the Tribunal to the effect that—

(i) the relevant earlier accounts were prepared in a fraudulent manner; or

(ii) the affairs of the company were mismanaged during the relevant period, casting a doubt on the reliability of financial statements.

However, no order shall be made in respect of re-opening of books of account relating to a period earlier than eight financial years immediately preceding the current financial year.
In the given instance, an application was filed for re-opening and re-casting of the financial statements of Chetan Ltd. for the financial year 2008-2009.

Though application filed by the Income Tax Authorities to NCLT is valid, its recommendation for reopening and recasting of financial statements for the period earlier than eight financial years immediately preceding the current financial year i.e. 2019-2020, is invalid.

Question 3

The directors of Element Ltd. want to voluntary revise the Financial statements of the company. They have approached you to state to them the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013 regarding voluntary revision of financial statements.

[MTP March 18]

Answer

(1) Preparation of revised financial statement or revised report on the approval of Tribunal: If it appears to the directors of a company that—

(a) the financial statement of the company; or

(b) the report of the Board,

do not comply with the provisions of section 129 or section 134, they may prepare revised financial statement or a revised report in respect of any of the three preceding financial years after obtaining approval of the Tribunal on an application made by the company in such form and manner as may be prescribed and a copy of the order passed by the Tribunal shall be filed with the Registrar

Tribunal to serve the notice: Provided that the Tribunal shall give notice to the Central Government and the Income tax authorities and shall take into consideration the representations, if any, made by that Government or the authorities before passing any order under this section:

Number of times of revision and recast: Provided further that such revised financial statement or report shall not be prepared or filed more than once in a financial year.

Reason for revision to be disclosed: Provided also that the detailed reasons for revision of such financial statement or report shall also be disclosed in Board's report in the relevant financial year in which such revision is being made.

(2) **Limits of revisions**: Where copies of the previous financial statement or report have been sent out to members or delivered to the Registrar or laid before the company in general meeting, the revisions must be confined to—

(a) the correction in respect of which the previous financial statement or report do not comply with the provisions of section 129 or section 134; and

(b) the making of any necessary consequential alternation.

(3) Framing of rules by the Central Government in relation to revised financial statement or director's report: The Central Government may make rules as to the application of the provisions of this Act in relation to revised financial statement or a revised director's report and such rules may, in particular—

(a) make different provisions according to which the previous financial statement or report are replaced or are supplemented by a document indicating the corrections to be made;

(b) make provisions with respect to the functions of the company's auditor in relation to the revised financial statement or report;

(c) require the directors to take such steps as may be prescribed

Question 4

Explain the following in brief with reference to Companies Act 2013: National Financial Reporting Authority .

[Nov 20, Jan 21]

Answer

National Financial Reporting Authority (NFRA)

According to section 132 of the Companies Act, 2013, the Central Government may, by notification, constitute the National Financial Reporting Authority (NFRA) to provide for matters relating to accounting and auditing standards under this Act.

Notwithstanding anything contained in any other law for the time being in force, the NFRA shall—

(a) make recommendations to the Central Government on the formulation and laying down of accounting and auditing policies and standards for adoption by companies or class of companies or their auditors, as the case may be

(b) monitor and enforce the compliance with accounting standards and auditing standards in such manner as may be prescribed

(c) oversee the quality of service of the professions associated with ensuring compliance with such standards, and suggest measures required for improvement in quality of service and such other related matters as may be prescribed; and

(d) perform such other functions relating to clauses (a), (b) and (c) as may be prescribed.

Question 5

Altar Limited has on its Board, four Directors viz. W, X, Y and Z. In addition, the company has Mr. D as the Managing Director. The company also has a full time Company Secretary, Mr. Wise, on its rolls. The financial statements of the company for the year ended 31st March, 2017 were authenticated by two of the directors, Mr. X and Y under their signatures.

Referring to the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013:

(i) Examine the validity of the authentication of the Balance Sheet and Statement of Profit & Loss and the Board's Report.

(ii) What would be your answer in case the company is a One Person Company (OPC) and has only one Director, who has authenticated the Balance Sheet and Statement of Profit & Loss and the Board's Report?

[RTP May 2018, MTP May 2020]

Answer

In accordance with the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013, as contained under section 134 (1), the financial statements, including consolidated financial statement, if any, shall be approved by the Board of Directors before they are signed on behalf of the Board by at least:

1) the chairperson of the company where he is authorised by the Board or by two Directors out of which one shall be managing director, if any, and

2) the Chief Executive Officer, the Chief Financial Officer and the company secretary of the company, wherever they are appointed, or

3) in the case of One Person Company, only by one director, for submission to the auditor for his report thereon

The Board's report and annexures thereto shall be signed by its Chairperson of the company, if he is authorized by the Board and where he is not so authorized, shall be signed by at least two directors one of whom shall be a managing director.

(i) In the given case, the Balance Sheet and Profit & Loss Account have been signed by Mr. X and Mr. Y, the directors. In view of the provisions of Section 134 (1), the Managing Director Mr. D should be one of the two signatories. Since, the company has also employed a full time Secretary, he should also sign the Balance Sheet and Profit & Loss Account. Therefore, authentication done by two directors is not valid.

(ii) In case of OPC, the financial statements should be signed by one director and hence, the authentication is in order.

Question 6

The Companies Act, 2013 has prescribed an additional duty on the Board of Directors to include in the Board's Report a 'Directors' Responsibility Statement'. Explain briefly the details to be furnished in the said statement.

[MTP Aug 2018, May 18, MTP Nov 22]

Answer

Section 134(3)(c) of the Companies Act, 2013 provides that there shall be attached to statements laid before a company in general meeting, a report by its Board of Directors, which shall include a number of statements as prescribed in the sub section including Directors' Responsibility Statement.

Further section 134(5) states that the Directors Responsibility Statement shall state that:

i. In the preparation of the annual accounts, the applicable accounting standards had been followed along with proper explanation relating to material departures;
ii. the directors had selected such accounting policies and applied them consistently and made judgments and estimates that are reasonable and prudent so as to give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company at the end of the financial year and of the profit or loss of the company for that period;
iii. the directors had taken proper and sufficient care for the maintenance of adequate accounting records in accordance with the provisions of this Act for safeguarding the assets of the company and for preventing and detecting fraud and other irregularities;
iv. that the directors had prepared the annual accounts on a going concern basis; and
v. the directors, in the case of a listed company, had laid down internal financial controls to be followed by the company and that such internal financial controls are adequate and were operating effectively; and
vi. the directors had devised proper systems to ensure compliance with the provisions of all applicable laws and that such systems were adequate and operating effectively .

Question 7

Yellow limited has prepared its financial statements for the year 2018-19. Mr. Prateek, the Managing director the company is declining to sign these financial statements on the grounds that it is only the duty of the Board of the directors to sign the financial statements as approved by the Board and he is not liable to sign the same. Now, Mr. Prateek has approached you advise him regarding his responsibility for signing the financial statement. Advise Mr. Prateek regarding his responsibility for signing the financial statements as per the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013.

Mr. Prateek has also provided to you the following more information:

1. The Board as a policy does not authorise the chairperson of the company to sign the financial statements
2. The company has appointed Ms. Sunanina as its Company Secretary

[RTP Nov 19]

Answer

According to section 134(1) of the Companies Act, 2013, the financial statement, including consolidated financial statement, if any, shall be approved by the Board of Directors before they are signed on behalf of the Board by the chairperson of the company where he is authorised by the Board or by two directors out of which one shall be managing director, if any, and the Chief Executive Officer, the Chief Financial Officer and the company secretary of the company, wherever they are appointed, or in the case of One Person Company, only by one director, for submission to the auditor for his report thereon.

As per the facts of the question, the Board has not authorised the chairperson of the company to sign the financial statements. Hence, the financial statement shall be signed by two directors out of which one shall be managing director [i.e. Mr. Prateek].

Author's Note –
In the conclusion, you can also mention that in addition to these 2 directors, the CEO, CFO and CS, if any, in the company will also sign such financial statements.

Question 8

The Board of Directors of Vishwakarma Electronics Limited consists of Mr. Ghanshyam (Director), Mr. Hyder (Director) and Mr. Indersen (Managing Director). The company has also employed a full time Secretary.

The Profit and Loss Account and Balance Sheet of the company were signed by Mr. Ghanshyam and Mr. Hyder. Examine whether the authentication of financial statements of the company was in accordance with the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013?

[RTP May 2020, Jan 21]

Answer

According to section 134(1) of the Companies Act, 2013, the financial statement, including consolidated financial statement, if any, shall be approved by the Board of Directors before they are signed on behalf of the Board by the chairperson of the company where he is authorised by the Board or by two directors out of which one shall be managing director, if any, and the Chief Executive Officer, the Chief Financial Officer and the company secretary of the company, wherever they are appointed, or in the case of One Person Company, only by one director, for submission to the auditor for his report thereon.

In the instant case, the Balance Sheet and Profit and Loss Account have been signed by Mr. Ghanshyam and Mr. Hyder, the directors. In view of Section 134(1) of the Companies Act, 2013, Mr. Indersen, the Managing Director should be one of the two signing directors.

Since, the company has also employed a full- time Secretary, he should also sign the Balance Sheet and Profit and Loss Account.

Hence, the financial statement is not properly authenticated as per the provision of this Act

Question 9

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Question 10

Tirupati Limited, a listed company has made the following profits, the profits reflect eligible profits under the relevant section of the Companies Act, 2013

Financial year	Amount (Rs. In crores)
2012-13	20
2013-14	40
2014-15	30
2015-16	70
2016-17	50

(i) Calculate the amount that the company has to spend towards CSR for the financial year 2017-18.

(ii) State the composition of the CSR committee unlisted company and a private company.

[RTP May 2018]

Answer

Section 135 read with Companies (Corporate Social Responsibility Policy) Rules, 2014 of the Companies Act, 2013 deals with the provisions related to the Corporate Social Responsibility.

As per the given facts, following are the answers in the given situations:

(i) **Amount that Company has to spend towards CSR:** According to section 135 of the Companies Act, 2013, the Board of every company shall ensure that the company spends, in every financial year, at least two per cent of the average net profits of the company made during the three immediately preceding financial years, in pursuance of its CSR Policy. Accordingly, net profits of Tirupati Ltd. for three immediately preceding financial years is 150 crores (30+70+50) and 2% of the average net profits of the company made during these three immediately preceding financial years will constitute 1 crore, can be spent towards CSR in financial year 2017-2018.

(ii) **Composition of CSR Committee:** The CSR Committee shall be consisting of 3 or more directors, out of which at least one director shall be an independent director.

(a) an unlisted public company or a private company covered under section 135(1) which is not required to appoint an independent director, shall have its CSR Committee without such director;

(b) a private company having only two directors on its Board shall constitute its CSR Committee with two such directors;

Question 11

Rera Ltd., a company incorporated under the Companies Act, 2013 having turnover of Rs. 100 crore, net profit Rs. 3 crore, accumulated loss of Rs. 50 crore and securities premium Rs. 300 crore as per the audited accounts of the company for the Financial Year 2016 -17.

The CFO of the company informed the directors of the company that the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) committee is required to be constituted as per the Companies Act, 2013. The directors seek your advice as a professional regarding the criteria required to constitute CSR committee and whether it is applicable to Rera Ltd. or not.

[May 18]

Answer

According to Section 135 of the Companies Act, 2013 read with the Companies (Corporate Social Responsibility) Rules, 2014, every company including its holding or subsidiary, and a foreign company defined under section 2(42) of the Companies Act, 2013, having its branch office or project office in India, having -

(1) net worth of rupees 500 crore or more, or
(2) turnover of rupees 1000 crore or more or
(3) a net profit of rupees 5 crore or more

during any financial year shall constitute a Corporate Social Responsibility Committee of the Board.

"Net worth" [Section 2(57)] means the aggregate value of the paid-up share capital and all reserves created out of the profits and securities premium account, after deducting the aggregate value of the accumulated losses, deferred expenditure and miscellaneous expenditure not written off, as per the audited balance sheet, but does not include reserves created out of revaluation of assets, write-back of depreciation and amalgamation.

In the present case,
- turnover of Rera Ltd. is Rs. 100 crore,
- net profit of Rs. 3 crore and
- net worth of Rs. 253 crore (Net profit + securities premium - accumulated loss= 3 + 300 – 50 = 253 crore).

Hence, RERA Ltd. is not fulfilling any criteria prescribed for constitution of CSR committee. So, it is not obligatory for Rera Ltd. to constitute CSR Committee.

Note 1: - It can also by presumed that net profit of the current year has already been considered while calculating accumulated losses.

Note 2: Since paid-up share capital value is not given in the question, it has been presumed that accumulated losses as stated in the question is given after taking into consideration the paid-up share capital, i.e. net of accumulated losses less paid-up share capital

Question 12

Mary Ltd is a listed company having turnover of Rs. 1200 crores during the financial year 2016-17. The CSR committee of the Board formulated and recommended a CSR project which was approved by the Board. The company finalised the project under its CSR initiatives which require funds @ 5 % of average net profit of the company for last three financial years. Will such excess expense be counted in subsequent financial years as a part of CSR expenditure? Advise the company.

[RTP Nov 2018]

Answer

In terms of Section 135(5) of the Companies Act, 2013, the Board of every company to which section 135 is applicable, shall ensure that the company spends, in every Financial year at least 2 per cent of average net profits of the company made during the 3 immediately preceding financial years, in pursuance of its CSR policy.

As per Rule 4: CSR Expenditure:

Where a company spends an amount in excess of requirement provided under sub-section (5) of section 135 , such excess amount may be set off against the requirement to spend under sub-section (5) of section 135 up to immediate succeeding three financial years subject to the conditions that -

(i) the excess amount available for set off shall not include the surplus arising out of the CSR activities, if any, in pursuance of sub-rule (2) of this rule.
(ii) the Board of the company shall pass a resolution to that effect..

Hence, such excess expense can be set off in immediately succeeding3 financial years subject to above conditions

Question 13

Explain the following in brief with reference to Companies Act 2013: Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Committee

[Nov 2020]

Answer

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Committee: According to section 135(1) of the Companies Act, 2013, every company having:

1) net worth of rupees 500 crore or more, or
2) turnover of rupees 1000 crore or more or
3) a net profit of rupees 5 crore or more

during the immediately preceding financial year shall constitute a Corporate Social Responsibility Committee of the Board consisting of three or more directors, out of which at least one director shall be an independent director.

Provided that where a company is not required to appoint an independent director under sub-section (4) of section 149, it shall have in its Corporate Social Responsibility Committee two or more directors.
Duties of CSR Committee [Section 135(3)]:

The CSR Committee shall-

(a) formulate and recommend to the Board, a CSR Policy which shall indicate the activities to be undertaken by the company in areas or subject, specified in Schedule VII;
(b) recommend the amount of expenditure to be incurred on the activities referred to in clause (a); and
(c) monitor the CSR Policy of the company from time to time.

Question 14

The balances extracted from the financial statement of ABC Limited are as below:

Sr. No.	Particulars	Balances as on 31-03-2020 as per Audited Financial Statement (Rs. in crore)	Balances as on 30-09-2020 (Provisional Rs. in crore)
1.	Net Worth	100	100
2.	Turnover	500	1000
3.	Net Profit	1	5

Explaining the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013, you are requested to examine whether ABC Limited is required to constitute 'Corporate Social Responsibility Committee' (CSR Committee) during the second half of the financial year 2020-21.

Answer

According to section 135(1) of the Companies Act, 2013, every company having net worth of rupees five hundred crore or more, or turnover of rupees one thousand crore or more or a net profit of rupees five crore or more during the immediately preceding financial year shall constitute a Corporate Social Responsibility Committee of Board consisting of three or more directors, out of which at least one director shall be an independent director.

In the given question, the company does not fulfil any of the given criteria (net worth/ turnover/ net profit) for the immediately preceding financial year (i.e., 1.4.2019 to 31.3.2020).

Hence, ABC Limited is not required to constitute Corporate Social Responsibility Committee for the financial year 2020-21.

Question 15

A Housing Finance Ltd. is a housing finance company having a paid up Share Capital of Rs. 11 crores and a turnover of Rs. 145 crores during the Financial Year 2017-18. Explain with reference to the relevant provisions and rules, whether it is necessary for A Housing Finance Ltd. to file its financial statements in XBRL mode

[Nov 18]

Answer

Filing of financial statements in XBRL Mode

As per Rule 3 of the Companies (Filing of Documents and forms in Extensible Business Reporting Language) Rules, 2015, the following class of companies shall file their financial statements and other documents under section 137 of the Act with the Registrar in e-form AOC-4 XBRL as per Annexure-I of this Rule:-

(i) companies listed with stock exchanges in India and their Indian subsidiaries
(ii) companies having paid up capital of five crore rupees or above
(iii) companies having turnover of one hundred crore rupees or above
(iv) all companies which were hitherto covered under the Companies (Filing of documents and Forms in Extensible Business Reporting Language) Rules, 2011.

Provided that the companies in Banking, insurance, and Non-Banking Financial companies are exempted from XBRL filing.

Hence, A housing Finance Ltd. being a housing finance company is exempted from filing its financial statement in XBRL mode under Rule 3 of the Companies *(Filing of Documents and forms in Extensible Business Reporting Language) Rules, 2015* .

Question 16

The Government of India is holding 51% of the paid-up equity share capital of Sun Ltd. The Audited financial statements of Sun Ltd. for the financial year 2017-18 were placed at its annual general meeting held on 31st August, 2018. However, pending the comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) on the said accounts the meeting was adjourned without adoption of the accounts. On receipt of CAG comments on the accounts, the adjourned annual general meeting was held on 15th October, 2018 whereat the accounts were adopted. Thereafter, Sun Ltd. filed its financial statements relevant to the financial year 2017-18 with the Registrar of Companies on 12th November, 2018. Examine, with reference to the applicable provisions of the Companies Act, 2013, whether Sun Ltd. has complied with the statutory requirement regarding filing of accounts with the Registrar?

[May 19, Nov 22]

Answer

According to first proviso to section 137(1) of the Companies Act, 2013, where the financial statements are not adopted at annual general meeting or adjourned annual general meeting, such unadopted financial statements along with the required documents shall be filed with the Registrar within thirty days of the date of annual general meeting and the Registrar shall take them in his records as provisional till the financial statements are filed with him after their adoption in the adjourned annual general meeting for that purpose.

According to second proviso to section 137(1) of the Companies Act, 2013, financial statements adopted in the adjourned AGM shall be filed with the Registrar within thirty days of the date of such adjourned AGM with such fees or such additional fees as may be prescribed.

In the instant case, the accounts of Sun Ltd. were adopted at the adjourned AGM held on 15th October, 2018 and filing of financial statements with Registrar was done on 12th November, 2018 i.e. within 30 days of the date of adjourned AGM.

Hence, Sun Ltd. has not complied with the statutory requirement regarding filing of unadopted accounts with the Registrar, but has certainly complied with the provisions by filing of adopted accounts within the due date with the Registrar.

Question 17

Natraj Limited is an unlisted Public company having paid up share capital of Rs. 80 crores during the preceding financial year 2016-17. The turnover of the company was Rs. 110 crores for the same period. Referring to the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013, discuss the answer to the following:

(i) Is it mandatory for the above company to appoint an internal auditor for the financial year 2017-18?

(ii) What are the qualifications of the Internal Auditor?

[MTP March 18]

OR

The Companies Act, 2013, prescribes certain classes of unlisted public companies to appoint internal auditor. Enumerate such unlisted public companies that are required to appoint internal auditor.

[MTP Nov 22]

Answer

(i) Class of companies required to appoint Internal Auditor: Section 138 of the Companies Act, 2013 and the Companies (Accounts) Rules, 2014 prescribes the class of companies required to appoint Internal Auditor.

According to it, following class of companies shall be required to appoint an internal auditor or a firm of internal auditors which may be either an individual or a partnership firm or a body corporate, namely:

1. Every listed company;
2. Every unlisted public company having –
   (a) Paid up share capital of 50 crore rupees or more during the preceding financial year; or
   (b) Turnover of 200 crore rupees or more during the preceding financial year; or
   (c) Outstanding loans or borrowings from banks or public financial institutions exceeding 100 crore rupees or more at any point of time during the preceding financial year; or
   (d) Outstanding deposits of 25 crore rupees or more at any point of time during the preceding financial year; and
3. Every private company having –
   (a) Turnover of 200 crore rupees or more during the preceding financial year; or
   (b) Outstanding loans or borrowings from banks or public financial institutions exceeding 100 crore rupees or more at any point of time during the preceding financial year.

As per the facts given in the question, Natraj Limited is an unlisted public company with the paid up share capital of Rs. 80 cores during the preceding financial year with the turnover of Rs. 110 crores. Since, Natraj Limited fulfills one of the criteria with paid up share capital of more than 50 crore rupees during the preceding financial year, it is mandatory for the Natraj Limited to appoint an internal auditor for the financial year 2017-18.

(ii) Qualifications of Internal Auditor

(a) Internal Auditor shall either be a chartered accountant or a cost accountant or such other professional as may be decided by the Board to conduct internal audit of the functions and activities of the company. Here, the term "Chartered Accountant" or "Cost Accountant" shall mean a "Chartered Accountant" or a "Cost Accountant", as the case may be, whether engaged in practice or not.

(b) The internal auditor may or may not be an employee of the company.

Question 18

Kim Private Limited was incorporated on 30th September 2016. It has a paid up share capital of Rs. 45 crore. The company had a turnover of Rs. 250 crore for the financial year 2019-20. The accounts manager of the company has intimated to the company that they are not required to appoint internal auditor for the financial year 2020 -21. The management of the company have approached you to advise them about the appointment of internal auditor. Advise them as per the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013

[RTP Nov 2021]

Answer

According to section 138 read along with Rules of the Companies Act, 2013, every private company having:

(a) turnover of 200 crore rupees or more during the preceding financial year; or

(b) outstanding loans or borrowings from banks or public financial institutions exceeding 100 crore rupees or more at any point of time during the preceding financial year.

shall be required to appoint an internal auditor which may be either an individual or a partnership firm or a body corporate.

In the given question, the company has a paid up capital of Rs. 45 crore and turnover of Rs. 250 crore for the financial year 2019-20.

Since, the company is fulfilling the criteria of turnover (i.e. more than Rs. 200 crore), hence, it is required to appoint an internal auditor for the financial year 2020 -21.

Question 19

X Ltd. is a listed company having a paid-up share capital of Rs. 25 crore as at 31st March, 2019 and turnover of Rs. 100 crore during the financial year 2018-19. The Company Secretary has advised the Board of Directors that X Ltd. is not required to appoint 'Internal Auditor' as the company's paid up share capital and turnover are less than the threshold limit prescribed under the Companies Act, 2013. Do you agree with the advice of the Company Secretary? Explain your view referring to the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013

[Jan 2021]

Answer

According to the provisions of Section 138 of the Companies Act, 2013, read with Rule 13 of the Companies (Accounts) Rules, 2014, the following class of companies shall be required to appoint an internal auditor which may be either an individual or a partnership firm or a body corporate, namely:

(1) every listed company;

(2) every unlisted public company having-

(A) paid up share capital of 50 crore rupees or more during the preceding financial year; or

(B) turnover of 200 crore rupees or more during the preceding financial year;

(C) outstanding loans or borrowings from banks or financial institutions exceeding 100 crore rupees or more at any point of time during the preceding financial year; or

(D) outstanding deposits of 25 crore rupees or more at any point of time during the preceding financial year.

Besides, some private companies are also required to appoint an internal auditor which may be either an individual or a partnership firm or a body corporate.

Thus, X limited (which is a listed company) is required to appoint an internal auditor, irrespective of its paid-up share capital or turnover (as the limit of paid- up share capital or turnover is applicable for unlisted public company).

Hence, the advice of the Company Secretary is not correct.

Question 20

Dhiman Limited, is a company incorporated in India. Dhiman Limited is a leading manufacturer of sports shoes. It has many subsidiaries, one of them being Best Shoes Limited which is based in Morocco. Dhiman Limited is in the process of finalization of the consolidated financial statements of the company for the year ended 31 March 2022. The accounts section of Dhiman Limited has requested the management of Best Shoes Limited to provide its standalone financial statements to Dhiman Limited. The subsidiary company prepares its financial statements in the local language of the country and the same is provided to the Indian parent company. Further, audit of financial statement is not required by the Best Shoes Limited under the Moroccan laws. Advise, how would Dhiman Limited deal with the consolidation of such financial statements.

[RTP Nov 22]

Answer

According to fourth proviso to section 137(1) of the Companies Act, 2013, a company shall, along with its financial statements to be filed with the Registrar, attach the accounts of its subsidiary or subsidiaries which have been incorporated outside India and which have not established their place of business in India.

Provided also that in the case of a subsidiary which has been incorporated outside India (herein referred to as "foreign subsidiary"), which is not required to get its financial statement audited under any law of the country of its incorporation and which does not get such financial statement audited, the requirements of the fourth proviso shall be met if the holding Indian company files such unaudited financial statement along with a declaration to this effect and where such financial statement is in a language other than English, along with a translated copy of the financial statement in English.

It has also been clarified vide General Circular no. 11/2015 dated 21 July 2015 that in case of foreign company which is not required to get its accounts audited as per the legal requirements prevalent in the country of its incorporation and which does not get such accounts audited, the holding or parent Indian company may place or file such unaudited accounts to comply with requirements of section 136(1) and 137(1) as applicable. These, however, would need to be translated in English, if the original accounts are not in English. Further, the format of accounts of foreign subsidiaries should be, as far as possible, in accordance with requirements under the Companies Act, 2013. In case this is not possible, a statement indicating the reasons for deviation may be placed/ filed along with such accounts.

Hence, Dhiman Limited. would have to get the standalone financial statements of Best Shoes Limited translated in English language and also get those aligned as per the its accounting policies for the purpose of consolidation.

Further Dhiman Limited would need to file such unaudited financial statement of Best Shoes Limited along with a declaration to this effect along with a translated copy of the financial statement in English.

Further the format of accounts of Moroccan subsidiary company should be, as far as possible, in accordance with requirements under the Companies Act, 2013. In case this is not possible, a statement indicating the reasons for deviation may be placed/ filed along with such accounts.

Question 21

XYZ Ltd. received a communication from Central Government for preparation of periodical financial results and complete audit or limited review of such periodical financial results. The Board of Directors have raised an objection on the ground that as it is an unlisted company, periodical financial results need not to be prepared. Examine, referring the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013, in this regard.

[May 2022, RTP May'23]

Answer

Periodical Financial Results [Section 129A of the Companies Act, 2013]

The Central Government may, require such class or classes of unlisted companies, as may be prescribed,—

(a) to prepare the financial results of the company on periodical basis and in prescribed form

(b) to obtain approval of the Board of Directors and complete audit or limited review of such periodical financial results in the prescribed manner; and

(c) file a copy with the Registrar within a period of thirty days of completion of the relevant period with such fees as may be prescribed.

Therefore, the objection of the Board of Directors on the ground that as XYZ Ltd. is an unlisted company, periodical financial results need not be prepared, is not correct. Section 129A clearly specifies that even unlisted company has to prepare Periodical Financial Results.

Question 22

SKIP Limited (the Company) was incorporated on 01.04.2019. The balances extracted from its audited financial statement are as given below:

Financial Year (FY)	Net Profit before tax	Net Profit after tax (Ignore Income Tax computation)
2019-20	₹ 5.00 crore	₹ 3.75 crore
2020-21	₹ 7.00 crore	₹ 5.25 crore

The Company proposes to allocate the minimum required amount for CSR Activities to be undertaken during FY 2021-22, if it is mandatory. You are requested to advice the Company in this regard and compute the minimum

amount to be allocated, if so required, taking into account the relevant provisions of the Companies Act, 2013.
[May 2022]

Answer

According to section 135(1) of the Companies Act, 2013, every company having net worth of rupees five hundred crore or more, or turnover of rupees one thousand crore or more or a net profit of rupees five crore or more during the immediately preceding financial year shall constitute a Corporate Social Responsibility Committee of the Board.

Further, according to section 135(5), the Board of every company referred to in sub- section (1), shall ensure that the company spends, in every financial year, at least two per cent. of the average net profits of the company made during the three immediately preceding financial years or where the company has not completed the period of three financial years since its incorporation, during such immediately preceding financial years, in pursuance of its Corporate Social Responsibility Policy.

Here, the "Net Profit" shall not include such sums as may be prescribed, and shall be calculated in accordance with the provisions of section 198.

In the instant case,

1. Net Profit before tax of SKIP Limited for the FY 2020-21 is ₹ 7 crore, hence, SKIP Limited is required to constitute a CSR committee during FY 2021-22 as the Net profit before tax for the FY exceeds ₹ 5 crore.
2. Minimum contribution towards CSR will be: 2% of average net profits since incorporation (SKIP Limited was incorporated on 1.04.2019.)
   Average Net Profit since incorporation: (₹ 5 crore + ₹ 7 crore)/ 2 = ₹ 6 crore
   Minimum contribution towards CSR will be: 2% of ₹ 6 crore = ₹ 0.12 crore or ₹ 12 Lacs

Question 23:

Explain the following as per the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013:

(i) Who shall sign Board's Report

(ii) Filing of financial statements with the Registrar when AGM is not held

[MTP-1 May 23]

Answer

(i) Signing of Board's Report [Section 134(6)]:
The Board's report and any annexures thereto under section 134(3) shall be signed by its chairperson of the company if he is authorised by the Board and where he is not so authorised, shall be signed by at least two directors, one of whom shall be a managing director, or by the director where there is one director.

(ii) Annual General meeting not held [Section 137(2)]:
Where the AGM of a company for any year has not been held, the financial statements along with the documents required to be attached, duly signed along with the statement of facts and reasons for not holding the AGM shall be filed with the Registrar within 30 days of the last date before which the AGM should have been held and in such manner, with such fees or additional fees as may be prescribed.

Question 24

Red Limited (the Company) was incorporated on 01.04.2020. The balances extracted from its audited financial statement are as given below:

Financial Year (FY)	Net Profit before tax	Net Profit after tax (Ignore Income Tax computation)
2020-21	₹ 5.00 crore	₹ 3.75 crore
2021-22	₹ 7.00 crore	₹ 5.25 crore

The Company proposes to allocate the minimum required amount for CSR Activities to be undertaken during FY 2022-23 if it is mandatory. You are requested to advice the Company in this regard and compute the minimum

amount to be allocated, if so required, taking into account the relevant provisions of the Companies Act, 2013.
[RTP May 23]

Answer

According to section 135(1) of the Companies Act, 2013, every company having net worth of rupees five hundred crore or more, or turnover of rupees one thousand crore or more or a net profit of rupees five crore or more during the immediately preceding financial year shall constitute a Corporate Social Responsibility Committee of the Board.

Further, according to section 135(5), the Board of every company referred to in sub-section (1), shall ensure that the company spends, in every financial year, at least two per cent. of the average net profits of the company made during the three immediately preceding financial years or where the company has not completed the period of three financial years since its incorporation, during such immediately preceding financial years, in pursuance of its Corporate Social Responsibility Policy.

Here, the "Net Profit" shall not include such sums as may be prescribed, and shall be calculated in accordance with the provisions of section 198. In the instant case,

1. Net Profit before tax of Red Limited for the FY 2021-22 is ₹ 7 crore, hence, Red Limited is required to constitute a CSR committee during FY 2022-23 as the Net profit before tax for the FY exceeds ₹ 5 crore.
2. Minimum contribution towards CSR will be: 2% of average net profits since incorporation (Red Limited was incorporated on 1.04.2020.)

Average Net Profit since incorporation: (₹ 5 crore + ₹ 7 crore)/ 2 = ₹ 6 crore

Minimum contribution towards CSR will be: 2% of ₹ 6 crore = ₹ 0.12 crore or ₹ 12 Lacs

Chapter 10 – Audit and Auditors

Question 1

Explain how the auditor will be appointed in the following cases:

(i) A Government Company within the meaning of section 394 of the Companies Act,2013

[RTP May 18, MTP March 2019]

(ii) The Auditor of the company (other than government company) has resigned on 31st December, 2016, while the Financial year of the company ends on 31st March, 2017

[MTP Oct 2019, Oct 21]

Answer

(i) The appointment and re-appointment of auditor of a Government Company or a government controlled company is governed by the provisions of section 139 of the Companies Act, 2013 which are summarized as under:

The first auditor shall be appointed by the Comptroller and Auditor General of India within 60 days from the date of incorporation and in case of failure to do so, the Board shall appoint auditor within next 30 days and on failure to do so by Board of Directors, it shall inform the members, who shall appoint the auditor within 60 days at an extraordinary general meeting (EGM), such auditor shall hold office till conclusion of first Annual General Meeting.

In case of subsequent auditor for existing government companies, the Comptroller & Auditor General of India shall appoint the auditor within a period of 180 days from the commencement of the financial year and the auditor so appointed shall hold his position till the conclusion of the Annual General Meeting.

(ii) The situation as stated in the question relates to the creation of a casual vacancy in the office of an auditor due to resignation of the auditor before the AGM in case of a company other government company. Under section 139 (8)(i) any casual vacancy in the office of an auditor arising as a result of his resignation, such vacancy can be filled by the Board of Directors within 30 days thereof and in addition the appointment of the new auditor shall also be approved by the company at a general meeting convened within 3 months of the recommendation of the Board and he shall hold the office till the conclusion of the next annual general meeting.

Question 2

Lemon & Company, Chartered Accountants a Limited Liability Partnership firm with CA. L, CA. M and CA. N as partners, is the statutory auditor of a listed company M/s Big Limited for past 6 years as on 01.04.2014.

CA. M is also a partner in other Chartered Accountant firm Dew & Company, Chartered Accountants. Advise under the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013 :

(1) Upto how many years can Lemon & Company continue as statutory auditors of M/s Big Limited?
(2) What shall be the cooling-off period for Lemon & Company with respect to M/s Big Limited?
(3) Can Dew & Company; be appointed as statutory auditors of M/s Big Limited and it's another listed subsidiary M/s Dark Limited during such cooling-off period?
(4) Can Lemon & Company be appointed as internal auditors of M/s Big Limited and it's another listed subsidiary M/s Dark Limited, during such cooling-off period?

[RTP Nov 2018]

Answer

According to Section 139 (2) of the Companies Act, 2013,

i. Listed companies and other prescribed class or classes of companies (except one person companies and small companies) shall not appoint or re-appoint an audit firm as auditor for more than two terms of 5 consecutive years.

ii. An audit firm which has completed its term (i.e. two terms of five consecutive years) shall not be eligible for re- appointment as auditor in the same company for five years from the completion of such term.

iii. Further, as on the date of appointment no audit firm having a common partner or partners to the other audit firm, whose tenure has expired in a company immediately preceding the financial year, shall be appointed as an auditor of the same company for a period of five years.

iv. For the purpose of the rotation of auditors, in case of an auditor (whether an individual or audit firm), the period for which the individual or the firm has held office as auditor prior to the commencement of the Act shall be taken into account for calculating the period of 5 consecutive years or 10 consecutive years, as the case may be.

Applying the above provisions,

1. Lemon & Company can continue as statutory auditors of M/s Big Limited for 4 more years from 1.4.2014, i.e. they can continue in office only till 31.3.2018. (Author's note - transition provision, can be ignored)
2. The cooling- off period shall be of 5 years.
3. Dew & Company cannot be appointed as a statutory auditor of M/s Big Limited during the cooling – off period of Lemon & Company, as CA. M is the common partner in both Lemon & Company and Dew & Company However, Dew & Company can be appointed as a statutory auditor of M/s Dark Limited (a listed subsidiary of M/s Big Limited), during the cooling – off period.

4. As per Section 138 (1) of the Companies Act, 2013, every listed company and other prescribed class of companies, shall be required to appoint an internal auditor, who shall either be a chartered accountant or a cost accountant, or such other professional (which may be either an individual or a partnership firm or a body corporate) as may be decided by the Board to conduct internal audit of the functions and activities of the company.
   Accordingly, M/s Lemon & Company can be appointed as an internal auditors of M/s Big Limited and in its subsidiary M/S Dark Limited (a listed company). The provision of cooling off period as given under Section 139 of the Companies Act, 2013, shall not be applicable on the Internal auditors.

Question 3

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Question 4

Rupa Limited, a listed company appointed M/s. VG & Associates an audit firm as Company's auditor in the Annual General Meeting held on 30 -09-2017. Explain the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013 relating to the appointment or reappointment of an auditor in relation to the tenure of an auditor.

[May 18]

Answer

Tenure of Auditor:

Section 139(2) of the Companies Act, 2013, provides that listed companies and other prescribed class or classes of companies (except one person companies and small companies) shall not appoint or re-appoint-

1) an individual as auditor for more than one term of five consecutive years; and
2) an audit firm as auditor for more than two terms of five consecutive years.

Cooling off Period:

1) An individual auditor who has completed his term (i.e. one term of five consecutive years) shall not be eligible for re-appointment as auditor in the same company for five years from the completion of his term;
2) An audit firm which has completed its term (i.e. two terms of five consecutive years) shall not be eligible for re- appointment as auditor in the same company for five years from the completion of such term.

In terms of the above provisions, Rupa Limited, which is a listed company, can appoint M/S VG & Associates an audit firm, for a term of 5 years, i.e. from the conclusion of the AGM held on 30.09.2017 to the conclusion of the AGM to be held in the year 2022. Now, in terms of Section 139(2), since M/S VG & Associates is an audit firm, it can be re-appointed as auditor for one more term of five years, i.e., upto the conclusion of the AGM to be held in 2027.

Question 5

PKC Ltd., wants to appoint Mr. Praveen Kumar, a practicing Chartered Accountant as the statutory auditor of the company and asked the proposed auditor to give a certificate in this regard. What are the contents of the certificate to be issued in accordance with the Companies (Audit & Auditors Rules, 2014)?

[May 2018]

Answer

As per proviso to section 139(1) of the Companies Act, 2013, before the appointment is made, a written consent of the auditor to such appointment, and a certificate from him or it that the appointment, if made, shall be in accordance with the conditions as may be prescribed, shall be obtained.

Certificate by Auditor: The Companies (Audit and Auditors) Rules, 2014 provides the content of the Certificate. According to this, the auditor appointed shall submit a certificate that –

a. the individual or the firm, as the case may be, is eligible for appointment and is not disqualified for appointment under the Act, the Chartered Accountants Act, 1949 and the rules or regulations made thereunder;
b. the proposed appointment is as per the term provided under the Act;
c. the proposed appointment is within the limits laid down by or under the authority of the Act;
d. the list of proceedings against the auditor or audit firm or any partner of the audit firm pending with respect to professional matters of conduct, as disclosed in the certificate, is true and correct.

The certificate shall also indicate whether the auditor satisfies the criteria provided in section 141.

Mr. Praveen Kumar, the proposed auditor has to give the above certificate to the company before accepting the appointment as the auditor of PKC Ltd.

Question 6

CA. M is a partner in SM & Company (Chartered Accountants) and ML & Company (Chartered Accountants). SM & Company are statutory auditors of M/s. Global Ltd. (listed) for past seven years as on 1-04-2018. Advice under relevant provisions of the Companies Act, 2013:

(1) For how many more years SM & Company can continue as statutory auditors of M/s. Global Ltd. (listed)?
(2) Can ML & Company be appointed as statutory auditor of M/s. Global Ltd. during cooling off period for SM & Company?

[Nov 18]

Answer

(1) As per section 139 read with relevant Rule 6 of the Companies (Audit & Auditors) Rules, 2014, in case of an auditor (whether an individual or audit firm), the period for which the individual or the firm has held office as auditor prior to the commencement of the Act shall be taken into account for calculating the period of five consecutive years (individual) or ten consecutive years (audit firm), as the case may be.

As per the stated facts, SM & Co. are statutory auditors of M/s. Global Ltd. for past seven years as on 1.04.2018. Accordingly, SM & Co. can continue as statutory auditors of M/s. Global Ltd. for 3 more years i.e., till 31.03.2021.

(2) Section 139(2) states that as on the date of appointment no audit firm having a common partner or partners of the other audit firm, whose tenure has expired in a company immediately preceding the financial year, shall be appointed as auditor of the same company for a period of five years.

Hence, as per the above provision, ML & Co. cannot be appointed as statutory auditor of M/s. Global Ltd. during cooling period because CA. M was the common partner in both the Audit firms. This prohibition is only for 5 years i.e. upto year 2026. After 5 years, M/s. Global Ltd. is free to appoint ML & Co. as its statutory auditors.

Question 7

One-fourth of the subscribed capital of AMC Limited was held by the Government of Rajasthan. Mr. Vikas, a Chartered Accountant, was appointed as an auditor of the Company at the Annual General Meeting held on 30th

April, 2020 by an ordinary resolution. Mr. Mukesh, a shareholder of the Company, objects to the manner of appointment of Mr. Vikas on the ground of violation of the Companies Act, 2013. Decide whether the objection of Mr. Mukesh is tenable? Also examine the consequences of the above appointment under the said Act.

[MTP Oct 2020]

Answer

As per the section 2(45) of the Companies Act, 2013, the holding of 25% shares of AMC Ltd. by the Government of Rajasthan does not make it a government company. Hence, it will be treated as a non-government company.

Under section 139 of the Companies Act, 2013, the appointment of an auditor by a company vests generally with the members of the company except in the case of the first auditors and in the filling up of the casual vacancy not caused by the resignation of the auditor, in which case, the power to appoint the auditor vests with the Board of Directors. The appointment by the members is by way of an ordinary resolution only and no exceptions have been made in the Act whereby a special resolution is required for the appointment of the auditors.

Therefore, the contention of Mr. Mukesh is not tenable. The appointment is valid under the Companies Act, 2013.

Question 8

The Board of Directors of Moon Light Limited, a listed company appointed Mr. Tel, Chartered Accountant as its first auditor within 30 days of the date of registration of the Company to hold office from the date of incorporation to conclusion of the first Annual General Meeting (AGM). At the first AGM, Mr. Tel was re-appointed to hold office from the conclusion of its first AGM till the conclusion of 6th AGM. In the light of the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013, examine the validity of appointment/ reappointment in the following cases:

(i) Appointment of Mr. Tel by the Board of Directors.
(ii) Re-appointment of Mr. Tel at the first AGM in the above situation.
(iii) In case Mr. Bell, Chartered Accountant, was appointed as auditor at the first AGM to hold office from the conclusion of its first AGM till the conclusion of 5th AGM. ie., 4 years tenure.

[Nov 2020, MTP 1 May'23]

Answer

As per section 139(6) of the Companies Act, 2013, the first auditor of a company, other than a Government company, shall be appointed by the Board of Directors within thirty days from the date of registration of the company and such auditor shall hold office till the conclusion of the first annual general meeting

Whereas Section 139(1) of the Companies Act, 2013 states that every company shall, at the first annual general meeting (AGM), appoint an individual or a firm as an auditor of the company who shall hold office from the conclusion of 1st AGM till the conclusion of its 6th AGM and thereafter till the conclusion of every sixth AGM.

As per section 139(2), no listed company or a company belonging to such class or classes of companies as may be prescribed, shall appoint or re-appoint an individual as auditor for more than one term of five consecutive years.

As per the given provisions following are the answers:

(i) Appointment of Mr. Tel by the Board of Directors is valid as per the provisions of section 139(6).
(ii) Appointment of Mr. Tel at the first Annual General Meeting is valid due to the fact that the appointment of the first auditor made by the Board of Directors is a separate appointment and the period of such appointment is not to be considered, while Mr. Tel is appointed in the first Annual General Meeting, which is for the period from the conclusion of the first Annual General Meeting to the conclusion of the sixth Annual General Meeting.
(iii) As per law, auditor appointed shall hold office from the conclusion of 1st AGM till the conclusion of its 6th AGM i.e., for 5 years. Accordingly, here appointment of Mr. Bell, which is for 4 years, is not in compliance with the said legal provision, so his appointment is not valid.

Question 9

Shivam Limited is incorporated on 1.1.2020. The company wants to appoint its first auditor. Please enumerate to the company the relevant provisions of the Companies Act, 2013 with respect to the appointment of first auditor.

[MTP March 2021, MTP Mar 2022]

Answer

According to section 139(6) of the Companies Act, 2013, the first auditor of a company, other than a Government Company, shall be appointed by the Board of directors within 30 days of the date of registration of the company and the auditor so appointed shall hold office until the conclusion of the first AGM.

If the Board fails to exercise its powers i.e. appointment of first auditor, it shall inform the members of the company and the company may appoint the first auditor within 90 days at an extra ordinary general meeting (EGM) and such auditor shall hold office till the conclusion of the first AGM.

Question 10

Shiv Limited is incorporated on 3.10.2020. The company is having a paid- up share capital of Rs. 5 crores. Following are key shareholders of the company:

Name of the Party holding shares	Amount (in Rs.)
Central Government	1.50
Punjab Government	1.23
Others	2.27

The first auditor of the company has been appointed by the Board of Directors on 31.10.2020. The members of the company have objected to such an appointment by the Board of Directors. According to the members its only the members who can appoint the first auditor.

Advise the company on the validity of such appointment as per the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013. Also, advise whether the contention of members of the company is correct.

[MTP April 2021]

Answer

According to section 2(45) of the Companies Act, 2013, "Government company" means any company in which not less than 51% of the paid-up share capital is held by the Central Government, or by any State Government or Governments, or partly by the Central Government and partly by one or more State Governments, and includes a company which is a subsidiary company of such a Government company.

As per section 139(7), in the case of a Government company or any other company owned or controlled, directly or indirectly, by the Central Government, or by any State Government, or Governments, or partly by the Central Government and partly by one or more State Governments, the first auditor shall be appointed by the Comptroller and Auditor-General of India within 60 days from the date of registration of the company and in case the Comptroller and Auditor - General of India does not appoint such auditor within the said period, the Board of Directors of the company shall appoint such auditor within the next 30 days; and in the case of failure of the Board to appoint such auditor within the next 30 days, it shall inform the members of the company who shall appoint such auditor within the 60 days at an extraordinary general meeting, who shall hold office till the conclusion of the first annual general meeting .

In the given question, Shiv Limited is a government company as 54.6% [(1.5+1.23)/ 5= 54.6%] of the share capital is held by Central government and State Government (Punjab Government).

Thus, the first auditor of Shiv Limited shall be appointed by the Comptroller and Auditor-General of India within 60 days from the date of registration.

Thus, the appointment of first auditor by Board of Directors on 31.10.2020 is not valid. The Board of Directors can appoint the first auditor in case the Comptroller and Auditor-General of India does not appoint such auditor within the said period of period 60 days. The Board of Directors of the company shall appoint such auditor within the next 30 days.

In the case of failure of the Board to appoint such auditor within the next 30 days, it shall inform the members of the company who shall appoint such auditor within 60 days at an extraordinary general meeting, who shall hold office till the conclusion of the first annual general meeting .

Thus, the contention of members that its only the members who can appoint the first auditor of the Government company, is not correct.

Question 11

Maya Limited is a public company. Maharashtra Bank (a nationalized bank) is a shareholder holding 18% of the subscribed capital of the company. Explain how the following shall be appointed:

(i) First auditor
(ii) Subsequent auditor

[July 2021]

OR

A Public Company whose shareholders include XYZ Bank (a nationalized bank) holding 18% of the subscribed capital of the company

[MTP March 2018]

OR

A company includes the following shareholders also:

1) Bank of Baroda (A nationalized Bank) holding 12% of the subscribed capital in the company.
2) National Insurance Company Limited (carrying on General Insurance Business) holding 10% of the subscribed capital in the company.
3) Maharashtra State Financial Corporation (A Public Financial Institution) holding 8% of the subscribed capital in the company.

Advise the company, whether the provisions related to 'appointment of auditor in case of Government Company' are applicable to it. Discuss in the light of the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013.

[MTP Oct 2019]

Answer

According to section 2(45) of the Companies Act, 2013, "Government company" means any company in which not less than 51% of the paid-up share capital is held by the Central Government, or by any State Government or Governments, or partly by the Central Government and partly by one or more State Governments, and includes a company which is a subsidiary company of such a Government company.

In the given case, the total shareholding of the Maharashtra Bank in Maya Limited, is just 18% of the subscribed capital of the company. Hence, Maya Limited is not a government company. Hence, the provisions applicable to non-government companies in relation to the appointment of auditors shall apply.

The auditor shall be appointed as follows:

(i) According to section 139(6) of the Companies Act, 2013, the first auditor of a company, other than a Government company, shall be appointed by the Board of Directors within 30 days from the date of registration of the company and in the case of failure of the Board to appoint such auditor, it shall inform the members of the company, who shall within 90 days at an extraordinary general meeting appoint such auditor and such auditor shall hold office till the conclusion of the first annual general meeting.

(ii) The company shall, at the first annual general meeting, appoint an individual or a firm as an auditor who shall hold office from the conclusion of that meeting till the conclusion of its sixth annual general meeting and thereafter till the conclusion of every sixth meeting.

Before such appointment of auditor is made, the written consent of the auditor to such appointment, and a certificate from him or firm of auditors that the appointment, if made, shall be obtained from the auditor:

Further, the company shall inform the auditor concerned of his or its appointment, and also file a notice of such appointment with the Registrar within 15 days of the meeting in which the auditor is appointed (Form ADT-1).

Question 12

Mr. Suresh, a Chartered Accountant, was appointed by the Board of Directors of AB Limited as the First Auditor. The company in General Meeting removed Mr. Suresh without seeking the approval of the Central Government and appointed Mr. Gupta as Auditor in his place ?

[MTP Aug 2018]

Answer

Section 140(1) stipulates that any auditor appointed under section 139 may be removed from office before the expiry of his term by passing special resolution in general meeting, after obtaining the previous approval of the Central Government in that behalf.

Provided that before taking any action under subsection (1) of Section 140, the auditor concerned shall be given a reasonable opportunity of being heard.

The first auditors appointed by Board of Directors can be removed in accordance with the provision of Section 140(1) of the Companies Act, 2013. Hence, the removal of the first auditor appointed by the Board without seeking approval of the Central Government is invalid. The company contravened the provision of the Act.

Question 13

Mr. Honest, an auditor of MM company ltd. has colluded with the company for a fraud. The Central Government has applied to Tribunal about the said fraud by Mr. Honest. State the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013 regarding the steps that can be taken by Tribunal when it finds that the auditor of a company has acted in a fraudulent manner.

[MTP Aug 18]

Answer

Auditor acts in a fraudulent manner or abetted or colluded in any fraud [Section 140(5) of the Companies Act, 2013]

(i) On satisfaction of Tribunal that the auditor of a company has acted in a fraudulent manner etc.: Without prejudice to any action under the provisions of this Act or any other law for the time being in force, the Tribunal either suo moto or on an application made to it by the Central Government or by any person concerned, if it is satisfied that the auditor of a company has, whether directly or indirectly, acted in a fraudulent manner or abetted or colluded in any fraud by, or in relation to, the company or its directors or officers, it may, by order, direct the company to change its auditors.

(ii) Requirement for change of auditor: If the application is made by the Central Government and the Tribunal is satisfied that any change of the auditor is required, it shall within fifteen days of receipt of such application, make an order that he shall not function as an auditor and the Central Government may appoint another auditor in his place.

Question 14

AB & Associates, a firm of Chartered Accountants was re-appointed as auditors at the Annual General Meeting of X Ltd. held on 30-09-2019. However, the Board of Directors recommended to remove them before expiry of their term by passing a resolution in the Board Meeting held on 31-03-2020. Subsequently, having given consideration to the Board recommendation, AB & Associates were removed at the general meeting held on 25-05-2020 by passing a special resolution subject to approval of the Central Government. Explaining the provisions for removal of second and subsequent auditors, examine the validity of removal of AB & Associates by X Ltd. under the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013.

[July 2021, MTP Nov'22]

Answer

Section 140 of the Companies Act, 2013 prescribes procedure for removal of auditors. Under section 140 (1) the auditor appointed under section 139 may be removed from his office before the expiry of his term only by a special resolution of the company, after obtaining the previous approval of the Central Government in that behalf in the prescribed manner.

From this sub section it is clear that the approval of the Central Government shall be taken first and thereafter the special resolution of the company should be passed.

Provided that before taking any action under this sub-section, the auditor concerned shall be given a reasonable opportunity of being heard.

Therefore, in terms of section 140 (1) of the Companies Act, 2013 read with Rule 7 of the Companies (Audit & Auditors) Rules, 2014, the following steps should be taken for the removal of an auditor before the completion of his term:

- The application to the Central Government for removal of auditor shall be made in Form ADT-2 and accompanied with fees as provided for this purpose under the Companies (Registration Offices and Fees) Rules, 2014.
- The application shall be made to the Central Government within thirty days of the resolution passed by the Board.
- The company shall hold the general meeting within sixty days of receipt of approval of the Central Government for passing the special resolution.

Hence, in the instant case, the decision of X Ltd. to remove AB & Associates, auditors of the company at the general meeting held on 25-5-2020 subject to approval of Central Government is not valid. The Approval of the Central Government shall be taken before passing the special resolution in the general meeting.

Question 15

Gajendra Ltd. was incorporated in 1995 in the town of Alwar. Its main business is manufacturing tiles. It is in the process of appointing statutory auditors for the financial year 2021 -22. Advise whether the following persons are qualified to be appointed as statutory auditor of the Gajendra

(i) Maninder, a qualified Chartered Accountant, holds equity shares of nominal value of Rs. 2,00,000 of Narender Ltd., which is an associate company of Gajendra Ltd.

(ii) Dinesh, a qualified Chartered Accountant, whose son owes Gajendra Ltd. a sum of Rs. 99,000

(iii) Rajender, a qualified Chartered Accountant, who has been convicted in the year 2005 by a Court for an offence involving fraud.

[MTP April 2022]

OR

Gizmo Limited was incorporated in 1990 in the town of Alwar. Its main business is manufacturing high quality bangles. It is in the process of appointing statutory auditors for the financial year 2021 -22. Advise whether the following persons are qualified to be appointed as statutory auditor of the Gizmo Limited:

(1) Priyansh, a qualified chartered accountant, is an employee of Gizmo Limited.

(2) Vinod is a practicing Chartered Accountant indebted to Gizmo Limited for rupees 2 lakh.

[MTP Nov 22]

Answer

(i) As per section 141 (3)(d)(i) of the Companies Act, 2013, read with Rule 10 of the Companies (Audit and Auditors) Rules, 2014, a person is disqualified to be appointed as an auditor if he, or his relative or partner holding any security of or interest in the company or its subsidiary, or of its holding or associate company or a subsidiary of such holding company.
Hence, Maninder is disqualified to be appointed as an auditor in Gajendra Ltd. as he holds securities in the Narender Ltd. (associate company of Gajendra Ltd.)

(ii) As per section 141(3)(d)(ii) a person is disqualified to be appointed as an auditor if he, or his relative or partner is indebted to the company, or its subsidiary, or its holding or associate company or a subsidiary of such holding company, in excess of Rs. 5 Lacs.
Hence, Dinesh is not disqualified as the limit of indebtedness for the auditor or his relative is exceeding Rs.5,00,000 and in this case Dinesh's son owes only Rs. 99,000.

(iii) As per section 141(3)(h), a person who has been convicted by a court of an offence involving fraud and a period of 10 years has not elapsed from the date of such conviction , shall not be qualified to be appointed as an auditor of a company.

Though Rajender was convicted by a court for an offence involving fraud but as a period of 10 years have elapsed, hence, Rajendra is qualified to be appointed as statutory auditor of Gajendra Ltd.

Question 16

Examine the validity of the following with reference to the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013:-

(i) "Mr. A", a practicing Chartered Accountant, is holding securities of "XYZ Ltd." having face value of Rs. 900/-. Whether Mr. A is qualified for appointment as an Auditor of "XYZ Ltd."?

(ii) "Mr. P" is a practicing Chartered Accountant and "Mr. Q", the relative of "Mr. P", is holding securities of "ABC Ltd." having face value of Rs. 90,000/-. Whether "Mr. P" is Qualified from being appointed as an Auditor of "ABC Ltd."?

[MTP Oct, 2018]

OR

Mr. Ram brother of CA. Shyam, a practicing chartered accountant, acquired securities of M/s. Cool Ltd. having market value of Rs. 1,20,000 (face value Rs. 95,000). State whether CA. Shyam is qualified to be appointed as a statutory auditor of M/s. Cool Ltd.

[Nov 18, MTP Oct, 2021]

Answer

(i) According to section 141 (3)(d) (i), an auditor is disqualified to be appointed as an auditor if he, or his relative or partner holding any security of or interest in the company or its subsidiary, or of its holding or associate company or a subsidiary of such holding company:

In the present case, Mr. A. is holding security of Rs. 900 in the XYZ Ltd, therefore he is not eligible for appointment as an Auditor of "XYZ Ltd".

(ii) As per section 141 (3)(d)(i), an auditor is disqualified to be appointed as an auditor if he, or his relative or partner holding any security of or interest in the company or its subsidiary, or of its holding or associate company or a subsidiary of such holding company: Further as per proviso to this Section, the relative of the auditor may hold the securities or interest in the company of face value not exceeding of Rs. 1,00,000.

In the present case, Mr. Q. (relative of Mr. P, an auditor), is having securities of Rs. 90,000 face Value in the ABC Ltd., which is as per requirement of proviso to section 141 (3)(d)(i), Therefore, Mr. P will not be disqualified to be appointed as an auditor of ABC Ltd

Question 17

Examine the following situations in the light of the Companies Act, 2013

(i) Mr. Ayush, a Chartered accountant has been appointed as an auditor of X Ltd. in the Annual General Meeting of the company held in September, 2018, in which he accepted the assignment. Subsequently, in January, 2019 he joined B, as a partner for the consultancy firm of Mr. B. Mr. B is working also working as a Finance Executive of X Ltd.

(ii) "Mr. Abhi", a practicing Chartered Accountant, is holding securities of "Abhiman Ltd." having face value of Rs. 1000/-. Whether Mr. Abhi is qualified for appointment as an Auditor of Abhiman Ltd."?

[MTP March 19, May 20, RTP May 19]

Answer

(i) (i) Provisions and Explanation: Section 141(3) (c) of the Companies Act, 2013 prescribes that any person who is a partner or in employment of an officer or employee of the company will be disqualified to act as an auditor of a company. Sub- section (4) of Section 141 provides that an auditor who becomes subject, after his appointment, to any of the disqualifications specified in sub-sections (3) of Section 141, he shall be deemed to have vacated his office as an auditor.

Conclusion: In the present case, Ayush, an auditor of X Ltd., joined as partner with B, who is Finance

executive of X Ltd., has attracted clause (3) (c) of Section 141 and, therefore, he shall be deemed to have vacated office of the auditor of X Limited.

(ii) As per section 141 (3)(d) (i) an auditor is disqualified to be appointed as an auditor if he, or his relative or partner holding any security of or interest in the company or its subsidiary, or of its holding or associate company or a subsidiary of such holding company

In the present case, Mr. Abhi. is holding security of Rs. 1000 in the Abhiman Ltd, therefore he is not eligible for appointment as an Auditor of "Abhiman Ltd."

Question 18

New Limited appointed an individual firm, Naresh & Company, Chartered Accountants, as Auditors of the company at the Annual General Meeting held on 30 September 2019. Mrs. Reena, wife of Mr. Naresh, invested in the equity shares face value of Rs. 1 lakh of New Limited on 15 October 2019. But Naresh & Company continues to function as statutory auditors of the company. Advice, Naresh & Company on the continuation of such appointment, as per provisions of the Companies Act, 2013.

[MTP Aug 18, April 19, RTP May 20, Nov 20]

OR

Mrs. Sita, wife of CA. 'Arjun' the statutory auditor of Stellar Builders Limited, acquired shares in the company for a face value of Rs.75,000/- on 15th March, 2018. CA. 'Arjun', issued his audit report on 25th April, 2018. Examine the validity of this transaction under the Companies Act, 2013. Would your answer be different if face value of the shares have been Rs. 1,50000/- (market value Rs. 95,000/-)

[RTP Nov 18]

Answer

Disqualification of auditor: According to section 141(3)(d)(i) of the Companies Act, 2013, a person who, or his relative or partner holds any security of the company or its subsidiary or of its holding or associate company or a subsidiary of such holding company, which carries voting rights, such person cannot be appointed as auditor of the company. Provided that the relative of such person may hold security or interest in the company of face value not exceeding 1 lakh rupees as prescribed under the Companies (Audit and Auditors) Rules, 2014.

In the case Mr. Naresh, Chartered Accountants, did not hold any such security. But Mrs. Reena, his wife held equity shares of New Limited of face value Rs. 1 lakh, which is within the specified limit.

Further Section 141(4) provides that if an auditor becomes subject, after his appointment, to any of the disqualifications specified in sub-section 3 of section 141, he shall be deemed to have vacated his office of auditor. Hence, Naresh & Company can continue to function as auditors of the Company even after 15 October 2019 i.e. after the investment made by his wife in the equity shares of New Limited.

Answer to part (ii) of the question in OR part (Mrs. Sita):

Yes, answer will be different in case where the face value of acquired shares is Rs. 1,50,000. Then in that case:

(i) Corrective action to maintain the limit specified (i.e., 1 lac) shall be taken by the auditor within 60 days of such acquisition, or

(ii) Failure to take such corrective action shall lead to auditor has to vacate his office.

Question 19

Examine whether the following persons are eligible for being appointed as auditor under the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013:

i. "Mr. Prakash" is a practicing Chartered Accountant and "Mr. Aakash", who is a relative of "Mr. Prakash" is holding securities of "ABC Ltd." having face value of Rs. 70,000/- (market value Rs. 1, 10,000/-). Directors of ABC Ltd. want to appoint Mr. Prakash as an auditor of the company:
ii. Mr. Ramesh is a practicing Chartered Accountant indebted to MNP Ltd. for Rs. 6 lacs. Directors of MNP Ltd. want to appoint Mr. Ramesh as an auditor of the company.
iii. Mrs. KVJ spouse of Mr. Kumar, a Chartered Accountant, is the store keeper of PRC Ltd. Directors of PRC Ltd. want to appoint Mr. Kumar as an auditor of the company.

[Nov 19, MTP Nov 2021]

Answer

i. Already covered in previous questions
ii. Already covered in previous questions
iii. As per section 141(3)(f), an auditor is disqualified to be appointed as an auditor if a person whose relative is a director or is in the employment of the company as a director or a key managerial personnel.

In the instant case, since Mrs. KVJ Spouse of Mr. Kumar (Chartered Accountant) is the store keeper (not a director or KMP) of PRC Ltd., hence Mr. Kumar will not be disqualified to be appointed as an auditor in the said company.

Question 20

Three chartered accountants, Mr. Robert, Mr. Ram and Mrs. Rohini, formed a Limited Liability Partnership under the Limited Liability Partnership Act, 2008 in the name of 'R & Associates LLP', practicing chartered accountants. SR Ltd. intends to appoint 'R & Associates LLP' as auditors of the company.
Examine the validity of the proposal of SR Ltd. to appoint 'R & Associates LLP', a body corporate, as an auditor of the company as per the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013.

[Jan 2021]

Answer

As per the provisions of Section 141 (3) of the Companies Act, 2013 read with Rule 10 of Companies (Audit and Auditors) Rule 2014, a body corporate other than a limited liability partnership registered under the Limited Liability Partnership Act, 2008 shall not be qualified for appointment as auditor of a company.

In the given case, proposal of SR Ltd. to appoint 'R & Associates LLP' as auditors of the company is valid as the restriction marked for appointment as auditor for a body corporate is not applicable to Limited Liability Partnership.

Question 21

State the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013 regarding the signing of the Audit report by the Auditors of the company

[MTP March 18]

Answer

Section 145 of the Companies Act, 2013 provides for auditors to sign audit reports, etc. According to this section:

(i) The person appointed as an auditor of the company shall sign the auditor's report or sign or certify any other document of the company in accordance with the provisions of sub-section (2) of section 141 (i.e. in case of firm including LLP, only Chartered Accountants are authorised to act and sign).
(ii) The qualifications, observations or comments on financial transactions or matters, which have any adverse effect on the functioning of the company mentioned in the auditor's report shall be read before the company in general meeting and shall be open to inspection by any member of the company.

Question 22

What are the rights of the auditor of a company in respect of attending the General Meeting.

[MTP Oct 18]

Answer

Section 146 of the Companies Act, 2013 provides for auditors to attend general meeting. According to this section:

(i) All notices of, and other communications relating to, any general meeting shall be forwarded to the auditor of the company.
(ii) The auditor shall, unless otherwise exempted by the company, attend either by himself or through his authorised representative, who shall also be qualified to be an auditor, any general meeting.
(iii) The auditor shall have right to be heard at such meeting on any part of the business which concerns him as the auditor.

Question 23

The Board of Directors of A Ltd. requested its Statutory Auditor to accept the assignment of designing and implementation of suitable financial information system to strengthen the internal control mechanism of the Company. How will you approach to this proposal, as an Statutory Auditor of A Ltd., taking into account the consequences, if any, of accepting this proposal?

[May 19, RTP May 2021, MTP 2 May'23]

Answer

According to section 144 of the Companies Act, 2013, an auditor appointed under this Act shall provide to the company only such other services as are approved by the Board of Directors or the audit committee, as the case may be. But such services shall not include designing and implementation of any financial information system.

In the said instance, the Board of directors of A Ltd. requested its Statutory Auditor to accept the assignment of designing and implementation of suitable financial information system to strengthen the internal control mechanism of the company. As per the above provision said service is strictly prohibited.

In case the Statutory Auditor accepts the assignment, he will attract the penal provisions as specified in Section 147 of the Companies Act, 2013.

In the light of the as above provisions, we shall advise the Statutory Auditor not to take up the above stated assignment.

Question 24

ABC & Co., Chartered Accountants, are statutory auditors of Moon Exports Limited. In an inquiry, it is proved that 'A', one of the partners of the firm has acted in fraudulent manner and colluded in fraud to its partners. Explain the consequences of such act under the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013.

[May 2022]

Answer

According to section 147(5) of the Companies Act, 2013, where, in case of audit of a company being conducted by an audit firm, it is proved that the partner or partners of the audit firm has or have acted in a fraudulent manner or abetted or colluded in any fraud by, or in relation to or by, the company or its directors or officers, the liability, for such act shall be of the partner or partners concerned of the audit firm and of the firm jointly and severally.

Provided that in case of criminal liability of an audit firm, in respect of liability other than fine, the concerned partner or partners, who acted in a fraudulent manner or abetted or, as the case may be, colluded in any fraud shall only be liable.

Here, 'A' the partner of ABC & Co. on inquiry was found that he acted in a fraudulent manner or colluded in fraud to its partners.

Accordingly, 'A' the partner, partners concerned and the firm 'ABC & Co.' jointly & severally liable for the fine.

With respect to criminal liability of the firm 'ABC & Co.', the concerned partner or partners, who acted in a fraudulent manner or colluded in any fraud, shall only be liable.

Question 25

Mr. Govind Ram is a partner and in- charge (and certifies financial statements) of P & Associates. The firm is appointed as an auditor firm of Kanha Limited (listed company). Mr. Govind Ram retires from P & Associates and after some time join Gupta & Gupta firm as a partner, on 20/05/22. In the general meeting of Kanha Limited held on 15/06/22, the company appointed Gupta & Gupta firm as next auditor of the company. Advise Kanha Limited, whether the company has adhered to the provision of the Company Act, 2013, by appointing Gupta & Gupta as auditor for the company?

[RTP Nov 22]

Answer

According to Section 139(2) of the Companies Act, 2013, no listed company or a company belonging to such class or classes of companies as may be prescribed, shall appoint or re-appoint—

(a) an individual as auditor for more than one term of five consecutive years; and

(b) an audit firm as auditor for more than two terms of five consecutive years. Provided that –

  (i) an individual auditor who has completed his term under clause (a) shall not be eligible for re-appointment as auditor in the same company for five years from the completion of his term;

  (ii) an audit firm which has completed its term under clause (b), shall not be eligible for re-appointment as auditor in the same company for five years from the completion of such term.

Provided further that as on the date of appointment no audit firm having a common partner or partners to the other audit firm, whose tenure has expired in a company immediately preceding the financial year, shall be appointed as auditor of the same company for a period of five years.

As per Explanation II in Rule 6(3) of the Companies (Audit and Auditors) Rules, 2014, if a partner, who is in charge of an audit firm and also certifies the financial statements of the company, retires from the said firm and joins another firm of chartered accountants, such other firm shall also be ineligible to be appointed for a period of five years.

Here, Mr. Govind Ram has retired from P & Associates and joined Gupta & Gupta Firm. Mr. Govind Ram was a partner, in- charge Associates (and certifies the financial statement of the company) in P & Associates. He retires from P & Associates and joins Gupta & Gupta firm.

As per the facts of the question and provisions of law, Gupta & Gupta Firm will also be ineligible, to be appointed as auditor of Kanha Limited (listed company) for a period of 5 years.

Question 26

P Limited appointed "XYZ & Co.", an audit firm, as Auditor of the company at the Annual General Meeting held on 30th September, 2021. Mr. X, Y and Z are partners in XYZ & Co. With reference to the Companies Act, 2013, examine, the validity of appointment of the XYZ & Co. in each of the following cases separately:

(i) Mrs. Q, wife of Mr. X has invested in the equity shares of P Limited having face value of ₹1 lakh.

(ii) Mrs. Q, wife of Mr. X has given guarantee in relation to a loan taken by G from P Limited of an amount worth ₹ 1,50,000.

(iii) Mrs. Q, wife of Mr. X is indebted to Z Limited for ₹10,00,000 (P Limited holds one fourth of the paid-up Equity Share Capital of Z Ltd.)

[Nov 22]

Answer

Already covered in prior questions.

And here begins the Questions for Other Laws 40 marks!

Chapter 1 - Indian Contract Act, 1872

Question 1

Mr. Gogia has contracted with Rajeev Ltd. on 1st January, 2019, to manufacture certain machinery and deliver it to Mr. Gogia by 31st May, 2019. Part of the contract price was to be paid in advance, and thus Mr. Gogia accordingly paid Rs. 2,00,000. An earthquake on 31st March, 2019, destroyed the area in which Rajeev Ltd. was situated which resulted in break in the operations of Rajeev Ltd for at least 1 year. Mr. Gogia thereupon requested the return of the Rs. 2,00,000. This amount was not returned by Rajeev Ltd. only because considerable work had already been put into construction of the machinery. In the light of the provisions of the Indian Contract Act, 1872, please advise Mr. Gogia whether he can regain the amount from Rajeev Ltd.

[MTP March 21]

Answer

According to Section 65 of the Indian Contract Act, 1872, when an agreement is discovered to be void, or when a contract becomes void, any person who has received any advantage under such agreement or contract is bound to restore it, or to make compensation for it, to the person from whom he received it.

In the given case, the contract for supply of machinery by Rajeev Ltd. to Mr. Gogia by 31st May, 2019 was frustrated due to the occurrence of an earthquake on 31st March, 2019 which has led to the break in the operations of Rajeev Ltd. for at least one year.

Since, Mr. Gogia obtains no benefit from the contract, and he has paid part of a sum before frustration, he can recover the money paid in advance because it can be said there has been total failure of consideration. Hence, Mr. Gogia can recover the amount of Rs. 2,00,000 from Rajeev Ltd.

Question 2

S asks R to beat T and promises to indemnify R against the consequences. R beats T and is fined Rs. 50,000. Can R claim Rs. 50,000 from S.

[ICAI Module]

Answer

R cannot claim Rs. 50,000 from S because the object of the agreement was unlawful. A contract of indemnity to be valid must fulfil all the essentials of a valid contract which includes:

a. Offer and acceptance
b. Intention to create legal obligation
c. Consideration
d. Competency to contract
e. Free consent
f. Lawful object
g. The agreement must not be expressly declared to be void. Eg: Agreement in restraint of trade
h. The terms of the agreement must not be vague or uncertain
i. The agreement must be capable of performance- An agreement to do an impossible act is void.
j. Legal formalities

Question 3

State the rights of the indemnity-holder when sued?

[MTP Mar 2018]

Answer

According to the Section 125 of the Indian Contract Act,1872 the indemnity holder i.e., promisee in a contract of indemnity, acting within the scope of his authority, is entitled to recover from the promisor:

(i) all damages which he may be compelled to pay in any suit in respect of any matter to which the promise

to indemnify applies.

(ii) all costs which he may be compelled to pay in any such suit, if in bringing or defending it, he did not contravene the orders of the promisor, and acted as it would have been prudent for him to act in the absence of any contract of indemnity, or if the promisor authorised him to bring or defend the suit.

(iii) all sums which he may have paid under the terms of any compromise of any such suit, if the compromise was not contrary to the orders of the promisor and was one which it would have been prudent for the promisee to make in the absence of any contract of indemnity, or if the promisor authorised him to compromise the suit.

Section 125 is by no means exhaustive, which deals only with his rights in the event of his being sued. The indemnity holder has other rights besides those mentioned above. If he has incurred a liability and that liability is absolute, he is entitled to call upon his indemnifier to save him from that liability and to pay it off.

Question 4

Define 'Contract of Indemnity' as per the Indian Contract Act, 1872. What are the parties to a contract of indemnity? Give an example to explain the contract of indemnity.

[MTP Aug 2018]

Answer

According to section 124 of the Indian Contract Act, 1872, a contract by which one party promises to save the other from loss caused to him by the conduct of the promisor himself, or by the conduct of any other person, is called a "contract of indemnity."

There are two parties in this form of contract. The party who promises to indemnify/ save the other party from loss is known as 'indemnifier, whereas the party who is promised to be saved against the loss is known as 'indemnified' or indemnity holder.

Example: A may contract to indemnify B against the consequences of any proceedings which C may take against B in respect of a sum of Rs. 5000/- advanced by C to B. In consequence, when B who is called upon to pay the sum of money to C fails to do so, C would be able to recover the amount from A as provided in Section 124.

Question 5

Define contract of indemnity and contract of guarantee and state the conditions when guarantee is considered invalid?

[MTP April 19, Oct 19, Nov 21]

Answer

Section 124 of the Indian Contract Act, 1872 says that "A contract by which one party promises to save the other from loss caused to him by the conduct of the promisor himself, or the conduct of any person", is called a "contract of indemnity".

Section 126 of the Indian Contract Act says that "A contract to perform the promise made or discharge liability incurred by a third person in case of his default." is called as "contract of guarantee".

The conditions under which the guarantee is invalid or void are stated in section 142,143 and 144 of the Indian Contract Act are :

i. Guarantee obtained by means of misrepresentation.
ii. Creditor obtained any guarantee by means of keeping silence as to material circumstances.
iii. When contract of guarantee is entered into on the condition that the creditor shall not act upon it until another person has joined in it as co-surety and that other party fails to join as such.

Question 6

Distinguish between a contract of Indemnity and a contract of Guarantee as per The Indian Contract Act, 1872.

[Nov 20, MTP Nov 22]

Answer

Point of distinction	Contract of Indemnity	Contract of Guarantee
Number of party/ Parties to the contract	There are only two parties namely the indemnifier [promisor] and the indemnified [promisee]	There are three parties creditor, principal debtor and surety.
Nature of liability	The liability of the indemnifier is primary and unconditional.	The liability of the surety is secondary and conditional as the primary liability is that of the principal debtor.
Time of liability	The liability of the indemnifier arises only on the happening of a contingency.	The liability arises only on the non performance of an existing promise or non- payment of an existing debt.
Time to act	The indemnifier need not act at the Request of indemnity holder	The surety acts at the request of principal debtor.
Right to sue third party	Indemnifier cannot sue a third party for loss in his own name as there is no privity of contract. Such a right would arise only if there is an assignment in his favour.	Surety can proceed against principal debtor in his own right because he gets all the right of a creditor after discharging the debts.
Purpose	Reimbursement of loss	For the security of the creditor
Competency to contract	All parties must be competent to contract	In the case of a contract of guarantee, where a minor is a principal debtor, the contract is still valid.

Question 7

Paul (minor) purchased a smart phone on credit from a mobile dealer on the surety given by Mr. Jack, (a major). Paul did not pay for the mobile. The mobile dealer demanded the payment from Mr. Jack because the contract entered with Paul (minor) is void. Mr. Jack argued that he is not liable to pay the amount since Paul (Principal Debtor) is not liable. Whether the argument is correct under the Indian Contract Act, 1872? What will be your answer if Jack and Paul both are minor?

[July 21]

Answer

In the case of a contract of guarantee, where a minor is a principal debtor, the contract is still valid.
In the given question, the contract is a valid contract and Jack (major) shall be liable to pay the amount even if Paul (Principal debtor) is not liable (as Paul i s minor).

If both Jack and Paul are minors then the agreement of guarantee is void because the surety as well as the principal debtor are incompetent to contract.

Question 8

'Surendra' guarantees 'Virendra' for the transactions to be done between 'Virendra' & 'Jitendra' during the month of March, 2021. 'Virendra' supplied goods of Rs. 30,000 on 01.03.2021 and of Rs. 20,000 on 03.03.2021 to 'Jitendra'. On 05.03.2021, 'Surendra' died in a road accident. On 10.03.2021, being ignorant of the death of 'Surendra', 'Virendra' further supplied goods of Rs. 40,000. On default in payment by 'Jitendra' on due date, 'Virendra' sued on legal heirs of 'Surendra' for recovery of Rs. 90,000. Describe, whether legal heirs of 'Surendra' are liable to pay Rs. 90,000 under provisions of Indian Contract Act 1872.
What would be your answer, if the estate of 'Surendra' is worth of Rs. 45,000 only?

[RTP May 22]

Answer

According to section 131 of Indian Contract Act 1872, in the absence of a contract to contrary, a continuing guarantee is revoked by the death of the surety as to the future transactions. The estate of deceased surety, however, liable for those transactions which had already taken place during the lifetime of deceased. Surety's estate will not be liable for the transactions taken place after the death of surety even if the creditor had no knowledge of surety's death.

In this question, 'Surendra' was surety for the transactions to be done between 'Virendra' & 'Jitendra' during the month of March'2021. 'Virendra' supplied goods of Rs. 30,000, Rs. 20,000 and of Rs. 40,000 on 01.03.2021, 03.03.2021 and 10.03.02021 respectively. 'Surendra' died in a road accident but this was not in the knowledge of 'Virendra'. When 'Jitendra' defaulted in payment, 'Virendra' filed suit against legal heirs of 'Surendra' for recovery of full amount i.e. Rs. 90,000.

On the basis of above, it can be said in case of death of surety ('Surendra'), his legal heirs are liable only for those transactions which were entered before 05.03.2021 i.e. for Rs. 50,000. They are not liable for the transaction done on 10.03.2021 even though Virendra had no knowledge of death of Surendra.
Further, if the worth of the estate of deceased is only Rs. 45,000, the legal heirs are liable for this amount only.

Question 9

Megha advances to Nisha Rs. 5,000 on the guarantee of Prem. The loan carries interest at ten percent per annum. Subsequently, Nisha becomes financially embarrassed. On Nisha's request, Megha reduces the interest to six per cent per annum and does not sue Nisha for one year after the loan becomes due. Nisha becomes insolvent. Can Megha sue Prem?
Decide your answer in reference to the provisions of the Contract Act, 1872.

[MTP Aug 18]

Answer

According to section 133 of the Indian Contract Act, 1872, where there is any variance in the terms of contract between the principal debtor and creditor without surety's consent, it would discharge the surety in respect of all transactions taking place subsequent to such variance.

Here, in the given situation, Megha cannot sue Prem, because a surety is discharged from liability when, without his consent, the creditor makes any change in the terms of his contract with the principal debtor, no matter whether the variation is beneficial to the surety or does not materially affect the position of the surety.

Question 10

Mr. Shashank, is employed as a cashier on a monthly salary of Rs. 10,000 by XYZ bank for a period of three years. Yash gave surety for Shashank's good conduct. After nine months, the financial position of the bank deteriorates. Then Shashank agrees to accept a lower salary of Rs. 5,000/- per month from Bank. Two months later, it was found that Shashank has misappropriated cash since the time of his appointment. What is the liability of Yash? Decide your answer in reference to the provisions of the Contract Act, 1872.

[MTP March 18, RTP Nov 2019, Nov 18]

Answer

According to section 133 of the Indian Contract Act, 1872, where there is any variance in the terms of contract between the principal debtor and creditor without surety's consent, it would discharge the surety in respect of all transactions taking place subsequent to such variance.

Thus, if the creditor makes any variance (i.e. change in terms) without the consent of the surety, then surety is discharged as to the transactions subsequent to the change.
In the instant case Yash is liable as a surety for the loss suffered by the bank due to misappropriation of cash by Shashank during the first nine months but not for misappropriations committed after the reduction in salary.

Question 11

A contracts with B for a fixed price to construct a house for B within a stipulated time. B would supply the necessary material to be used in the construction. C guarantees A's performance of the contract. B does not supply the material as per the agreement. Is C discharged from his liability?

[MTP March 18]

Answer

According to section 134 of the Indian Contract Act, 1872, the surety is discharged by any contract between the creditor and the principal debtor, by which the principal debtor is released or by any act or omission of the creditor, the legal consequence of which is the discharge of the principal debtor.

In the given case, B does not supply the necessary material as per the agreement. Hence, C is discharged from his liability.

Question 12

Manish, a minor, lost his parents in COVID-19 pandemic. Due to poor financial background Manish was facing difficulties in maintaining his livelihood. He approached Mr. Sohel (a grocery shopkeeper) to supply him grocery items and to wait for some period for receiving his dues. Mr. Sohel did not agree with the proposal; but when Mr. Ganesh, a local person, who is a major, agreed to provide guarantee that he would pay the dues in case Manish fails to pay the amount, Mr. Sohel supplied the required groceries to Manish. After few months when Manish failed to clear his dues, Mr. Sohel approached Mr. Ganesh and asked him to clear the dues of Manish. Mr. Ganesh refused to pay the amount on two grounds; firstly, that there was no consideration in the contract of guarantee and secondly that Manish is a minor and therefore on both the grounds the contract of guarantee is not valid.

Referring to the relevant provisions of the Indian Contract Act, 1872, decide, whether the contention of Mr. Ganesh, (the surety) is tenable? Will your answer differ in case both Manish (the principal debtor) and Mr. Ganesh (the surety) are minors?

[Nov 22]

Answer

(i) In the light of the given facts in the question, the **guarantee was given by Mr. Ganesh (the surety)** to Mr. Sohel that he would pay the dues in case Mr. Manish (the Principal Debtor) **fails to pay the amount**. However, later on it was contended by Mr. Ganesh that there was **no consideration in the contract** of guarantee and **also that Manish is a minor** and **therefore the contract of guarantee is not valid.**

As per the provisions of **Section 127** of the Indian Contract Act, 1872, anything done, or promise made, for the **benefit of the principal debtor**, may be a **sufficient consideration** to the surety for giving the guarantee.

In the given case, Mr. Ganesh has provided guarantee to Mr. Sohel for the benefit of Mr. Manish which will be **treated as sufficient consideration** even though there is absence of direct consideration. In other words, a guarantee without consideration is void, but there is no need for a direct consideration between the surety and the creditor.

Regarding the contention that Manish is a minor and therefore, the contract of guarantee will be invalid is not tenable due to the fact that Mr. Ganesh (surety) and Mr. Sohel (the creditor) are not minors. In other words, the capability of the principal debtor (being a minor) does not affect the validity of the agreement of the guarantee.

In view of the above, it can be concluded that the contention of Mr. Ganesh is not tenable.

(ii) In case both Manish (the **principal debtor**) and Mr. Ganesh (the **surety**) are **minors**:
The answer will differ in case both Manish (the principal debtor) and Mr. Ganesh (the surety) are minors. In such a situation, the agreement will be treated as void from inception as the minors cannot give guarantee even with a claim for necessities.

Question 13

Manoj guarantees for Ranjan, a retail textile merchant, for an amount of Rs. 1,00,000, for which Sharma, the supplier may from time to time supply goods on credit basis to Ranjan during the next 3 months.
After 1 month, Manoj revokes the guarantee, when Sharma had supplied goods on credit for Rs. 40,000. Referring to the provisions of the Indian Contract Act, 1872, decide whether Manoj is discharged from all the liabilities to Sharma for any subsequent credit supply. What would be your answer in case Ranjan makes default in paying back Sharma for the goods already supplied on credit i.e. Rs. 40,000 ?

[May 19, RTP Nov 20]

Answer

Discharge of Surety by Revocation: As per section 130 of the Indian Contract Act, 1872 a specific guarantee cannot be revoked by the surety if the liability has already accrued. A continuing guarantee may, at any time, be revoked by the surety, as to future transactions, by notice to the creditor, but the surety remains liable for transactions already entered into.

As per the above provisions, liability of Manoj is discharged with relation to all subsequent credit supplies made by Sharma after revocation of guarantee, because it is a case of continuing guarantee.

However, liability of Manoj for previous transactions (before revocation) i.e. for Rs. 40,000 remains. He is liable for payment of Rs. 40,000 to Sharma because the transaction was already entered into before revocation of guarantee.

Question 14

C, the holder of an over due bill of exchange drawn by A as surety for B, and accepted by B, contracts with X to give time to B. Is A discharged from his liability?

[RTP Nov 18, MTP Mar 19, May 20]

Answer

According to Section 136 of the Indian Contract Act, 1872, where a contract to give time to the principal debtor is made by the creditor with a third person and not with the principal debtor, the surety is not discharged.

In the given question the contract to give time to the principal debtor is made by the creditor with X who is a third person. X is not the principal debtor. Hence, A is not discharged.

Question 15

'A' gives to 'M' a continuing guarantee to the extent of Rs. 8,000 for the fruits to be supplied by 'M' to 'S' from time to time on credit. Afterwards 'S' became embarrassed and without the knowledge of 'A', 'M' and 'S' contract that 'M' shall continue to supply 'S' with fruits for ready money and that payments shall be applied to the then existing debts between 'S' and 'M'. Examining the provision of the Indian Contract Act, 1872, decide whether 'A' is liable on his guarantee given to M.

[RTP May 19]

Answer

Discharge of surety by variance in terms of contract: The problem asked in the question is based on the provisions of the Indian Contract Act, 1872 as contained in Section 133. The section provides that any variance made without the surety's consent in the terms of the contract between the principal debtor and the creditor, discharges the surety as to transactions subsequent to the variance.

In the given problem, 'M' and 'S' entered into arrangement by entering into a new contract without knowledge of the Surety 'A'. Since, the variance made in the contract is without the surety's consent in the existing contract, as per the provision, 'A' is not liable on his guarantee for the fruits supplied after this new arrangement. The reason for such a discharge is that the surety agreed to be liable for a contract which is no more there now and he is not liable on the altered contract because it is different from the contract made by him.

Question 16

Mr. Ram was employed as financer in "Swaraj Ltd" on the surety of his good conduct, given by Mr. Janak, a

good friend of the director of the company. Mr. Ram was kept on the salary of Rs. 45,000 per month. After 3 years, the company went into losses and so company decided for the cost cutting by retrenching of many employees and reducing the salaries of the employees. Mr. Ram was also proposed either to quit the job or continued with the lower salary of Rs. 35,000 per month . He accepted and continued with the job . After few months, it was reported by accounts department of the company that Mr. Ram manipulated with the funds of the company.

As per the provisions of the Indian Contract Act, 1872, analyse the legal positions of Mr. Janak, in the given situations:

(i) Mr. Ram has manipulated the funds of the company since the time of his appointment.

(ii) Mr. Ram has manipulated the funds of the company since from few months before when he accepted to continue the job on lower salary.

[MTP Oct 18]

Answer

Section 133 of the Indian Contract Act, 1872 deals with the provision related to the discharge of the surety. Provisions states that where there is any variance in the terms of contract between the principal debtor and creditor without surety's consent it would discharge the surety in respect of all transactions taking place subsequent to such variance.

Following is the answer in the light of the above provision:

(i) In case where, Mr. Ram has manipulated the funds of the company since the time of his appointment. In this case Mr. Janak is liable as a surety for the loss suffered by the Swaraj Company due to manipulation of the funds by Mr. Ram during the three years of his service (before such change).

(ii) In case where, Mr. Ram has manipulated the funds of the company since from few months before when he accepted to continue the job on lower salary. In this case, variance in the terms of the contract (i.e., to work on lower salary) was made without surety's consent. For all the transactions taking place subsequent to such variance, shall discharge the surety for the loss suffered by the Swaraj company.

Question 17

(i) Mr. CB was invited to guarantee an employee Mr. BD who was previously dismissed for dishonesty by the same employer. This fact was not told to Mr. CB. Later on, the employee embezzled funds. Whether CB is liable for the financial loss as surety under the provisions of the Indian Contract Act, 1872?

(ii) Mr. X agreed to give a loan to Mr. Y on the security of four properties. Mr. A gave guarantee against the loan. Actually Mr. X gave a loan of smaller amount on the security of three properties. Whether Mr. A is liable as surety in case Mr. Y failed to repay the loan?

[Nov 20]

Answer

(i) As per section 143 of the Indian Contract Act, 1872, any guarantee which the creditor has obtained by means of keeping silence as to material circumstances, is invalid.

In the given instance, Mr. CB was invited to give guarantee of an employee Mr. BD to the same employer who previously dismissed Mr. BD for dishonesty. This fact was not told to Mr. CB. Here, keeping silence as to previous dismissal of Mr. BD for dishonesty is a material fact and if Mr. BD later embezzled the funds of the employer.

Mr. CB will not be held liable for the financial loss as surety since such a contract of guarantee entered is invalid in terms of the above provisions.

(ii) As per the provisions of section 133 of the Indian Contract Act, 1872, any variance, made without the surety's consent, in the terms of the contract between the principal [debtor] and the creditor, discharges the surety as to transactions subsequent to the variance.

In the given instance, the actual transaction was not in terms of the guarantee given by Mr. A. The loan amount as well as the securities were reduced without the knowledge of the surety.

So, accordingly, Mr. A is not liable as a surety in case Y failed to repay the loan

Question 18

Satya has given his residential property on rent amounting to Rs. 25,000 per month to Tushar. Amit became the surety for payment of rent by Tushar. Subsequently, without Amit's consent, Tushar agreed to pay higher rent to Satya. After a few months of this, Tushar defaulted in paying the rent.
Explain the meaning of contract of guarantee according to the provisions of the Indian Contract Act, 1872. State the position of Amit in this regard.

[Jan 21, MTP 1 May'23]

Answer

(i) Contract of guarantee: As per the provisions of section 126 of the Indian Contract Act, 1872, a contract of guarantee is a contract to perform the promise made or discharge the liability, of a third person in case of his default.
Three parties are involved in a contract of guarantee:

- Surety- person who gives the guarantee,
- Principal debtor- person in respect of whose default the guarantee is given,
- Creditor- person to whom the guarantee is given

(ii) According to the provisions of section 133 of the Indian Contract Act, 1872, where there is any variance in the terms of contract between the principal debtor and creditor without surety's consent, it would discharge the surety in respect of all transactions taking place subsequent to such variance.

In the instant case, Satya (Creditor) cannot sue Amit (Surety), because Amit is discharged from liability when, without his consent, Tushar (Principal debtor) has changed the terms of his contract with Satya (creditor). It is immaterial whether the variation is beneficial to the surety or does not materially affect the position of the surety.

Question 19

Rahul is the owner of electronics shop. Priyanka reached the shop to purchase an air conditioner whose compressor should be of copper. As Priyanka wanted to purchase the air conditioner on credit, Rahul demand a guarantor for such transaction. Mr. Arvind (a friend of Priyanka) came forward and gave the guarantee for payment of air conditioner. Rahul sold the air conditioner of a particular brand, misrepresenting that it is made of copper while it is made of aluminium. Neither Priyanka nor Mr. Arvind had the knowledge of fact that it is made of aluminium. On being aware of the facts, Priyanka denied for payment of price. Rahul filed the suit against Mr. Arvind. Explain with reference to the Indian Contract Act 1872, whether Mr. Arvind is liable to pay the price of air conditioner?

[RTP Nov 21, MTP Nov 22]

Answer

As per the provisions of section 142 of the Indian Contract Act 1872, where the guarantee has been obtained by means of misrepresentation made by the creditor concerning a material part of the transaction, the surety will be discharged.

Further according to provisions of section 134, the surety is discharged by any contract between the creditor and the principal debtor, by which the principal debtor is released, or by any act or omission of the creditor, the legal consequence of which is the discharge of the principal debtor.

In the given question, Priyanka wants to purchase air conditioner whose compressor should be of copper, on credit from Rahul. Mr. Arvind has given the guarantee for payment of price. Rahul sold the air conditioner of a particular brand on misrepresenting that it is made of copper while it is made of aluminum of which both Priyanka & Mr. Arvind were unaware. After being aware of the facts, Priyanka denied for payment of price. Rahul filed the suit against Mr. Arvind for payment of price.

On the basis of above provisions and facts of the case, as guarantee was obtained by Rahul by

misrepresentation of the facts, Mr. Arvind will not be liable. He will be discharged from liability.

Question 20

Mr. D was in urgent need of money amounting to Rs. 5,00,000. He asked Mr. K for the money. Mr. K lent the money on the sureties of A, B and N without any contract between them in case of default in repayment of money by D to K. D makes default in payment. B refused to contribute, examine whether B can escape liability under the Indian Contract Act, 1872?

[May 18, MTP April 19, Oct 20, Oct 21]

OR

Due to urgent need of money amounting to Rs. 3,00,000, Pawan approached Raman and asked him for the money. Raman lent the money on the guarantee of Suraj, Tarun and Usha. Pawan makes default in payment and Suraj pays full amount to Raman. Suraj, afterwards, claimed contribution from Tarun and Usha refused to contribute on the basis that there is no contract between Suraj and him. Examine referring to the provisions of the Indian Contract Act, 1872, whether Tarun can escape from his liability.

[Dec 21]

Answer

Co-sureties liable to contribute equally (Section 146 of the Indian Contract act, 1872): Equality of burden is the basis of Co-suretyship. This is contained in section 146 which states that "when two or more persons are co-sureties for the same debt, or duty, either jointly, or severally and whether under the same or different contracts and whether with or without the knowledge of each other, the co-sureties in the absence of any contract to the contrary, are liable, as between themselves, to pay each an equal share of the whole debt, or of that part of it which remains unpaid by the principal debtor".

Accordingly, on the default of D in payment, B cannot escape from his liability. All the three sureties A, B and N are liable to pay equally, in absence of any contract between them.

Question 21

'C' advances to 'B', Rs. 2,00,000 on the guarantee of 'A'. 'C' has also taken a further security for the same borrowing by mortgage of B's furniture worth Rs. 2,00,000. Without knowledge of 'A'. C' cancels the mortgage. After 6 months 'B' becomes insolvent and 'C' 'sues 'A' his guarantee. Decide the liability of 'A' if the market value of furniture is worth Rs.80,000, under the Indian Contract Act, 1872.

[Nov 2019]

Answer

Surety's right to benefit of creditor's securities: According to section 141 of the Indian Contract Act, 1872, a surety is entitled to the benefit of every security which the creditor has against the principal debtor at the time when the contract of suretyship is entered into, whether the surety knows of the existence of such security or not; and, if the creditor loses, or, without the consent of the surety, parts with such security, the surety is discharged to the extent of the value of the security.

In the instant case, C advances to B, Rs. 2,00,000 rupees on the guarantee of A. C has also taken a further security for Rs. 2,00,000 by mortgage of B's furniture without knowledge of A. C cancels the mortgage. B becomes insolvent, and C sues A on his guarantee. A is discharged from liability to the amount of the value of the furniture i.e. Rs. 80,000 and will remain liable for balance Rs. 1,20,000.

Question 22

State the essential elements of a contract of bailment.

[ICAI Module]

Answer

Essential elements of a contract of bailment: Section 148 of the Indian Contract Act, 1872 defines the term 'Bailment'. A 'bailment' the pledges are the delivery of goods by one person to another for some purpose upon a contract that they shall, when the purpose is accomplished, be returned or otherwise disposed of according to the directions of the person delivering them.

The essential elements of the contract of the bailment are:

1. Delivery of goods—The essence of bailment is delivery of goods by one person to another.
2. Bailment is a contract—In bailment, the delivery of goods is upon a contract that when the purpose is accomplished, the goods shall be returned to the bailor.
3. Return of goods in specific—The goods are delivered for some purpose and it is agreed that the specific goods shall be returned.
4. Ownership of goods—In a bailment, it is only the possession of goods which is transferred and the bailor continues to be the owner of the goods.
5.Property must be movable—Bailment is only for movable goods and never for immovable goods or money.

Question 23

Examine whether the following constitute a contract of 'Bailment' under the provisions of the Indian Contract Act, 1872:
(i) V parks his car at a parking lot, locks it, and keeps the keys with himself.
(ii) Seizure of goods by customs authorities.

[ICAI Module, MTP-1 May 23]

Answer

As per Section 148 of the Act, bailment is the delivery of goods by one person to another for some purpose, upon a contract, that the goods shall, when the purpose is accomplished, be returned or otherwise disposed of according to the directions of the person delivering them.
For a bailment to exist the bailor must give possession of the bailed property and the bailee must accept it. There need not betransfer in ownership of the goods.

(i) No. Mere custody of goods does not mean possession. In the given case, since the keys of the car are with V, Section 148, of the Indian Contract Act, 1872 shall not applicable.

(ii) Yes, the possession of the goods is transferred to the custom authorities. Therefore, bailment exists and section 148 is applicable.

Question 24

Mrs. Shivani delivered her old silver jewellery to Mr. Y a Goldsmith, for the purpose of making anklet out of it. Every evening she used to receive the unfinished good (anklet) to put it into box kept at Mr. Y's Shop. She kept the key of that box with herself. One night, the anklet was stolen from that box. Was there a contract of bailment? Whether the possession of the goods (actual or constructive) delivered, constitute contract of bailment or not? Give your answer as per the provisions of the Indian Contract Act, 1872.

[MTP March 22]

Answer

Section 148 of Indian Contract Act 1872 defines 'Bailment' as the delivery of goods by one person to another for some purpose, upon a contract that they shall, when the purpose is accomplished, be returned or otherwise disposed of according to the direction of the person delivering them.

According to Section 149 of the Indian Contract Act, 1872, the delivery to the bailee may be made by doing anything which has the effect of putting the goods in the possession of the intended bailee or of any person authorised to hold them on his behalf. Thus, delivery is necessary to constitute bailment.

Thus, the mere keeping of the box at Y's shop, when Mrs. Shivani herself took away the key cannot amount to delivery as per the meaning of delivery given in the provision in section 149.

Therefore, in this case there is no contract of bailment as Mrs. Shivani did not deliver the complete possession of the good by keeping the keys with herself.

Question 25

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Question 26

On the basis of reward, what are various categories of bailment?

[MTP Oct 21]

Answer

On the basis of reward, bailment can be classified into two types:

(i) Gratuitous Bailment: The word gratuitous means free of charge. So, a gratuitous bailment is one when the provider of service does it gratuitously i.e. free of charge. Such bailment would be either for the exclusive benefits of bailor or bailee.

(ii) Non-Gratuitous Bailment: Non gratuitous bailment means where both the parties get some benefit i.e. bailment for the benefit of both bailor & bailee

Question 27

Ramesh hires a carriage of Suresh and agrees to pay Rs. 1500 as hire charges. The carriage is unsafe, though Suresh is unaware of it. Ramesh is injured and claims compensation for injuries suffered by him. Suresh refuses to pay. Discuss the liability of Suresh.

[RTP May 18, Oct 18]

Answer

Problem asked in the question is based on the provisions of the Indian Contract Act, 1872 as contained in Section 150. The section provides that if the goods are bailed for hire, the bailor is responsible for such damage, whether he was or was not aware of the existence of such faults in the goods bailed.

Accordingly, applying the above provisions in the given case Suresh is responsible to compensate Ramesh for the injuries sustained even if he was not aware of the defect in the carriage.

Question 28

Ashley bails his jewelry with Barn on the condition to safeguard in bank's safe locker. However, Barn kept it in safe locker at his residence, where he usually keeps his own jewelry. After a month all jewelry was lost in a religious riot. Ashley filed a suit against Barn for recovery. Referring to provisions of the Indian Contract Act, 1872, state whether Ashely will succeed.

[MTP Aug 18, MTP Nov'22]

Answer

According to section 151 of the Indian Contract Act, 1872, in all cases of bailment, the bailee is bound to take as much care of the goods bailed to him as a man of ordinary prudence would, under similar circumstances, take of his own goods of the same bulk, quality and value as the goods bailed.

According to section 152 of the Indian Contract Act, 1872, the bailee, in the absence of any special contract, is not responsible for the loss, destruction or deterioration of the thing bailed, if he has taken the amount of care of it described in section 151.

Thus, Barn is liable to compensate Ashley for his negligence to keep jewelry at his residence. Here, Ashley and Barn agreed to keep the jewelry at the Bank's safe locker and not at the latter's residence.

Question 29

Amit lends a horse to Bimal for his own riding only. However, Bimal allows Chinku, a member of his family to ride the horse. Chinku rides the horse with care, but the horse falls and is injured .

As per the provisions of the Indian Contract Act, 1872, analyse the liability of Bimal in the given situation.

[MTP Oct 18]

Answer

According to section 154 of the Indian Contract Act, 1872, if the bailee makes any use of the goods bailed, which is not according to the conditions of the bailment, he is liable to make compensation to the bailor for any damage arising to the goods from or during such use of them.

Hence, Bimal is liable to make compensation to Amit for the injury done to the horse.

Question 30

As per the provisions of the Indian Contract Act, 1872, what is the meaning of:

(1) Continuing guarantee

(2) Gratuitous Bailment

[MTP Nov 22]

Answer

(1) Continuing guarantee: A guarantee which extends to a series of transaction is called a continuing guarantee. A surety's liability continues until the revocation of the guarantee. The essence of continuing guarantee is that it applies not to a specific number of transactions but to any number of transactions and makes the surety liable for the unpaid balance at the end of the guarantee.

(2) Gratuitous Bailment: The word gratuitous means free of charge. So, a gratuitous bailment is one when the provider of service does it gratuitously i.e., free of charge. Such bailment would be either for the exclusive benefits of bailor or bailee.

Question 31

What is the liability of a bailee making unauthorized use of goods bailed?

[May 19]

Answer

Liability of bailee making unauthorised use of goods bailed: According to section 154 of the Indian Contract Act, 1872, if the bailee makes any use of the goods bailed, which is not according to the conditions of the bailment, he is liable to make compensation to the bailor for any damage arising to the goods from or during such use of them.

Question 32

Mr. Dhannaseth delivers a rough blue sapphire to a jeweler, to be cut and polished. The jeweler carries out the job accordingly. However, now Mr. Dhannaseth refuses to make the payment and wants his blue sapphire back. The jeweler denies the delivery of goods without payment. Examine

[MTP Oct 19]

Answer

According to section 170 of the Indian Contract Act, 1872, where the bailee has, in accordance with the purpose of the bailment, rendered any service involving the exercise of labour or skill in respect of the goods bailed, he has, in the absence of a contract to the contrary, a right to retain such goods until he receives due remuneration for the services he has rendered in respect of them.

Thus, in accordance with the purpose of bailment if the bailee by his skill or labour improves the goods bailed, he is entitled for remuneration for such services. Towards such remuneration, the bailee can retain the goods bailed if the bailor refuses to pay the remuneration. Such a right to retain the goods bailed is the right of particular lien. He however does not have the right to sue.
Where the bailee delivers the goods without receiving his remuneration, he has a right to sue the bailor.

In such a case the particular lien may be waived. The particular lien is also lost if the bailee does not complete the work within the time agreed.

Hence, in the given situation the jeweller is entitled to retain the stone till he is paid for the services he has rendered.

Question 33

Raj gives his umbrella to Manoj during raining season to be used for two days during Examinations. Manoj keeps the umbrella for a week. While going to Raj's house to return the umbrella, Manoj accidently slips and the umbrella is badly damaged. Taking into account the provisions of the Indian Contract Act, 1872, who will bear the loss and why?

[RTP Nov 20]

Answer

It is the duty of bailee to return, or deliver according to the bailor's directions, the goods bailed without demand, as soon as the time for which they were bailed, has expired, or the purpose for which they were bailed has been accomplished. [Section 160 of the Indian Contract Act, 1872]

If, by the default of the bailee, the goods are not returned, delivered or tendered at the proper time, he is responsible to bailor for any loss, destruction or deterioration of goods from that time. [Section 161]

In the instant case, Manoj shall have to bear the loss since he failed to return the umbrella within the stipulated time and Section 161 clearly says that where a bailee fails to return the goods within the agreed time, he shall be responsible to the bailor for any loss, destruction or deterioration of the goods from that time notwithstanding the exercise of reasonable care on his part.

Question 34

Megha lends a sum of Rs. 20,000 to Bhim, on the security of two shares of a Prema Limited on 1st April 2019. On 15th June, 2019, the company issued two bonus shares. Bhim returns the loan amount of Rs. 20,000 with interest but Megha returns only two shares which were pledged and refuses to give the two bonus shares. Advise Bhim in the light of the provisions of the Indian Contract Act, 1872.

[MTP April 21]

Answer

Bailee's Duties and Liabilities: The problem as asked in the question is based on the provisions of Section 163(4) of the Indian Contract Act, 1872. As per the section, "in the absence of any contract to the contrary, the bailee is bound to deliver to the bailor, any increase or profit which may have accrued from the goods bailed."

In the given question, Megha received 2 bonus shares on the 2 pledged shares of Prema Limited. Applying the provisions of the Indian Contract Act, 1872, to the given case, the bonus shares are an increase on the shares pledged by Bhim to Megha. So, Megha is liable to return the shares along with the bonus shares.

Hence Bhim the bailor, is entitled to receive the original shares as well as bonus shares (after he has repaid the loan amount).

Question 35

What are the rights available to the finder of lost goods under Section 168 and Section 169 of the Indian Contract Act, 1872.

[Nov 18]

Answer

As per the provisions of section 168 and 169 of the Indian Contract Act, 1872, the finder of goods has no right to sue the owner for compensation for trouble and expense voluntarily incurred by him to preserve the goods and to find out the owner. But 'finder of lost goods' can ask for reimbursement for expenditure incurred for preserving the goods and also for searching the true owner. If the real owner refuses to pay compensation, the 'finder' cannot sue but retain the goods so found.

Further, where the real owner has announced any reward, the finder is entitled to receive the reward. The right to collect the reward is a primary and a superior right even more than the right to seek reimbursement of expenditure.

The finder though has no right to sell the goods found in the normal course; he may sell the goods if the real owner cannot be found with reasonable efforts or if the owner refuses to pay the lawful charges subject to the following conditions:

(i) when the article is in danger of perishing and losing the greater part of the value or

(ii) when the lawful charges of the finder amounts to two-third or more of the value of the article found.

Question 36

Mr. Stefen owns a chicken firm near Gurgaon, where he breeds them and sells eggs and live chicken to retail shops in Gurgaon. Mr. Flemming also owns a similar firm near Gurgaon, doing the same business. Mr. Flemming had to go back to his native place in Australia for one year. He needed money for travel so he had pledged his firm to Mr. Stefen for one year and received a deposit of Rs. 25 lakhs and went away. At that point of time, stock of live birds were 100,000 and eggs 10,000. The condition was that when Flemming returns, he will repay the deposit and take possession of his firm with live birds and eggs.

After one year Flemming came back and returned the deposit. At that time there were 109,000 live birds (increase is due to hatching of eggs out of 10,000 eggs he had left), and 15,000 eggs.

Mr. Stefen agreed to return 100,000 live birds and 10,000 eggs only.

State the duties of Mr. Stefen as Pawnee and advise Mr. Flemming about his rights in the given case.

[July 2021]

Answer

According to section 163 of the Indian Contract Act, 1872, in the absence of any contract to the contrary, the bailee is bound to deliver to the bailor, or according to his directions, any increase or profit which may have accrued from the goods bailed.

In the given question, when Mr. Flemming returned from Australia there were 1,09,000 live birds and 15,000 eggs (1,00,000 birds and 10,000 eggs were originally deposited by Mr. Flemming). Mr. Stefen agreed to return 1,00,000 live birds and 10,000 eggs only and not the increased number of live birds and eggs.

In the light of the provision of law and facts of the question, following are the answers:

Duties of Mr. Stefen: Mr. Stefen (pawnee) is bound to deliver to Mr. Flemming (pawnor), any increase or profit (9,000 live birds and 5,000 eggs) which has occurred from the goods bailed (i.e the live birds and eggs).

Right of Mr. Flemmimg: Mr. Flemming is entitled to recover from Pawnee any increase in goods so pledged

Question 37

Radheshyam borrowed a sum of Rs. 50,000 from a Bank on the security of gold on 1.07.2019 under an agreement which contains a clause that the bank shall have a right of particular lien on the gold pledged with it. Radheshyam thereafter took an unsecured loan of Rs. 20,000 from the same bank on 1.08.2019 for three months. On 30.09.2019 he repaid entire secured loan of Rs. 50,000 and requested the bank to release the gold pledged with it. The Bank decided to continue the lien on the gold until the unsecured loan is fully repaid by Radheshyam. Decide whether the decision of the Bank is valid within the provisions of the Indian Contract Act, 1872 ?

[Jan 21, MTP 2 May'23]

Answer

General lien of bankers: According to section 171 of the Indian Contract Act, 1872, bankers, factors, wharfingers, attorneys of a High Court and policy brokers may, in the absence of a contract to the contrary, retain, as a security for a general balance of account any goods bailed to them; but no other persons have a right to retain, as a security for such balance, goods bailed to them, unless there is an express contract to the effect.

Section 171 empowers the banker with general right of lien in absence of a contract whereby it is entitled to retain the goods belonging to another party, until all the dues are discharged.

Here, in the first instance, the banker under an agreement has a right of particular lien on the gold pledged with it against the first secured loan of Rs. 50,000/-, which has already been fully repaid by Radheshyam.

Accordingly, Bank's decision to continue the lien on the gold until the unsecured loan of Rs. 20,000/- (which is the second loan) is not valid.

Question 38

Mr. Avinash wanted a loan for expanding his business, from ABC Bank. Mr. Avinash has pledged the stock of his business to obtain the loan from bank. However, the expansion of business did not reap the desired results and Mr. Avinash was not able to repay the loan. Now, ABC bank wants to retain the stock for adjustment of their loan. Advise, ABC Bank whether they can retain the stock for the adjustment of their loan and also for payment of interest. Give your answer as per the provisions of the Contract Act, 1872.

[RTP Nov 18]

Answer

According to section 173 of the Indian Contract Act, 1872, the pawnee may retain the goods pledged, not only for payment of the debt or the performance of the promise, but for the interest, of the debt, and all necessary expenses incurred by him in respect of the possession or for the preservation of the goods pledged.

Hence, ABC Bank can retain the stock of business of Mr. Avinash, not only for adjustment of the loan but also for payment of interest

Question 39

Give four differences between Bailment and Pledge

[May 18]

Answer

Distinction between bailment and pledge: The following are the distinction between bailment and pledge:

1. As to purpose: Pledge is a variety of bailment. Under pledge goods are bailed as a security for a loan or a performance of a promise. In regular bailment the goods are bailed for other purpose than the two referred above. The bailee takes them for repairs, safe custody etc.
2. As to right of sale: The pledgee enjoys the right to sell only on default by the pledgor to repay the debt or perform his promise, that too only after giving due notice. In bailment the bailee, generally, cannot sell the goods. He can either retain or sue for non-payment of dues.
3. As to right of using goods: Pledgee has no right to use goods. A bailee can, if the terms so provide, use the goods.
4. Consideration: In pledge there is always a consideration whereas in a bailment there may or may not be consideration.
5. Discharge of contract: Pledge is discharged on the payment of debt or performance of promise whereas bailment is discharged as the purpose is accomplished or after specified time.

Question 40

(i) Srushti acquired valuable diamond at a very low price by a voidable contract under the provisions of the Indian Contract Act, 1872. The voidable contract was not rescinded. Srushti pledged the diamond with Mr. VK. Is this a valid pledge under the Indian Contract Act, 1872?

(ii) Whether a Pawnee has a right to retain the goods pledged.

[Nov 19]

Answer

(iii) Pledge by person in possession under voidable contract [Section 178A of the Indian Contract Act, 1872]: When the pawnor has obtained possession of the goods pledged by him under a contract voidable under section 19 or section 19A, but the contract has not been rescinded at the time of the pledge, the pawnee acquires a good title to the goods, provided he acts in good faith and without notice of the pawnor's defect of title.

Therefore, the pledge of diamond by Srushti with Mr. VK is valid.

(iv) Right of retainer [Section 173 of the Indian Contract Act, 1872]: Yes, the pawnee may retain the goods pledged, not only for payment of the debt or the performance of the promise, but for the interest, of the debt, and all necessary expenses incurred by him in respect of the possession or for the preservation of the goods pledged.

Question 41

As per the Indian Contract Act, 1872, answer the following:

(i) Definition of Pledge, pawnor and pawnee

(ii) Essential characteristics of contract of pledge

[MTP April 21]

Answer

(i) "Pledge", "pawnor" and "pawnee" defined [Section 172]:

The bailment of goods as security for payment of a debt or performance of a promise is called "pledge". The bailor is in this case called the "pawnor". The bailee is called the "pawnee".

(ii) Since Pledge is a special kind of bailment, all the essential of bailment are also essentials of Pledge. Apart from that, the characteristics of the pledge are:

(a) There shall be a bailment of security against payment or performance of the promise.
(b) The subject matter of pledge is goods.
(c) Goods pledged for shall be in existence
(d) There shall be delivery of goods from pledger to pledgee.

Question 42

A appoints M, a minor, as his agent to sell his watch for cash at a price not less than Rs. 700. M sells it to D for Rs. 350. Is the sale valid? Explain the legal position of M and D, referring to the provisions of the Indian Contract Act, 1872.

[MTP March 19, Nov 21]

Answer

According to the provisions of Section 184 of the Indian Contract Act, 1872, as between the principal and a third person, any person, even a minor may become an agent. But no person who is not of the age of majority and of sound mind can become an agent, so as to be responsible to his principal. Thus, if a person who is not competent to contract is appointed as an agent, the principal is liable to the third party for the acts of the agent.

Thus, in the given case, D gets a good title to the watch. M is not liable to A for his negligence in the performance of his duties.

Question 43

Explain the following as per the provisions of the Indian Contract Act, 1872

(i) What is the meaning of 'Agent' and 'Principal'?

(ii) Who can appoint an agent.

[MTP April 22, MTP-1 May'23]

Answer

(i) Agent: means a person employed to do any act for another or to represent another in dealing with the third persons and

The principal: means a person for whom such act is done or who is so represented.

(ii) Who may employ an agent: According to section 183 of the Indian Contract Act, 1872, "any person who has attained majority according to the law to which he is subject, and who is of sound mind, may employ an agent." Thus, a minor or a person of unsound mind cannot appoint an agent.

Question 44

State with reason whether the following statement is correct or incorrect: Ratification of agency is valid even if knowledge of the principal is materially defective.

[ICAI Module]

Answer

Incorrect: Section 198 of the Indian Contract Act, 1872 provides that for a valid ratification, the person who ratifies the already performed act must be without defect and have clear knowledge of the facts of the case. If the principal's knowledge is materially defective, the ratification is not valid and hence no agency.

Question 45

Mr. Navin owns a big car and has leased his car to Mrs. Susie. The lease agreement is terminable on three months' notice. Mr. Bhalla, not being authorised by Mr. Navin, demands on behalf of Mr. Navin, the delivery of the car and gives a notice of termination of lease agreement to Mrs. Susie who was in possession of the car at that time. Examine whether Mr. Navin can ratify the notice sent by Mr. Bhalla. Give your answer as per the provisions of the Contract Act, 1872.

[MTP Aug 18]

OR

A rented his house to B on lease for 3 years. The lease agreement is terminable on 3 months' notice by either party. C, the son of A, being in need of a separate house to live, served a notice on B, without any authority, to vacate the house within a month and requested his father A to ratify his action. Examine whether it shall be valid for A to ratify the action of C taking into account the provisions of the Indian Contract Act, 1872?

[July 21]

Answer

According to section 200 of the Indian Contract Act, 1872, an act done by one person on behalf of another, without such other person's authority, which, if done with authority, would have the effect of subjecting a third person to damages, or of terminating any right or interest of a third person, cannot, by ratification, be made to have such effect.

In other words, when the interest of third parties is affected, the principle of ratification does not apply. Ratification cannot relate back to the date of contract if third party has in the intervening time acquired rights.

Thus, in the instant case the notice cannot be ratified by Navin, so as to be binding on Susie.

Question 46

What is the meaning of 'Agency by estoppel'? What are the essential conditions for creation of an agency by estoppel? Give your answer with respect to the provisions the Indian Contract Act, 1872.

[MTP March 21, MTP March 22]

Answer

An agency by estoppel is based on the principle of estoppel. The principle of estoppel lays down that "when one person by declaration (representation), act or omission has intentionally caused or permitted another person to believe a thing to be true and to act upon such belief, he shall not be allowed to deny his previous statement or he shall be stopped to deny his previous statement or conduct".

The agency by Estoppel is provided under section 237 of the Indian Contract Act. Section 237 states: "When an agent has without authority done acts or incurred obligations to third persons on behalf of his principal the principal is bound by such acts or obligations if he has by his words or conduct induced such third persons to believe that such acts and obligations were within the scope of the agent's authority".

According to section 237 of the Contract Act, an agency by estoppel may be created when following essentials are fulfilled:

(i) the principal must have made a representation;
(ii) the representation may be express or implied;
(iii) The representation must state that the agent has an authority to do certain act although really he has no authority;
(iv) The principal must have induced the third person by such representation; and
(v) The third person must have believed the representation and made the contract on the belief of such representation.

Question 47

Ramu has given authority to Prem to buy certain goods at the market rate. Prem buys the goods at a higher rate than the market rate. However, Ramu accepted the purchase in spite of higher rate. Afterwards, Ramu comes to know that the goods purchased belonged to Prem himself. Decide, whether Ramu is bound by ratification done?

[May 2022]

Answer

According to section 198 of the Indian Contract Act, 1872, no valid ratification can be made by a person whose knowledge of the facts of the case is materially defective.

In the instant case, Ramu has given authority to Prem to buy certain goods at the market rate. Prem buys the goods at a higher rate than the market rate. However, Ramu accepted the purchase inspite of higher rate.

Afterwards, Ramu comes to know that the goods belonged to Prem himself. The ratification is not binding on Ramu.

Question 48

Rahul, a transporter was entrusted with the duty of transporting tomatoes from a rural farm to a city by Aswin. Due to heavy rains, Rahul was stranded for more than two days. Rahul sold the tomatoes below the market rate in the nearby market where he was stranded fearing that the tomatoes may perish. Can Aswin recover the loss from Rahul on the ground that Rahul had acted beyond his authority?

[May 18, RTP May 18, MTP Oct 19, April 21]

Answer

Agent's authority in an emergency (Section 189 of the Indian Contract Act, 1872): An agent has authority, in an emergency, to do all such acts for the purpose of protecting his principal from loss as would be done by a person of ordinary prudence, in his own case, under similar circumstances.

In the instant case, Rahul, the agent, was handling perishable goods like 'tomatoes' and can decide the time, date and place of sale, not necessarily as per instructions of the Aswin, the principal, with the intention of protecting Aswin from losses. Here, Rahul acts in an emergency as a man of ordinary prudence, so Aswin will not succeed against him for recovering the loss.

Question 49

Aarthi is the wife of Naresh. She purchased some sarees on credit from M/s Rainbow Silks, Jaipur.
M/s Rainbow Silks, Jaipur demanded the amount from Naresh. Naresh refused. M/s Rainbow Silks, Jaipur filed a suit against Naresh for the said amount. Decide in the light of provisions of the Indian Contract Act, 1872, whether M/s Rainbow Silks, Jaipur would succeed?

[May 19]

Answer

The situation asked in the question is based on the provisions related with the modes of creation of agency relationship under the Indian Contract Act, 1872.

Agency may be created by a legal presumption; in a case of cohabitation by a married woman (i.e. wife is considered as an implied agent of her husband). If wife lives with her husband, there is a legal presumption that a wife has authority to pledge her husband's credit for necessaries.

But the legal presumption can be rebutted in the following cases:

(i) Where the goods purchased on credit are not necessaries.
(ii) Where the wife is given sufficient money for purchasing necessaries.
(iii) Where the wife is forbidden from purchasing anything on credit or contracting debts.
(iv) Where the trader has been expressly warned not to give credit to his wife.

If the wife lives apart for no fault on her part, wife has authority to pledge her husband's credit for necessaries. This legal presumption can be rebutted only in cases (iii) and (iv) above.

Applying the above conditions in the given case M/s Rainbow Silks will succeed. It can recover the said amount from Naresh if sarees purchased by Aarthi are necessaries for her.

Question 50

What is agent's authority in case of an emergency. What are the essential conditions to be satisfied to constitute a valid emergency. Give your answer as per the provisions of the Indian Contract Act, 1872.

[MTP March 19]

Answer

An agent has authority, in an emergency, to do all such acts for the purpose of protecting his principal from loss as would be done by a person of ordinary prudence, in his own case, under similar circumstances.

To constitute a valid agency in an emergency, following conditions must be satisfied.

(i) Agent should not be a in a position or have any opportunity to communicate with his principal within the time available.
(ii) There should have been actual and definite commercial necessity for the agent to act promptly.
(iii) The agent should have acted bonafide and for the benefit of the principal.
(iv) The agent should have adopted the most reasonable and practicable course under circumstances, and
(v) The agent must have been in possession of the goods belonging to his principal and which are the subject of contract.

Question 51

Mr. Yadav, a cargo owner, chartered a vessel to carry a cargo of wheat from a foreign port to Chennai. The vessel got stranded on a reef in the sea 300 miles from the destination.

The ship's managing agents signed a salvage agreement for Mr. Yadav. The goods (wheat) being perishable, the salvors stored it at their own expense. Salvors intimated the whole incident to the cargo owner. Mr. Yadav refuse to reimburse the Salvor, as it is the Ship- owner, being the bailee of the cargo, who was liable to reimburse the salvor until the contract remained unterminated. Referring to the provision of The Indian Contract Act 1872, do you acknowledge or decline the act of Salvor, as an agent of necessity, for Mr. Yadav. Explain?

[RTP Nov 21, MTP Nov'22]

Answer

Section 189 of Indian Contract Act 1872 defines agent's authority in an emergency. An agent has authority, in an emergency, to do all such acts for the purpose of protecting his principal from loss as would be done by a person of ordinary prudence, in his own case, under similar circumstances.

In certain circumstances, a person who has been entrusted with another' s property may have to incur unauthorized expenses to protect or preserve it. This is called an agency of necessity.

Hence, in the above case the Salvor had implied authority from the cargo owner to take care of the cargo. They acted as agents of necessity on behalf of the cargo owner. Cargo owner were duty-bound towards salvor. Salvor is entitled to recover the agreed sum from Mr. Yadav and not from the ship owner, as a lien on the goods.

Question 52

Comment on the following 'Principal is not always bound by the acts of a sub-agent'.

[MTP May 20]

Answer

The statement is correct. Normally, a sub-agent is not appointed, since it is a delegation of power by an agent given to him by his principal. The governing principle is, a delegate cannot delegate'. (Latin version of this principle is, "delegates non potest delegare"). However, there are certain circumstances where an agent can appoint sub-agent.

In case of proper appointment of a sub-agent, by virtue of Section 192 of the Indian Contract Act, 1872 the principal is bound by and is held responsible for the acts of the sub-agent. Their relationship is treated to be as if the sub-agent is appointed by the principal himself.

However, if a sub-agent is not properly appointed, the principal shall not be bound by the acts of the sub-

agent. Under the circumstances the agent appointing the sub-agent shall be bound by these acts and he (the agent) shall be bound to the principal for the acts of the sub-agent.

Question 53

Mr. Bhalla instructs Aman, a merchant, to buy a ship for him. Aman employs a ship surveyor of good reputation to choose a ship for Mr. Bhalla. The surveyor makes the choice negligently and the ship turns out to be unseaworthy and is lost. Now, Mr. Bhalla holds Aman responsible for the same. Examine as per the provisions of the Contract Act, 1872, whether Aman is responsible to Mr. Bhalla.

[MTP March 18]

Answer

According to section 194 of the Indian Contract Act, 1872, where an agent, holding an express or implied authority to name another person to act for the principal in the business of the agency, has named another person accordingly, such person is not a sub-agent, but an agent of the principal for such part of the business of the agency as is entrusted to him.

Further, as per section 195, in selecting such agent for his principal, an agent is bound to exercise the same amount of discretion as a man of ordinary prudence would exercise in his own case; and, if he does this, he is not responsible to the principal for the acts or negligence of the agent so selected.

Thus, in the present case, Aman is not, but the surveyor is, responsible to Mr. Bhalla.

Question 54

Azar consigned electronic goods for sale to Aziz. Aziz employed Rahim a reputed auctioneer to sell the goods consigned to him through auction. Aziz authorized Rahim to receive the proceeds and transfer those proceeds once in 45 days. Rahim sold goods on auction for Rs. 2,00,000 but before transferring the proceeds of the auction, became insolvent. Assess the liability of Aziz according to the provisions of the Indian Contract Act, 1872.

[MTP March 18]

Answer

According to section 195 of the Contract Act, 1872, in selecting an agent (substituted) for his principal, an agent is bound to exercise the same amount of discretion as a man of ordinary prudence would exercise in his own case; and, if he does this, he is not responsible to the principal for the acts or negligence of the agent so selected.

Thus, while selecting a "substituted agent" the agent is bound to exercise same amount of diligence as a man of ordinary prudence and if he does so he will not be responsible for acts or negligence of the substituted agent.

Hence, if Aziz has exercised same amount of diligence as a man of ordinary prudence would, he shall not be responsible to Azar for the proceeds of the auction.

Question 55

Mr. Ahuja of Delhi engaged Mr. Singh as his agent to buy a house in West Extension area. Mr. Singh bought a house for Rs. 20 lakhs in the name of a nominee and then purchased it himself for Rs. 24 lakhs. He then sold the same house to Mr. Ahuja for Rs. 26 lakhs. Mr. Ahuja later comes to know the mischief of Mr. Singh and tries to recover the excess amount paid to Mr. Singh. Is he entitled to recover any amount from Mr. Singh? If so, how much? Explain.

[RTP May 18, MTP April 19, May 20]

Answer

The problem in this case, is based on the provisions of the Indian Contract Act, 1872 as contained in Section 215 read with Section 216. The two sections provide that where an agent without the knowledge of the principal, deals in the business of agency on his own account, the principal may:

(i) repudiate the transaction, if the case shows, either that the agent has dishonestly concealed any material

fact from him, or that the dealings of the agent have been disadvantageous to him.

(ii) claim from the agent any benefit, which may have resulted to him from the transaction.

Therefore, based on the above provisions, Mr. Ahuja is entitled to recover Rs. 6 lakhs from Mr. Singh being the amount of profit earned by Mr. Singh out of the transaction.

Question 56

ABC Ltd. sells its products through some agents and it is not the custom in their business to sell the products on credit. Mr. Pintu, one of the agents sold goods of ABC Ltd. to M/s. Parul Pvt. Ltd. (on credit) which was insolvent at the time of such sale. ABC Ltd. sued Mr. Pintu for compensation towards the loss caused due to sale of products to M/s. Parul Pvt. Ltd. Will ABC Ltd. succeed in its claim?

[May 18, MTP April 22]

Answer

To conduct the business of agency according to the principal's directions (Section 211 of the Indian Contract Act, 1872):

An agent is bound to conduct the business of his principal according to the direction given by the principal, or, in the absence of any such directions, according to the custom which prevails in doing business of the same kind at the place where the agent conducts such business. When the agent acts otherwise, if any loss be sustained, he must make it good to his principal, and, if any profit accrues, he must account for it.

In the present case, Mr. Pintu, one of the agents, sold goods of ABC Ltd. to M/s Parul Pvt. Ltd. (on credit) which was insolvent at the time of such sale. Also, it is not the custom in ABC Ltd. to sell the products on credit.

Hence, Mr. Pintu must make good the loss to ABC Ltd.

Question 57

Pankaj appoints Shruti as his agent to sell his estate. Shruti, on looking over the estate before selling it, finds the existence of a good quality Granite-Mine on the estate, which is unknown to Pankaj. Shruti buys the estate herself after informing Pankaj that she (Shruti) wishes to buy the estate for herself but conceals the existence of Granite-Mine. Pankaj allows Shruti to buy the estate, in ignorance of the existence of Mine. State giving reasons in brief the rights of Pankaj, the principal, against Shruti, the agent. Give your answer as per the provisions of the Contract Act, 1872.

What would be your answer if Shruti had informed Pankaj about the existence of Mine before she purchased the estate, but after two months, she sold the estate at a profit of Rs. 10 lakhs?

[MTP May 2020]

Answer

Agent's duty to disclose all material circumstances & his duty not to deal on his own account without principal's consent. The problem is based on Sections 215 & 216 of the Indian Contract Act, 1872. According to Section 215, if an agent deals on his own account in the business of the agency, without obtaining the consent of his principal and without acquainting him with all material circumstances, then the principal may repudiate the transaction.

On the other hand, section 216 provides that, if an agent, without the knowledge of his principal, acts on his own account in the business of the agency, then the principal may claim any benefit which may have accrued to the agent from such a transaction.

Hence in the first instance, though Pankaj had given his consent to Shruti permitting the latter to act on his own account in the business of agency, Pankaj may still repudiate the sale as the existence of the mine, a material circumstance, had not been disclosed to him.

In the second instance, Pankaj had knowledge that Shruti was acting on her own account and also that the mine was in existence; hence, Pankaj cannot repudiate the transaction under section 215. Also, under Section 216, he cannot claim any benefit from Shruti as he had knowledge that Shruti was acting on her own account

in the business of the agency.

Question 58

An agent is neither personally liable nor can he personally enforce the contract on behalf of the principal." Comment.

[May 19]

Answer

According to section 230 of the Indian Contract Act, 1872, in the absence of any contract to that effect, an agent cannot personally enforce contracts entered into by him on behalf of his principal, nor is he personally bound by them. Thus, an agent cannot personally enforce, nor be bound by, contracts on behalf of principal.

Presumption of contract to the contrary: But such a contract shall be presumed to exist in the following cases:

(i) Where the contract is made by an agent for the sale or purchase of goods for a merchant resident abroad/foreign principal
(ii) Where the agent does not disclose the name of his principal or undisclosed principal; and
(iii) Where the principal, though disclosed, cannot be sued.

Question 59

X has made an agency agreement with Y to authorize him to purchase goods on the behalf of X for the year 2020 only. The agency agreement was signed by both and it contains all the terms and conditions for the agent. It has a condition that Y is allowed to purchase goods maximum upto the value of Rs. 10 lakhs only. In the month of April 2020, Y has purchased a single item of Rs. 12 lakhs from Z as an agent of X. The market value of the item purchased was Rs. 14 lakhs but a discount of Rs. 2 lakhs was given by Z. The agent Y has purchased this item due to heavy discount offered and the financially benefit to X.

After delivery of the item Z has demanded the payment from X as Y is the agent of X. But X denied to make the payment stating that Y has exceeded his authority as an agent therefore he is not liable for this purchase. Z has filed a suit against X for payment.

Decide whether Z will succeed in his suit against X for recovery of payment as per provisions of The Indian Contract Act, 1872.

[Nov 2020]

Answer

An agent does all acts on behalf of the principal but incurs no personal liability. The liability remains that of the principal unless there is a contract to the contrary. An agent also cannot personally enforce contracts entered into by him on behalf of the principal. In the light of section 226 of the Indian Contract Act, 1872, Principal is considered to be liable for the acts of agents which are within the scope of his authority.

Further section 228 of the Indian Contract Act, 1872 states that where an agent does more than he is authorised to do, and what he does beyond the scope of his authority cannot be separated from what is within it, the principal is not bound to recognize the transaction.

In the given case, the agency agreement was signed between X and Y, authorizing Y to purchase goods maximum upto the value of Rs. 10 lakh. But Y purchased a single item of Rs. 12 lakh from Z as an agent of X at a discounted rate to financially benefit to X. On demand of payment by Z, X denied saying that Y has exceeded his authority therefore he is not liable for such purchase. Z filed a suit against X for payment.

As said above, liability remains that of the principal unless there is a contract to the contrary. The agency agreement clearly specifies the scope of authority of Y for the purchase of goods, however he exceeded his authority as an agent. Therefore, in the light of section 228 as stated above, since the transaction is not separable, X is not bound to recognize the transaction entered between Z and Y, and therefore may repudiate the whole transaction. Hence, Z will not succeed in his suit against X for recovery of payment.

Question 60

Bhupendra borrowed a sum of Rs. 3 lacs from Atul. Bhupendra appointed Atul as his agent to sell his land and authorized him to appropriate the amount of loan out of the sale proceeds. Afterward, Bhupendra revoked the agency.

Decide under the provisions of the Indian Contract Act, 1872 whether the revocation of the said agency by Bhupendra is lawful.

[Nov 19]

Answer

According to Section 202 of the Indian Contract Act, 1872 an agency becomes irrevocable where the agent has himself an interest in the property which forms the subject-matter of the agency, and such an agency cannot, in the absence of an express provision in the contract, be terminated to the prejudice of such interest.

In the instant case, the rule of agency coupled with interest applies and does not come to an end even on death, insanity or the insolvency of the principal.

Thus, when Bhupendra appointed Atul as his agent to sell his land and authorized him to appropriate the amount of loan out of the sale proceeds, interest was created in favour of Atul and the said agency is not revocable. The revocation of agency by Bhupendra is not lawful.

Question 61

Akash is a famous manufacturer of leather goods. He appoints Prashant as his agent. Prashant is entrusted with the work of recovering money from various traders to whom Akash sells leather goods. Prashant is paid a monthly remuneration of Rs. 15,000. Prashant during a particular month recovers Rs. 40,000 from traders on account of Akash. Prashant gives back Rs. 25,000 to Akash, after deducting his salary.

Examine with reference to relevant provisions of the Indian Contract Act, 1872, whether act of Prashant is valid.

[RTP May 2021]

Answer

The given problem is based on the provision related to 'agency coupled with interest'. According to Section 202 of the Indian Contract Act, 1872 an agency becomes irrevocable where the agent has himself an interest in the property which forms the subject-matter of the agency, and such an agency cannot, in the absence of an express provision in the contract, be terminated to the prejudice of such interest.

In the given instance, Akash appointed Prashant as his agent to recover money from various traders to whom Akash sold his leather goods, on a monthly remuneration of Rs. 15,000. Prashant during a month recovers Rs. 40,000 from traders on account of Akash. Prashant after deducting his salary give the rest amount to Akash.

In the said case, interest was created in favour of Prashant and the said agency is not revocable, therefore, the act of Prashant is valid.

Question 62

Explain whether the agency shall be terminated in the following cases under the provisions of the Indian Contract Act, 1872:

(i) A gives authority to B to sell A's land, and to pay himself, out of the proceeds, the debts due to him from A. Afterwards, A becomes insane.

(ii) A appoints B as A's agent to sell A's land. B, under the authority of A, appoints C as agent of B. Afterwards, A revokes the authority of B but not of C. What is the status of agency of C ?

[Jan 21, MTP Nov 22]

Answer

(i) According to section 202 of the Indian Contract Act, 1872, where the agent has himself an interest in the property which forms the subject matter of the agency, the agency cannot, in the absence of an express contract, be terminated to the prejudice of such interest.

In other words, when the agent is personally interested in the subject matter of agency, the agency becomes irrevocable.

In the given question, A gives authority to B to sell A's land, and to pay himself, out of the proceeds, the debts due to him from A. As per the facts of the question and provision of law, A cannot revoke this authority, nor it can be terminated by his insanity.

(ii) According to section 191 of the Indian Contract Act, 1872, a "Sub-agent" is a person employed by, and acting under the control of, the original agent in the business of the agency. Section 210 provides that, the termination of the authority of an agent causes the termination (subject to the rules regarding the termination of an agent's authority) of the authority of all sub-agents appointed by him.

In the given question, B is the agent of A, and C is the agent of B. Hence, C becomes a sub- agent.
Thus, when A revokes the authority of B (agent), it results in termination of authority of sub-agent appointed by B i.e. C (sub-agent).

Question 63

Hari, authorises Bharat, a merchant in Mumbai, to recover dues from Bankey & Co. Bharat instructs Deepak, a solicitor, to take legal proceedings against Bankey & Co., for recovery of the money. Explain the legal position of Deepak, referring provisions of the Indian Contract Act, 1872, related to agency.

[May 2022]

Answer

As per section 194 of the Indian Contract Act, 1872, where an agent, holding an express or implied authority to name another person to act for the principal in the business of the agency, has named another person accordingly, such person shall be an agent of the principal for such part of the business of the agency as is entrusted to him.

In the instant case, Hari, authorizes Bharat, a merchant in Mumbai, to recover dues from Bankey & Co. Bharat instructs Deepak, a solicitor, to take legal proceedings against Bankey & Co. for recovery of the money.

Here, Deepak, a solicitor, is a substituted agent to act for the principal in the business of the agency, to take legal proceedings for recovering of money.

Question 64

Examine the validity of the following statements under the provisions of the Indian Contract Act, 1872.

(i) Creditor should proceed legal action first against the Principal Debtor and later against the surety.
(ii) A guarantee which extends to a single debt/ specific transaction is called continuing Guarantee.
(iii) Variation which is not material and beneficial to the surety will not discharge him of his liability.
(iv) If the bailee does not use the goods according to the terms and conditions of bailment, the contract of bailment becomes void.

[May 2022, MTP 2 May'23]

Answer

(i) Creditor should proceed legal action first against Principal Debtor and later against the surety: Invalid Reasoning: As per Section 128 of the Indian Contract Act, 1872, the surety's liability is co-extensive with that of Principal debtor. It's not mandatory that creditor should proceed legal action in case of default, first against the Principal debtor and later against the surety. It is on creditor to start action first either against the Principal debtor or the surety.

(ii) A guarantee which extends to a single debt/ specific transaction is called continuing Guarantee: Invalid Reasoning: Continuing Guarantee [Section 129 of the Indian Contract Act, 1872] A guarantee which extends to a series of transaction is called a continuing guarantee. It applies not to a specific number of transactions but to any number of transactions and makes the surety liable for the unpaid balance at the end of the guarantee.

(iii) Variation which is not material and beneficial to the surety will not discharge him of his liability: Valid
Reasoning: Based on the principle held in the M.S Anirudhan v Thomco's Bank Ltd. AIR 1963 SC 746 that the surety's liability will not be discharged where the alteration is for beneficial to him and is not substantial in nature.

(iv) If the bailee does not use the goods according to the terms and conditions of bailment, the contract of bailment becomes void: Invalid
Reasoning: As per Section 153, a contract of bailment is voidable at the option of the bailor, if the bailee does not use the goods according to the terms and conditions of bailment.

Question 65

Mr. Truth deposited 100 bags of groundnut in the factory of Mr. False for safe keeping. Mr. False mixed the groundnut bags with the other groundnut bags in the factory with the consent of Mr. Truth and consumed it to produce edible oil.

(i) Whether Mr. Truth is entitled to claim his share in the edible oil produced under the provisions of the Indian Contact Act, 1872?

(ii) What will be the consequences in case the groundnut bags were mixed without the consent of Mr. Truth under the above said Act?

[May 2022]

OR

Amar bailed 50 kg of high quality sugar to Srijith, who owned a kirana shop, promising to give Rs. 200 at the time of taking back the bailed goods. Srijith's employee, unaware of this, mixed the 50 kg of sugar belonging to Amar with the sugar in the shop and packaged it for sale when Srijith was away. This came to light only when Amar came asking for the sugar he had bailed with Srijith, as the price of the specific quality of sugar had trebled. What is the remedy available to Amar under the Indian Contract Act, 1872?

[Nov 18, MTP Oct 20, RTP Nov'22]

Answer

The given question is based on section 155, 156 & 157 of the Indian Contract Act, 1872.

(i) W.r.t. this part of the question, Mr. Truth deposited his ground nut bags for safe keeping in the factory of the Mr. False. He mixed the ground nut bags of Mr. Truth with the other ground nut bags lying in the factory with the consent of Mr. Truth and consumed the same for producing edible oils.

According to section 155 of the Indian Contract Act, 1872, if the Bailee, mixes the goods bailed with his own goods, with the consent of the bailor, both the parties shall have an interest in proportion to their respective shares in the mixture thus produced.

Accordingly, Mr. Truth is entitled to claim his share in the edible oil produced.

(ii) According to section 156 & 157 of the Indian Contract Act, 1872, where the bailee, without the consent of the bailor, mixes the goods bailed with his own goods and the goods can be separated or divided, the property in the goods remains in the parties respectively; but the bailee is bound to bear the expense of separation or division and any damage arising from the mixture.

In the given case, the goods were mixed without consent of Mr. Truth, and if such mixture can be separated, then Mr. False will bear the expense of separation and the damage, if any, arising from mixture.

However, in the light of given facts, as mixture of goods were consumed to produce oil, and so it cannot be separated and therefore Mr. False shall be liable to compensate Mr. Truth.

Question 66:

Explain the following as per the provisions of the Indian Contract Act, 1872

(i) Specific Guarantee

(ii) General Guarantee.

[MTP Nov 22]

Answer

Specific Guarantee- A guarantee which extends to a single debt/ specific transaction is called a specific guarantee. The surety's liability comes to an end when the guaranteed debt is duly discharged or the promise is duly performed.

Continuing Guarantee- A guarantee which extends to a series of transaction is called a continuing guarantee. A surety's liability continues until the revocation of the guarantee.
The essence of continuing guarantee is that it applies not to a specific number of transactions but to any number of transactions and makes the surety liable for the unpaid balance at the end of the guarantee.

Question 67:

Mr. X owes Mr. Y ₹50,000. He (Mr. X) afterwards appoints Mr. Y as his agent to sell his Flat at Bangalore and after paying himself (i.e., Mr. Y) what is due to him, hand over the balance to Mr. X. Examine, as per the provisions of the Indian Contract Act, 1872, can Mr. X revoke his authority delegated to Mr. Y?

[Nov 22]

Answer

According to Section 202 of the Indian Contract Act, 1872 an agency becomes irrevocable where the agent has himself an interest in the property which forms the subject-matter of the agency, and such an agency cannot, in the absence of an express provision in the contract, be terminated to the prejudice of such interest.

In the given question, Mr. X owed to Mr. Y ₹ 50,000. When Mr. X appointed Mr. Y as his agent to sell his Flat and authorized him to appropriate the amount due to Mr. X out of the sale proceeds, interest was created in favor of Mr. Y and the said agency is not revocable. Thus, Mr. X cannot revoke his authority delegated to Mr. Y.

Note: The answer to the above question can also be given as per Section 203, section 204 and section 206 as follows:

Revocation of authority under the Indian Contract Act, 1872: An agency may be terminated by the principal revoking the authority of the agent. Principal may revoke the authority given to his agent at any time before the authority has been exercised so as to bind the principal [Section 203]. However, the principal cannot revoke the authority given to his agent after the authority has been partly exercised so far as regards such acts and obligations as arise for acts already done in the agency. [Section 204]
When the principal, having justification to do so, revokes the authority, he must give reasonable notice of such revocation to the agent, otherwise, he would be liable to pay compensation for any damage caused to the agent (Section 206).

Hence, Mr. X can revoke his authority delegated to Mr. Y if Mr. Y has not exercised any authority towards the act authorized by Mr. X and no obligation arises out of it.

Question 68

Kartik took his AC to Pratik, an electrician, for repair. Even after numerous follow ups by Kartik, Pratik didn't return the AC in reasonable time even after repair. In the meantime, Pratik's electric shop caught fire because of short circuit and AC was destroyed. Decide, whether Pratik will be held liable under the provisions of the Indian Contract Act, 1872.

[Nov 22]

Answer

The legal provisions which dealt with the **return of goods** under the Indian Contract Act, 1872 (the Act) is covered in Sections 160 and 161 of the Act, whereby, it is the **duty of bailee to return**, or deliver according to the bailor's directions, the **goods bailed without demand**, as **soon as the time** for which they were bailed, has **expired**, or the purpose for which they were bailed has been accomplished.

Further, Section 161 of the Act clearly says that where a **bailee fails to return** the goods as per term given under Section 160, within the agreed time, he shall be **responsible to the bailor for any loss, destruction or**

deterioration of the goods from that time notwithstanding the exercise of reasonable care on his part.

In the instant case, Pratik did not return the AC in reasonable time even after repair, in spite of numerous follow ups by Kartik.

In the light of the said provision, Pratik shall be held liable for the destruction of goods (i.e. AC) on his failure to return to Kartik within the reasonable time.

Question 69:

Mr. Salil purchased furniture of worth ₹ 1,00,000 from Mr. Pooran on credit. Mr. Raman entered in contract with Mr. Pooran for the guarantee of the payment by Mr. Salil. On due date, Mr. Salil could not make the payment due to his financial crisis. Mr. Pooran filed the suit against Mr. Raman for payment. Meanwhile father of Mr.Salil paid ₹ 20,000 to Mr. Pooran on behalf of his son. Mr. Raman, in ignorance of above payment, paid.

₹1,00,000 to Mr. Pooran as surety. Afterwards, when Mr. Raman knew the facts, he asked Mr. Pooran for refund of ₹ 20,000. Mr. Pooran denied for refund with the words, that's only Mr. Salil who can claim the amount of ₹ 20,000. Explain, with reference to Indian Contract Act 1872, whether Mr. Raman (surety) can claim the refund of ₹ 20,000 from Mr. Pooran?

[RTP May 23]

Answer

As per the provisions of section 128 of the Indian Contract Act, 1872, the liability of the surety is co-extensive with that of the principal debtor, unless it is otherwise provided by the contract. In other words, the surety is liable for all those amounts, the principal debtor is liable for.

In the given question, before Mr. Raman makes the payment (on default of Mr. Salil), the father of Mr. Salil paid ₹ 20,000 to Mr. Pooran on behalf of his son. Unaware of the payment of ₹ 20,000, Mr. Raman paid the full amount to Mr. Pooran.

The liability of Mr. Raman (surety) is co-extensive with that of Mr. Salil (principal debtor). As the father of Mr. Salil made payment of ₹ 20,000 on Salil's behalf, Mr. Raman is liable only for ₹ 80,000 to Mr. Pooran (creditor). Mr. Raman made the full payment without the knowledge of facts. Therefore, he can claim the refund of ₹ 20,000 from Mr. Pooran.

Chapter 2 – Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881

Question 1:
Rama executes a promissory note in the following form, 'I promise to pay a sum of Rs. 10,000 after three months'. Decide whether the promissory note is a valid promissory note.

[ICAI Module]

Answer
The promissory note is an unconditional promise in writing. In the above question the amount is certain but the date and name of payee is missing, thus making it a bearer instrument.

As per Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934, a promissory note cannot be made payable to bearer - whether on demand or after certain days. Hence, the instrument is illegal as per Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934 and cannot be legally enforced.

Question 2:
Are the following instruments signed by Mr. Honest is valid promissory Notes? Give the reasons.

a) I promise to pay D's son Rs. 10000 for value received (D has two sons)
b) I promise to pay Rs. 5000/- on demand at my convenience

Who is the competent authority to issue a promissory note 'payable to bearer'?
Your answers shall be in accordance with the provisions of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881.

[Nov 20]

Answer
Promissory Note: As per the provisions of Section 4 of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881, a promissory note is an instrument in writing (not being a bank-note or a currency note) containing an unconditional undertaking, signed by the maker, to pay a certain sum of money to or to the order of a certain person, or to the bearer of the instruments.

a) This is not a valid promissory note as D has two sons and it is not specified in the promissory note that which son of D is the payee.
b) This is not a valid promissory note as details of the payee are not mentioned in it and it is not an unconditional undertaking.

   Moreover, a promissory note cannot be made payable to the bearer (Section 31 of Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934). Only the Reserve Bank or the Central Government can make or issue a promissory note 'payable to bearer'.

Question 3:
Mr. Muralidharan drew a cheque payable to Mr. Vyas or order. Mr. Vyas lost the cheque and was not aware of the loss of the cheque. The person who found the cheque forged the signature of Mr. Vyas and endorsed it to Mr. Parshwanath as the consideration for goods bought by him from Mr. Parshwanath. Mr. Parshwanath encashed the cheque, on the very same day from the drawee bank. Mr. Vyas intimated the drawee bank about the theft of the cheque after three days. Examine the liability of the drawee bank.

[ICAI Module, Nov 18, RTP Nov 19]

Answer
Relevant provision:
Cheque payable to order [Section 85 of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881]

1) Where a cheque payable to order purports to be indorsed by or on behalf of the payee, the drawee is discharged by payment in due course.
2) Where a cheque is originally expressed to be payable to bearer, the drawee is discharged by payment in due course to the bearer thereof, notwithstanding any indorsement whether in full or in blank appearing thereon, and notwithstanding that any such indorsement purports to restrict or exclude further negotiation.

Given case:

As per the given facts, cheque is drawn payable to "Mr. Vyas or order". It was lost and Mr. Vyas was not aware of the same. The person found the cheque and forged and endorsed it to Mr. Parshwanath, who encashed the cheque from the drawee bank. After few days, Mr. Vyas intimated about the theft of the cheque, to the drawee bank, by which time, the drawee bank had already made the payment.

Analysis and conclusion:

According to above stated section 85, the drawee banker is discharged when it has made a payment against the cheque payable to order when it is purported to be endorsed by or on behalf of the payee. Even though the signature of Mr. Vyas is forged, the banker is protected and is discharged. The true owner, Mr. Vyas, cannot recover the money from the drawee bank in this situation.

Question 4:

What is the meaning of Not negotiable crossing as per the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881?

[MTP March 2021, MTP March 2022]

Answer:

Not negotiable Crossing

This requires writing of words "not negotiable" in addition to the two parallel lines. These words may be written inside or outside these lines.

According to Section 130, a person taking a cheque crossed generally or specially, bearing in either case the word "not negotiable" shall not have, and shall not be capable of giving a better title to the cheque than that which the person from whom he took it. It is a statutory crossing. A cheque with such crossing is not negotiable, but continues to be transferable as before.

Ordinarily, in a negotiable instrument, if the title of the transferor is defective, the transferee, if he is a Holder in Due Course, will have a good title. When the words "not negotiable" are written, even a Holder in Due Course will get the same title as that of transferor. Thus, if the title of the transferor is defective, the title of transferee will also be so.

Hence, the addition of the words not negotiable does not restrict the further transferability of the cheque, but it entirely takes away the main feature of negotiability, which is that a holder with a defective title can give a good title to the subsequent holder in due course.

Question 5:

As per the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881, what are the parties who may cross a cheque?

[MTP April 22]

Answer

A cheque may be crossed by the following parties:

(1) By Drawer: A drawer may cross it generally or specially.

(2) By Holder: A holder may cross an uncrossed cheque generally or specially. If the cheque is crossed generally, the holder may cross specially. If cheque crossed generally or specially, he may add words "not negotiable".

(3) By Banker: A banker may cross an uncrossed cheque, or if a cheque is crossed generally he may cross it specially to himself. Where a cheque is crossed specially, the banker to whom it is crossed may again cross it specially to another banker, his agent, for collection.

Question 6:

A signs his name on a blank cheque with 'not negotiable crossing' which he gives to B with an authority to fill up a sum of Rs. 3,000 only. But B fills it for Rs. 5,000. B then endorsed it to C for a consideration of Rs. 5,000 who takes it in good faith. Examine whether C is entitled to recover the full amount of the instrument from B or A as per the provisions of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881.

[July 21, MTP Nov 22]

Answer

As per section 130 of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881, a cheque marked "not negotiable" is a transferable instrument. The inclusion of the words 'not negotiable' however makes a significant difference in the transferability of the cheques i.e., they cannot be negotiated. The holder of such a cheque cannot acquire title better than that of the transferor.

In the given question, A gave to B the blank cheque with 'not negotiable crossing'. B had an authority to fill only a sum of Rs. 3,000 but he filled it up Rs. 5,000. This makes B's title defective. B then endorsed it to C for consideration of Rs. 5,000.

In the light of above stated facts and provision, C is not entitled to recover the full amount from A or B as C cannot acquire a title better than that of the transferor (B).

Question 7:

Discuss with reasons, whether the following persons can be called as a 'holder' under the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881:

(i) X who obtains a cheque drawn by Y by way of gift.
(ii) A, the payee of the cheque, who is prohibited by a court order from receiving the amount of the cheque.
(iii) M, who finds a cheque payable to bearer, on the road and retains it.
(iv) B, the agent of C, is entrusted with an instrument without endorsement by C, who is the payee.
(v) B, who steals a blank cheque of A and forges A's signature.

[ICAI Module, MTP March 2018, RTP May 2020, MTP Nov'22]

OR

Discuss with reasons, whether the following persons can be called as a 'holder' under the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881:

(i) Babita, stole a blank cheque of Aman and forged Aman's signature.
(ii) Arvind, the payee of the cheque, who is prohibited by a court order from receiving the amount of the cheque

[MTP Apr 22]

Answer

Person to be called as a holder: As per section 8 of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881 'holder' of a Negotiable Instrument means any person entitled in his own name to the possession of it and to receive or recover the amount due thereon from the parties thereto.

On applying the above provision in the given cases—

(i) Yes, X can be termed as a holder because he has a right to possession and to receive the amount due in his own name.
(ii) No, he is not a 'holder' because to be called as a 'holder' he must be entitled not only to the possession of the instrument but also to receive the amount mentioned therein.
(iii) No, M is not a holder of the Instrument though he is in possession of the cheque, so is not entitled to the possession of it in his own name.
(iv) No, B is not a holder. While the agent may receive payment of the amount mentioned in the cheque, yet he cannot be called the holder thereof because he has no right to sue on the instrument in his own name.
(v) No, B is not a holder because he is in wrongful possession of the instrument.

Question 8:

Mr. V draws a cheque of Rs. 11,000 and gives to Mr. B by way of gift. State with reason whether-

(i) Mr.B is a holder in due course as per the Negotiable Instrument Act, 1881?
(ii) Mr.B is entitled to receive the amount of Rs. 11,000 from the bank?

[ICAI Module, May 18, MTP May 20]

OR

Amit draws a cheque for Rs. 1000 and hands it over to Beena by way of gift. Is Beena a holder in due course?

[MTP Apr 2021]

Answer

According to section 9 of the Negotiable Instrument Act, 1881, "Holder in due course" means-
any person who for consideration becomes the possessor of a promissory note, bill of exchange or cheque if payable to bearer or the payee or endorsee thereof, if payable to order, before the amount in it became payable and without having sufficient cause to believe that any defect existed in the title of the person from whom he derived his title.

In the instant case, Mr. V draws a cheque of Rs. 11,000 and gives to Mr. B by way of gift.

(i) Mr. B is holder but not a holder in due course since he did not get the cheque for value and consideration.
(ii) Mr. B's title is good and bonafide. As a holder, he is entitled to receive Rs. 11,000 from the bank on whom the cheque is drawn.

Question 9:

Give the answer of the following as per the provisions of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881:
On a Bill of Exchange for Rs. 5 lakh, X's acceptance to the Bill is forged. 'A' takes the Bill from his customer for value and in good faith before the Bill becomes payable. State with reasons whether 'A' can be considered as a 'Holder in due course' and whether he (A) can receive the amount of the Bill from 'X'.

[MTP Oct 18, MTP-1 May 23]

Answer

According to section 9 of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881 'holder in due course' means any person who for consideration becomes the possessor of a promissory note, bill of exchange or cheque if payable to bearer or the payee or endorsee thereof, if payable to order, before the amount in it became payable and without having sufficient cause to believe that any defect existed in the title of the person from whom he derived his title.

As 'A' in this case prima facie became a possessor of the bill for value and in good faith before the bill became payable, he can be considered as a holder in due course.

But where a signature on the negotiable instrument is forged, it becomes a nullity. The holder of a forged instrument cannot enforce payment thereon. In the event of the holder being able to obtain payment in spite of forgery, he cannot retain the money. The true owner may sue on tort the person who had received. This principle is universal in character, by reason where of even a holder in due course is not exempt from it.

A holder in due course is protected when there is defect in the title. But he derives no title when there is entire absence of title as in the case of forgery. Hence 'A' cannot receive the amount on the bill.

Question 10:

Mr. X is the payee of an order cheque. Mr. Y steals the cheque and forges Mr. X signature and endorses the cheque in his own favour. Mr. Y then further endorses the cheque to Mr. Z, who takes the cheque in good faith and for valuable consideration.

[Nov 19]

Answer

Forgery confers no title and a holder acquires no title to a forged instrument. Thus, where a signature on the negotiable instrument is forged, it becomes a nullity. Therefore, cheque further endorsed to Mr. Z, is not valid.

Since a forged instrument is a nullity, therefore the property in the such instrument remains vested in the person who is the holder at the time when the forged signatures were put on it. Forgery is also not capable of being ratified. In the case of forged endorsement, the person claiming under forged endorsement even if he is purchaser for value and in good faith, cannot acquire the rights of a holder in due course. Therefore, Mr. Z, acquires no title on the cheque.

Question 11:
Ram draws a cheque of Rs. 1 lakh. It was a bearer cheque. Ram kept the cheque with himself. After some time, Ram gives this cheque to Shyam as a gift on his birthday. Decide whether Shyam is having a valid title over the cheque and whether Shyam is a holder in due course or not in relation to this cheque as per the Section 9 of the Negotiable Instruments Act 1881.

[Nov 20]

Answer
Relevant provision:
"Holder in due course" [Section 9 of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881]:
'Holder in due course' means any person who for consideration becomes the possessor of a promissory note, bill of exchange or cheque if payable to bearer or the payee or endorsee thereof, if payable to order, before the amount in it became payable and without having sufficient cause to believe that any defect existed in the title of the person from whom he derived his title.

In the instant case, Ram draws a cheque for Rs. 1 lakh and hands it over to Shyam by way of gift. Here, Shyam's title is good and bonafide. As a holder he is entitled to receive Rs. 1 lakh from the bank on whom the cheque is drawn. However, Shyam is not a holder in due course as he does not get the cheque for value and consideration.

Question 12:
State with reasons whether each of the following instruments is an Inland Instrument or a Foreign Instrument as per The Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881:

(i) Ram draws a Bill of Exchange in Delhi upon Shyam a resident of Jaipur and accepted to be payable in Thailand after 90 days of acceptance.
(ii) Ramesh draws a Bill of Exchange in Mumbai upon Suresh a resident of Australia and accepted to be payable in Chennai after 30 days of sight.
(iii) Ajay draws a Bill of Exchange in California upon Vijay a resident of Jodhpur and accepted to be payable in Kanpur afster 6 months of acceptance.
(iv) Mukesh draws a Bill of Exchange in Lucknow upon Dinesh a resident of China and accepted to be payable in China after 45 days of acceptance.

[Nov 20]

Answer
"Inland instrument" and "Foreign instrument" [Sections 11 & 12 of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881]
A promissory note, bill of exchange or cheque drawn or made in India and made payable in, or drawn upon any person resident in India shall be deemed to be an inland instrument.

Any such instrument not so drawn, made or made payable shall be deemed to be foreign instrument.

Following are the answers as to the nature of the Instruments:

(i) In first case, Bill is drawn in Delhi by Ram on a person (Shyam), a resident of Jaipur (though accepted to be payable in Thailand after 90 days) is an Inland instrument.
(ii) In second case, Ramesh draws a bill in Mumbai on Suresh resident of Australia and accepted to be payable in Chennai after 30 days of sight, is an Inland instrument.
(iii) In third case, Ajay draws a bill in California (which is situated outside India) and accepted to be payable in India (Kanpur), drawn upon Vijay, a person resident in India (Jodhpur), therefore the Instrument is a Foreign instrument.
(iv) In fourth case, the said instrument is a Foreign instrument as the bill is drawn in India by Mukesh upon Dinesh, the person resident outside India (China) and also payable outside India (China) after 45 days of acceptance.

Question 13:
State briefly the rules laid down under the Negotiable Instruments Act for determining the date of maturity of a bill of exchange. Ascertain the date of maturity of a bill payable 100 days after sight and which is

presented for sight on 4th May, 2020

[ICAI Module]

OR

Venkat executed a promissory note in favour of Raman for ₹45 Lakhs. The amount was payable hundred days after sight. Raman presented the promissory note for sight on 4 th May 2021. Ascertain the date of maturity of the promissory note with reference to the relevant provisions of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881.

[Nov 22]

OR

State the rules laid down by the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881 for ascertaining the date of maturity of a bill of exchange.

[May 2018]

Answer

Ascertaining the date of maturity of a Bill of Exchange: The maturity of a bill, not payable on demand, at sight, or on presentment, is at maturity on the third day after the day on which it is expressed to be payable (Section 22 of Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881).

Three days are allowed as days of grace. No days of grace are allowed in the case of bill payable on demand, at sight, or presentment. When a bill is made payable at stated number of months after date, the period stated terminates on the day of the month which corresponds with the day on which the instrument is dated.

When it is made payable after a stated number of months after sight the period terminates on the day of the month which corresponds with the day on which it is presented for acceptance or sight or noted for non-acceptance or protested for nonacceptance. When it is payable a stated number of months after a certain event, the period terminates on the day of the month which corresponds with the day on which the event happens (Section 23).

When a bill is made payable a stated number of months after sight and has been accepted for honour, the period terminates with the day of the month which corresponds with the day on which it was so accepted. If the month in which the period would terminate has no corresponding day, the period terminates on the last day of such month (Section 23).

In calculating the date a bill made payable a certain number of days after date or after sight or after a certain event is at maturity, the day of the date, or the day of presentment for acceptance or sight or the day of protest for non-accordance, or the day on which the event happens shall be excluded (Section 24).

Three days of grace are allowed to these instruments after the day on which they are expressed to be payable (Section 22).

When the last day of grace falls on a day which is public holiday, the instrument is due and payable on the next preceding business day (Section 25).

Answer to Problem: In this case the day of presentment for sight is to be excluded i.e. 4th May, 2020. The period of 100 days ends on 12th August, 2020 (May 27 days + June 30 days + July 31 days + August 12 days). Three days of grace are to be added. It falls due on 15th August, 2020 which happens to be a public holiday. As such it will fall due on 14th August, 2020 i.e. the next preceding business day.

Question 14:

Calculate the date of maturity of bill of exchange drawn on 1 6.2019, payable 120 days after date, considering the relevant provisions of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881.

[RTP May 2021]

Answer

Date of maturity of the bill of exchange: In this case the day of drawing or presentment for sight is to be excluded i.e. 1st June, 2019. The period of 120 days ends on 29th September, 2019 (June 29 days + July 31

days + August 31 Days + September 29 days = 120 days). Three days of grace are to be added. It falls due on 2nd October, 2019, which happens to be a public holiday. As such it will fall due on 1st October, 2019 i.e., the next preceding Business Day.

Question 15:

Explain the meaning of 'Negotiation by delivery' with the help of an example. Give your answer as per the provisions of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881

[MTP March 19]

Answer

Negotiation by delivery

According to section 47 of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881, subject to the provisions of section 58, a promissory note, bill of exchange or cheque payable to bearer is negotiable by delivery thereof.

Exception: A promissory note, bill of exchange or cheque delivered on condition that it is not to take effect except in a certain event is not negotiable (except in the hands of a holder for value without notice of the condition) unless such event happens.

Example: A, the holder of a negotiable instrument payable to bearer, delivers it to B's agent to keep for B. The instrument has been negotiated.

Question 16:

Anjum' drew a cheque for Rs. 20,000 payable to 'Babloo' and delivered it to him. 'Babloo' indorsed the cheque in favour of 'Rehansh' but kept it in his table drawer. Subsequently, 'Babloo' died, and cheque was found by 'Rehansh' in 'Babloo's table drawer. 'Rehansh' filed the suit for the recovery of cheque. Whether 'Rehansh' can recover cheque under the provisions of the Negotiable Instrument Act 1881?

[RTP May 22]

OR

Mr. A made endorsement of a bill of exchange amounting ₹50,000 to Mr. B. But, before the same could be delivered to Mr. B, Mr. A passed away. Mr. S, son of Mr. A, who was the only legal representative of Mr. A approached Mr. B and informed him about his father's death. Now, Mr. S is willing to complete the instrument which was executed by his deceased father. Referring to the relevant provisions of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881, decide, whether Mr. S can complete the instrument in the above scenario?

[Nov 22]

OR

M drew a cheque amounting to Rs. 2 lakh payable to N and subsequently delivered to him. After receipt of cheque N indorsed the same to C but kept it in his safe locker. After sometime, N died, and P found the cheque in N's safe locker. Does this amount to Indorsement under the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881?

[ICAI Module]

Answer

According to section 48 of the Negotiable Instrument Act 1881, a promissory note, bill of exchange or cheque payable to order, is negotiable by the holder by indorsement and delivery thereof.

The contract on a negotiable instrument until delivery remains incomplete and revocable. The delivery is essential not only at the time of negotiation but also at the time of making or drawing of negotiable instrument.

The rights in the instrument are not transferred to the indorsee unless after the indorsement the same has been delivered. If a person makes the indorsement of instrument but before the same could be delivered to the indorsee the indorser dies, the legal representatives of the deceased person cannot negotiate the same by mere delivery thereof. [Section 57]

In the given case, cheque was indorsed properly but not delivered to indorsee i.e. 'Rehansh', Therefore, 'Rehansh' is not eligible to claim the payment of cheque.

Question 17:
Manoj owes money to Umesh. Therefore, he makes a promissory note for the amount in favour of Umesh, for safety of transmission he cuts the note in half and posts one half to Umesh. He then changes his mind and calls upon Umesh to return the half of the note which he had sent. Umesh requires Manoj to send the other half of the promissory note. Decide how rights of the parties are to be adjusted in reference to the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881.

[ICAI Module, RTP May 19, MTP Mar 19, May 20, Mar 21, MTP Mar 22]

Answer
The question arising in this problem is whether the making of promissory note is complete when one half of the note was delivered to Umesh. Under Section 46 of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881, the making of a promissory note is completed by delivery, actual or constructive. Delivery refers to the whole of the instrument and not merely a part of it. Delivery of half instrument cannot be treated as constructive delivery of the whole. So, the claim of Umesh to have the other half of the promissory note sent to him is not maintainable. Manoj is justified in demanding the return of the first half sent by him. He can change his mind and refuse to send the other half of the promissory note.

Question 18:
Chandra issues a cheque for Rs. 50,000/- in favour of Daye. Chandra has sufficient amount in his account with the Bank. The cheque was not presented within reasonable time to the Bank for payment and the Bank, in the meantime, became bankrupt. Decide under the provisions of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881, whether Daye can recover the money from Chandra?

[RTP May 21, May 2022]

Answer
Section 84(1) of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881 provides that cheque should be presented to Bank within reasonable time. If cheque is not presented within reasonable time, meanwhile the drawer suffers actual damage, the drawer is discharged to the extent of such actual damage. This would be so if the cheque would have been passed if it was presented within reasonable time.

As per section 84(2), in determining what is a reasonable time, regard shall be had to
(a) the nature of the instrument
(b) the usage of trade and of bankers, and
(c) facts of the particular case.

The drawer will get discharge, but the holder of the cheque will be treated as creditor of the bank, in place of drawer. He will be entitled to recover the amount from Bank [section 84(3)].

In the above case drawer i.e., Chandra has suffered damage as cheque was not presented by Daye within reasonable time. Hence, Chandra will be discharged but Daye will be the creditor of bank for the amount of cheque and can recover the amount from the bank.

Question 19:
Explain the modes of discharge from liability on instruments, as per the provisions of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881.

[MTP Aug 18]

Answer
According to section 82 of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881, the maker, acceptor or endorser respectively of a negotiable instrument is discharged from liability thereon-

(a) By cancellation-to a holder thereof who cancels such acceptor's or endorser's name with intent to discharge him, and to all parties claiming under such holder,
(b) By release- to a holder thereof who otherwise discharges such maker, acceptor or endorser, and to all parties deriving title under such holder after notice of such discharge;
(c) By payment-to all parties thereto, if the instrument is payable to bearer, or has been endorsed in blank, and such maker, acceptor or endorser makes payment in due course of the amount due thereon.

Further, as per section 83 of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881, if the holder of a bill of exchange allows the drawee more than 48 hours, exclusive of public holidays, to consider whether he will accept the same, all previous parties not consenting to such allowance are thereby discharged from liability to such holder.

Author's Note:
There are other points also for discharge of liability but given the weightage of question in exam, ICAI has only mentioned these points.

Question 20:
Referring to the provisions of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881, examine the validity of the following:
A Bill of Exchange originally drawn by R for a sum of Rs. 10,000 but accepted by S only for Rs. 7,000.
[Jan 21]

Answer
As per the provisions of Section 86 of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881, if the holder of a bill of exchange acquiesces in a qualified acceptance, or one limited to part of the sum mentioned in the bill, or which substitutes a different place or time for payment, or which, where the drawees are not partners, is not signed by all the drawees, all previous parties whose consent is not obtained to such acceptance are discharged as against the holder and those claiming under him, unless on notice given by the holder they assent to such acceptance.

Explanation to the above section states that an acceptance is qualified where it undertakes the payment of part only of the sum ordered to be paid.

In view of the above provisions, the bill, which has been drawn by R for Rs. 10,000/-, has been accepted by S only for Rs. 7,000/-. It is a clear case of qualified acceptance, which may either be rejected by R or he may give assent to the acceptance of Rs. 7,000/- only.

Question 21:
A promissory note was made without mentioning any time for payment. The holder added the words "on demand" on the face of the instrument.
OR
A Bill of Exchange was made without mentioning any time for payment. The holder added the words "on demand" on the face of the instrument. Does this amount to any material alteration? Explain.
[May 19, Nov 19, MTP Apr 21]

Answer
Material alteration of instrument:
A bill of exchange was made without mentioning any time for payment. The holder added the words "on demand" on the face of the instrument.

As per the provision of Section 89 of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881 this is not a material alteration since a bill of exchange where no date of payment is specified will be treated as payable on demand.

Therefore, adding the words "on demand" does not alter the business effect of the instrument. Therefore, this cannot be said to have caused material alteration to the instrument

Question 22:
What are the circumstances under which a bill of exchange can be dishonoured by non- acceptance? Also, explain the consequences if a cheque gets dishonoured for insufficiency of funds in the account.
[ICAI Module, Nov 18, MTP Apr 19, Oct 19, MTP May 20, MTP April 22]

Answer
As per section 91 of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881, a bill may be dishonoured either by non-acceptance or by non-payment.

Dishonour by non-acceptance may take place in any one of the following circumstances:

(i) When the drawee either does not accept the bill within forty-eight hours (exclusive of public holidays) of presentment or refuse to accept it;
(ii) When one of several drawees, not being partners, makes default in acceptance;
(iii) When the drawee makes a qualified acceptance;
(iv) When presentment for acceptance is excused and the bill remains unaccepted; and
(v) When the drawee is incompetent to contract.

Dishonour of Cheque for insufficiency, etc. of funds in the account:
As per section 138 of the Negotiable Instruments Act 1881, where any cheque drawn by a person on an account maintained by him with a banker for payment is dishonoured due to insufficiency of funds, he shall be punished with imprisonment for a term which may extend to two years or with fine which may extend to twice the amount of the cheque or with both.

Question 23:
Examine the following cases with respect to their validity. State your answer with reasons.

i. A bill of exchange is drawn, mentioning expressly as 'payable on demand'. The bill will be at maturity for payment on 04-01-2021, if presented on 01-01-2021.
ii. A holder gives notice of dishonor of a bill to all the parties except the acceptor. The drawer claims that he is discharged from his liability as the holder fails to give notice of dishonour of the bill to all the parties thereto.

[July 21, MTP Nov 22]

Answer

i. The bill of exchange is drawn, mentioning expressly as 'payable on demand'. The bill will be at maturity for payment on 04-1-2021, if presented on 01-01-2021: This statement is not valid as no days of grace are allowed in the case of bill payable on demand.
ii. A holder gives notice of dishonor of a bill to all the parties except the acceptor. The drawer claims that he is discharged form his liability as the holder fails to give notice of dishonour of the bill to all the parties thereto:

    As per section 93 of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881, notice of dishonor must be given by the holder to all parties other than the maker or the acceptor or the drawee whom the holder seeks to make liable.

    Accordingly, notice of dishonour to the acceptor of a bill is not necessary. Therefore, claim of drawer that he is discharged from his liability on account of holder's failure to give notice to all the parties thereto, is invalid.

Question 24:
Explain the power of court for trial of to cases summarily, as per the provisions of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881

[MTP Oct 18]

Answer
According to section 143 of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881,

1) **Trial of Offence:** Notwithstanding anything contained in the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973, all offences under this Chapter shall be tried by a Judicial Magistrate of the first class or by a Metropolitan Magistrate and the provisions of sections 262 to 265 (both inclusive) of the said Code shall, as far as may be, apply to such trials:
   In case of summary trial: Provided that in the case of any conviction in a summary trial under this section, it shall be lawful for the Magistrate to pass a sentence of imprisonment for a term not exceeding one year and an amount of fine exceeding five thousand rupees:
   In case where no summary trial can be made: Provided further that when at the commencement of, or in the course of, a summary trial under this section, it appears to the Magistrate that the nature of the

case is such that a sentence of imprisonment for a term exceeding one year may have to be passed or that it is, for any other reason, undesirable to try the case summarily, the Magistrate shall after hearing the parties, record an order to that effect and thereafter recall any witness who may have been examined and proceed to hear or rehear the case in the manner provided by the said Code.

2) **Speedy Trial:** The trial of a case under this section shall, so far as practicable, consistently with the interests of justice, be continued from day to day until its conclusion, unless the Court finds the adjournment of the trial beyond the following day to be necessary for reasons to be recorded in writing.
3) **Speedy and efficient Disposal:** Every trial under this section shall be conducted as expeditiously as possible and an endeavor shall be made to conclude the trial within six months from the date of filing of the complaint.

Question 25:

Bholenath drew a cheque in favour of Surendar. After having issued the cheque; Bholenath requested Surendar not to present the cheque for payment and gave a stop payment request to the bank in respect of the cheque issued to Surendar. Decide, under the provisions of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881 whether the said acts of Bholenath constitute an offence?

[ICAI Module, RTP Nov 20, May 18]

Answer

As per the facts stated in the question, Bholenath (drawer) after having issued the cheque, informs Surender (drawee) not to present the cheque for payment and as well gave a stop payment request to the bank in respect of the cheque issued to Surender.

Section 138 of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881, is a penal provision in the sense that once a cheque is drawn on an account maintained by the drawer with his banker for payment of any amount of money to another person out of that account for the discharge in whole or in part of any debt or liability, is informed by the bank unpaid either because of insufficiency of funds to honour the cheques or the amount exceeding the arrangement made with the bank, such a person shall be deemed to have committed an offence.

Once a cheque is issued by the drawer, a presumption under Section 139 of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881 follows and merely because the drawer issues a notice thereafter to the drawee or to the bank for stoppage of payment, it will not preclude an action under Section 138.

Also, Section 140 of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881, specifies absolute liability of the drawer of the cheque for commission of an offence under the section 138 of the Act. Section 140 states that it shall not be a defence in a prosecution for an offence under section 138 that the drawer had no reason to believe when he issued the cheque that the cheque may be dishonoured on presentment for the reasons stated in that section.

Accordingly, the act of Bholenath, i.e., his request of stop payment constitutes an offence under the provisions of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881

Question 26:

Mr. Manoj Malik, a major and Preet, a minor executed a promissory note in favour of Rimpy. Examine with reference to the provisions of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881, the validity of the promissory note and whether it is binding on Mr. Manoj Malik and Preet.

[MTP May 22]

Answer

According to Section 26 of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881, every person competent to contract (according to the law to which he is subject to) has capacity to bind himself and be bound by making, drawing, accepting, endorsing delivering and negotiating an instrument. A party having such capacity may himself put his signature or authorize some other person to do so.

A minor may draw, endorse, deliver and negotiate an instrument so as to bind all the parties except himself. A minor may be a drawer where the instrument is drawn or endorsed by him. In that case he does not incur any

liability himself although other parties to the instrument can be made liable and the holder can receive payment from any other party thereto.

Therefore, in the instant case, the promissory note is valid and it is binding on Mr. Manoj Malik but not on Preet, a minor.

Question 27:

Mr. Mudit is the employee in Senior Research Analyst Private Limited. He went to a Super Mall, a departmental store, where he purchased some goods for his personal use on credit. Mr. Mudit gave a cheque drawn on the Senior Research Analyst Private Limited's account to Super Mall towards the full payment of the dues. The cheque was dishonoured by the company's bank. Mr. Mudit was neither a director nor a person in-charge of the company.

Explain under the provisions of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881, whether Mr. Mudit has committed an offence under section 138

[MTP April, 22]

Answer

According to section 138 of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881, where any cheque drawn by a person on an account maintained by him with a banker for payment of any amount of money to another person from/out of that account for discharging any debt or liability, and if it is dishonoured by banker on sufficient grounds, such person shall be deemed to have committed an offence and shall be liable.

According to section 141, if the person committing an offence under section 138 is a company, every person who, at the time the offence was committed was in charge of, and was responsible to the company for the conduct of the business of the company, as well as the company, shall be deemed to be guilty of the offence and shall be liable to be proceeded against and punished accordingly.

However, in this case, Mudit is neither a director nor a person-in-charge of the company and is not connected with the day-to-day affairs of the company and had neither opened nor is operating the bank account of the company. Further, the cheque, which was dishonoured, was also not drawn on an account maintained by him but was drawn on an account maintained by the company.

Therefore, Mudit has not committed an offence under section 138.

Question 28

Examine the validity of the following statements with reference to the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881.

(i) When payment on an instrument is made in due course, both the instrument and the parties to it are discharged.

(ii) Alteration of rate of interest specified in the Promissory Note is not a material alteration.

(iii) Conversion of the blank indorsement into an indorsement in full is not a material alteration and it does not require authentication

[May 2022]

Answer

(i) When payment on an instrument is made in due course, both the instrument and the parties to it are discharged: Valid

Reasoning: As per section 78 of the Negotiable Instrument Act, 1881, when payment on an instrument is made in due course, both the instrument and the parties to it are discharged subject to the provision of section 82(c). The payment on an instrument may be made by any party to the instrument. It may even be made by a stranger provided it is made on account of the party liable to pay.

(ii) Alteration of rate of interest specified in the Promissory Note is not a material alteration: Not valid

Reasoning: An alteration is material which in any way alters the operation of the instrument and affects the liability of parties thereto. Hence, Alteration of rate of interest is material alteration.

(iii) Conversion of the blank indorsement into an indorsement in full is not a material alteration and it does not

require authentication: Valid

Reasoning: Conversion of a blank indorsement into an indorsement in full [under Section 49 of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881] is not a material alteration. It has been authorised by the Act and do not require any authentication.

Question 29

Healthcare Services Limited (the Bidder), bids the tender floated by Super Care Hospital (the Tenderer), attaching a cheque dated 01.04.2021 for ₹ 5,00,000 towards earnest money deposit. Since the tender process was extended, the Tenderer returned the cheque expiring on 30.06.2021 to the Bidder for its resubmission after having revalidated by changing the date of the cheque to 01.07.2021. Accordingly, the revalidated cheque was resubmitted by the Bidder to the Tenderer. The cheque was presented by the Tenderer to the banker. It was dishonoured by the bank. Examine, whether the cheque altered with a new date shall be deemed to be a valid cheque binding the Bidder for payment as per the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881?

[May 2022]

Answer

An alteration is material which in any way alters the operation of the instrument and affects the liability of parties thereto. By material alteration the identity of original instrument is destroyed and those parties who had agreed to be liable on the original instrument cannot be made liable on the new contract contained in the altered instrument to which they never consented (Gour Chandra vs Prasanna Kumar). It makes no difference whether the alteration is made by a party who is in possession of the same, or by a stranger while the instrument was in the custody of a party, because the party in custody of instrument is bound to preserve it in its integrity.

The rule is defended on the ground that no man shall be permitted to take the chance of committing a fraud without running any risk of loss by the event when it is detected. The party who consents to the alteration as well as the party who makes the alteration are disentitled to complain against such alteration.

In the given question, the tenderer (Super Care Hospital) returned the cheque to the bidder (i.e., the drawer of cheque- Healthcare Services Limited) for its resubmission after having revalidated by changing the date of the cheque. The drawer himself altered the date of the cheque for re-validating the same instrument, he cannot take advantage of it by saying that the cheque becomes void as there was a material alteration thereto. It is always open to a drawer to voluntarily re-validate a negotiable instrument including a cheque [Veera Exports v T. Kalavathy (2002)].

In the light of the above discussion, the cheque altered with a new date shall be deemed to be a valid cheque and thus, binding the Bidder for payment.

Question 30

Mr. Zahid accepted a bill of exchange and gave it to Mr. Kamil for the purpose of getting it discounted and handing over the proceeds to Mr. Zahid. Mr. Kamil couldn't get the bill discounted and returned the bill to Mr. Zahid. Mr. Zahid cut the bill in two pieces for the purpose to cancel it and he threw the pieces on the street. Mr. Kamil picked up the pieces and joined those pieces in such manner that the bill seemed to have been folded for safe custody, rather than cancelled. Mr. Kamil put it into circulation, and it finally reached to Mr. Salim, who took it in good faith and for value. Explain in the light of the provisions of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881, whether Mr. Zahid is liable to pay the bill to Mr. Salim?

[RTP Nov 22]

Answer

According to the section 9 of the Negotiable Instrument Act 1881, "Holder in due course" means any person who for consideration became the possessor of a negotiable instrument in good faith and without having sufficient cause to believe that any defect existed in the title of the person from whom he derived his title.
Further, section 120 says that no maker of a promissory note and no drawer of a bill or cheque and no acceptor of a bill for the honour of the drawer shall, in a suit thereon by a holder in due course be permitted to deny the validity of the instrument as originally made or drawn. Thus, a holder in due course gets a good title to the bill.

In the given question, since Mr. Salim acquired the bill in good faith and for value, he becomes the holder in due course. Mr. Zahid cannot deny the original validity of the bill towards Mr. Salim (he being holder in due course). Hence, Mr. Salim has right to recover the amount of bill from Mr. Zahid

Question 31

What is the meaning of 'Acceptor for honour' and 'payment for honour'? Give your answer in terms of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881.

[MTP Nov 22]

Answer

When a bill of exchange has been dishonoured by non-acceptance and any person accepts it for honour of the drawer or of any indorsers, such person is called 'an Acceptor for honour'.
The payment which he makes is known as 'payment for honour.'

Question 32:

Mr. Krishna draws a cheque of ₹ 20,000 and gives to Mr. Balram by way of gift. State with reason whether -

(1) Mr. Balram is a holder in due course as per the Negotiable Instrument Act, 1881?
(2) Mr. Balram is entitled to receive the amount of ₹ 20,000 from the bank?

[MTP Nov 22]

Answer

According to section 9 of the Negotiable Instrument Act, 1881, "Holder in due course" means

- any person
- who for consideration
- becomes the possessor of a promissory note, bill of exchange or cheque (if payable to bearer), or the payee or indorsee thereof, (if payable to order),
- before the amount mentioned in it became payable, and
- without having sufficient cause to believe that any defect existed in the title of the person from whom he derived his title.

In the instant case, Mr. Krishna draws a cheque of ₹ 20,000 and gives to Mr. Balram by way of gift. Hence,

(1) Mr. Balram is holder but not a holder in due course since he did not get the cheque for value and consideration.
(2) Mr. Balram's title is good and bonafide. As a holder he is entitled to receive ₹ 20,000 from the bank on whom the cheque is drawn.

Question 33

'Shama' made a promissory note for ₹ 4,500 payable to 'Vihari', and delivered the same to 'Vihari' on the condition that he ('Vihari') will demand payment only on the death of 'Kayah'. Before the death of 'Kayah', 'Vihari' indorsed and delivered the promissory note to 'Deepak', who receive the promissory note in good faith. On the date of maturity, 'Deepak' presented the promissory note for payment but 'Shama' denied for payment by stating that he issued this promissory note on the condition that it can be paid only on the death of ' Kayah'. Can 'Deepak' recover the amount due on the promissory note from 'Shama' under the provisions of the Negotiable Instrument Act 1881?

[MTP Nov 22]

Answer

By virtue of provisions of section 9 of the Negotiable Instrument Act 1881, any person who for consideration became the possessor of a negotiable instrument in good faith and without having sufficient cause to believe that any defect existed in the title of the person from whom he derived his title.

Exception to section 47 provides if a negotiable instrument is delivered to a person, upon condition, i.e., it will be effective on the happening of a certain event, such negotiable instrument cannot be further negotiated unless such event happens.

However, if it is transferred t o a holder in due course, his rights will not be affected by such condition.

'Shama' issued a promissory note to 'Vihari' on the condition that he ('Vihari') will demand payment only on the death of 'Kayah'. Before the death of 'Kayah', 'Vihari' indorsed and delivered the promissory note to 'Deepak', who receive the promissory note in good faith. On due date, 'Deepak' presented the promissory note for payment but 'Shama' denied for payment. From the above provisions and facts of the case, it can be said that 'Deepak' has received the promissory note in good faith, he is a holder in due course and his rights will not be affected by any condition attached to the instrument by any prior party.

Therefore, 'Deepak' can recover the amount due on the promissory note from 'Shama'.

Question 34:

A promissory note was made without mentioning any time for payment. The holder added the words 'on demand' on the face of the instrument. Whether this may be treated as material alteration in the instrument? Give answer referring to the provisions of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881.

[MTP-1 May 23]

Answer

Material alteration:

An alteration is material which in any way alters the operation of the instrument and affects the liability of parties thereto.

Any alteration is material:

a. which alters the business effect of the instrument if used for any business purpose;
b. which causes it to speak a different language in legal effect form that which it originally spoke or which changes the legal identity or character of the instrument.

The following alterations are specifically declared to be material: any al teration of (i) the date, (ii) the sum payable, (iii) the time of payment, (iv) the place of payment, or the addition of a place of payment.

A promissory note was made without mentioning any time for payment. The holder added the words "on demand" on the face of the instrument. As per the above provision of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881 this is not a material alteration as a promissory note where no date of payment is specified will be treated as payable on demand.

Hence, adding the words "on demand" does not alter the business effect of the instrument.

Question 35

Give three examples when the alterations to an instrument do not affect the liabilities of parties thereto

[MTP-2 May 23]

Answer

The following **alterations do not affect the liability** of parties thereto:

(i) If the alteration is **unintentional and due to pure accident** (e.g. accidental disfigurement of document).
(ii) Alteration made by a **stranger without the consent of holder and without any fraud** and negligence on his part.
(iii) An alteration made to correct a **clerical error or a mistake**, thus, if instead of 1823, the date entered was 1832, the agent of drawer held entitled to correct mistake [Brutt v pikard (1824) Ry & M 37]. Such correction is deemed to be giving effect to the original intention of the parties.
(iv) Alteration made to carry out **common intention of original parties** is permitted by Section 87. For example, where the words "or order" after the name of payee, inserted subsequently [Byrom v Thomson (1839) 11 A&E 31].
(v) **Alteration with the consent** of the parties liable thereto.
(vi) An alteration made **before the completion or the issue** of negotiable Instrument.

(vii) A material alteration **doesn't affect the liability** of those parties who become liable after the alteration is made.
Section 88 provides that the acceptor or indorser is bound by his acceptance or indorsement notwithstanding any previous alteration of the instrument.

(viii) An alteration which is **not material** e.g. when a bill payable to bearer is converted to bill payable to order/or an incomplete name of a person converted into the complete name of same person

Question 36

'A' draws a cheque for ₹ 5,000 in favour of 'B'. 'A' had sufficient funds in his bank account to meet it, when the cheque ought to be presented in the bank. The bank fails before the cheque is presented. 'B' wants to claim it from 'A'. Decide, whether 'A' is liable as per the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881.

[MTP-2 May 23]

Answer

According to section 84 of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881, if a **holder does not present a cheque within reasonable time** after its issue, and the **bank fails causing damage** to the drawer, the drawer is discharged as against the holder to the **extent of the actual damage** suffered by him.

In the given situation, when the cheque ought to be presented, 'A' had sufficie nt funds at the bank to meet it. The bank failed before the cheque was presented. Thus, the drawer ('A') is discharged, but the holder ('B') can prove against the bank for the amount of the cheque.

Question 37

A bill of exchange is drawn payable to 'Amir' or order. 'Amir' endorses it to 'Rani', 'Rani' to 'Kajol', 'Kajol' to 'Sharukh', 'Sharukh' to 'Madhuri' and 'Madhuri' to 'Amir'. State with reasons under the provisions of the Negotiable Instrument Act, 1881 whether 'Amir' can recover the amount of the bill from 'Rani', 'Kajol', 'Sharukh' and 'Madhuri', if he has originally endorsed the bill to 'Rani' by adding the words 'Sans Recourse'.

[RTP May 23]

Answer

In the course of negotiation, if a **negotiable instrument is circulated/negotiated back by an indorser** to any of the **prior party** on the negotiable instruments, it is termed as **negotiation back**. The person who becomes the holder in due course under this **negotiation back cannot make** any of the intermediate **indorsers liable** on the instruments. But where an **indorser had excluded his liability**, by the use of the words '**sans recourse' or 'without recourse to me'** and after that becomes the holder of the instrument in his own right under the 'negotiation back' all **intermediate indorsers are liable** to him and in case of dishonour, **he can recover the amount from all or any one of them.**

In the given question, on the basis of above facts it is clear that 'Amir', the endorser becomes the holder after it is negotiated to several parties. In normal situation none of the intermediate parties would be liable to 'Amir'. But in the given problem 'Amir's original endorsement is 'sans recourse' and therefore, he is not liable to 'Rani', 'Kajol', 'Sharukh' and 'Madhuri'. But if the bill is negotiated back to 'Amir', all of them are liable to him and he can recover the amount from all or any of them.

Question 38

A bill of exchange was drawn by Mr. G on Mr. H for ₹50,000 towards the value of goods purchased by Mr. H from Mr. G. Mr. H accepted the bill and returned it back to Mr. G. After that Mr. G handed over the bill to his supplier Mr. K to settle the amount of a transaction. On the due date, Mr. K presented the bill before Mr. H for payment. Mr. H denied to make payment and the bill was dishonoured. After five days of the date of dishonour of the bill, Mr. K gave a written notice of dishonour by post with acknowledgement to Mr. G without knowing the fact that Mr. G had passed away one day back. After one month, thereafter, Mr. K claimed the amount from Mr. L, the only son of Mr. G, who was the only legal representative of Mr. G; Mr. L contended that the notice of dishonour was neither served to him nor he had received the notice of dishonour which was sent by Mr. K addressing to his father and therefore, he is not liable for the amount of the bill. Referring to the relevant provisions of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881, advise Mr. K., whether the contention of Mr. L is

tenable.
Would your answer differ in case Mr. L contended that even though he received the notice of dishonour addressed to his father, since it was not addressed to him, he is not liable for the amount of the bill?

[Nov 22]

Answer

Dishonour by Non-Payment:

According to the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881, a promissory note, bill of exchange and cheque is said to be dishonored by non-payment when the maker of the note, acceptor of the bill or drawee of the cheque makes default in payment upon being duly required to pay the same (Section 92).

As per the requirement of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881, in line with the given facts, notice of dishonor must be given to all parties other than the acceptor of the bill, whom the holder seeks to make liable.

Notice of dishonor to the acceptor of a bill is not necessary as per Section 93 of the Act. Here the acceptor is primarily liable upon the instrument, on the due date and at the proper place. It is they who dishonour the instrument by no-acceptance or non-payment and notice to them will merely be notice of fact already known to them.

When a negotiable instrument is **dishonored by non-payment**, the holder must give a **notice of dishonour** to the drawer or his previous holder in order to make them liable on the instrument.

In order to make the drawer liable on dishonor by drawee/acceptor, it is **necessary that a notice** of dishonour must have **been given** to him.

When the party to whom notice of dishonor is dispatched is dead, but the party dispatching the notice is ignorant of his death, the notice is sufficient (Section 97).

1st Part: In the given question, at the time of giving notice of dishonor by post with acknowledgement to Mr. G (the drawer), Mr. K (the holder of the bill) was not aware of the death of Mr. G. So, the notice served addressed to him, was sufficient as per Section 97 of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881. Hence, the contention of Mr. L (the legal representative of Mr. G) is not tenable, and he is liable on the bill.

2nd Part: Where Mr. L, received the notice of dishonor addressed to his father though not addressed to Mr. L In a case, where Mr. L, received the notice of dishonor addressed to his father though not addressed to Mr. L, then also he will remain liable for the amount of bill. Hence, the answer will not differ.

Chapter 3 – The General Clauses Act, 1897

Question 1

Mr. Apar and Mr. New, both aspiring Chartered Accountants have met in a conference for CA students. Both are having an argument about the meaning of Financial Year. They have approached you as a senior in the profession to guide them about the meaning of Financial Year as per the provisions of the General Clauses Act, 1872. Also, brief them about the difference between a calendar year and financial year.

[RTP May 21]

OR

What is "Financial Year" under the General Clauses Act, 1897?

[ICAI Module]

OR

A confusion, regarding the meaning of 'financial year' arose among the financial executive and accountant of a company. Both were having different arguments regarding the meaning of financial year & calendar year. What is the correct meaning of financial year under the provision of the General Clauses Act, 1897? How it is different from calendar year?

[MTP Nov 22

Answer

Financial Year: According to section 3(21) of the General Clauses Act, 1897, financial year shall mean the year commencing on the first day of April. The term Year has been defined under Section 3(66) as a year reckoned according to the British calendar. Thus, as per General Clauses Act, Year means calendar year which starts from January to December.

Difference between Financial Year and Calendar Year: Financial year starts from first day of April but Calendar Year starts from first day of January.

Question 2

Vyas owned a land with acknowledgment due. He sold his land and the timber (obtained after cutting the fifty trees) to Yash. Vyas wants to know whether the sale of timber tantamounts to sale of immovable property. Advise him with reference to provisions of "General Clauses Act, 1897".

[May 18, RTP Nov 19, MTP April 19, Oct 19, March 21, March 22, RTP May'23]

OR

What is "Immovable Property" under the General Clauses Act, 1897?

[ICAI Module]

Answer

"Immovable Property" [Section 3(26) of the General Clauses Act, 1897]: 'Immovable Property' shall include:

(i) Land,
(ii) Benefits to arise out of land, and
(iii) Things attached to the earth, or
(iv) Permanently fastened to anything attached to the earth.

It is an inclusive definition. It contains four elements: land, benefits to arise out of land, things attached to the earth and things permanently fastened to anything attached to the earth. Where, in any enactment, the definition of immovable property is in the negative and not exhaustive, the definition as given in the General Clauses Act will apply to the expression given in that enactment.

In the instant case, Vyas sold Land along with timber (obtained after cutting trees) of fifty tamarind trees of his land. According to the above definition, Land is immovable property; however, timber cannot be immovable property since the same are not attached to the earth.

Question 3

What is a Document as per the Indian Evidence Act, 1872?

[MTP March 18]

Answer

As per Indian the Evidence Act, 1872: 'Document': Generally understood, a document is a paper or other material thing giving information, proof or evidence of anything. The Law defines 'document' in a more technical form.

As per Section 3 of the Indian Evidence Act, 1872, 'document' means any matter expressed or described upon any substance by means of letters, figures or marks or by more than one of those means, intended to be used, or which may be used, for the purpose of recording that matter. For Example: A writing is a document, any words printed, photographed are documents.

Question 4

Ayush and Vipul are good friends and pursuing CA course. While doing group studies for the paper of "Corporate and Other Law", they are confused about the provisions of section 3 of the Companies Act 2013. Section 3 provides "A company may be formed for any lawful purpose by……." Both Ayush and Vipul are in difficulty about the meaning of word "may". Whether it should be taken as mandatory or directory?

[RTP May 22]

Answer

The word 'shall' is used to raise a presumption of something which is mandatory or imperative while the word 'may' is used to connote something which is not mandatory but is only directory or enabling.

However, sometimes Word 'may' has a mandatory force if directory force will defeat the object of the Act.

However, sometimes the words "may and shall" can be interpreted interchangeably depending on the intention of the legislator.

Ayush and Vipul, two CA students, are confused with the language of the provisions of section 3 of the Companies Act 2013 that whether the word "may" used in section should be considered as mandatory or directory. In the given case, it can be said that the word "may" should be taken as mandatory force, because the law will never allow the formation of company with unlawful object. Here the word used "may" shall be read as "shall". Usage of word 'may' here makes it mandatory for a company for the compliance of section 3 for its formation.

Question 5

Define the following term Affidavit with reference to the General Clauses Act, 1897

[Nov 19, Nov 20]

Answer

"Affidavit" [Section 3(3) of the General Clauses Act, 1897]: 'Affidavit' shall include affirmation and declaration in the case of persons by law allowed to affirm or declare instead of swearing.

The above definition is inclusive in nature. It states that Affidavit shall include affirmation and declarations. This definition does not define affidavit. However, we can understand this term in general parlance. Affidavit is a written statement confirmed by oath or affirmation for use as evidence in Court or before any authority.

Question 6

Mrs. K went to a Jewellary shop to purchase diamond ornaments. The owners of jewellary shop are notorious and indulging in smuggling activities. Mrs. K purchased diamond ornaments honestly without making proper enquiries. Was the purchase made in Good faith as per the provisions of the General Clauses Act, 1897 so as to convey good title?

[Nov 20]

Answer

In the instant case, the purchase of diamond ornaments by Mrs. K from a Jewellary Shop, the owners of which are notorious and indulged in smuggling activities, made in good faith, will not convey good title.

As per section 3 (22) of the General Clauses Act, 1897, a thing shall be deemed to be done in "good faith" where it is in fact done honestly, whether it is done negligently or not. The definition of good faith as is generally understood in the civil law and which may be taken as a practical guide in understanding the expression in the Indian Contract Act, 1872 is that nothing is said to be done in good faith which is done without due care and attention as is expected with a man of ordinary prudence. An honest purchase made carelessly without making proper enquiries cannot be said to have been made in good faith so as to convey good title.

Question 7

"The act done negligently shall be deemed to be done in good faith." Comment with the help of the provisions of the General Clauses Act, 1897.

[Jan 21, MTP-2 May'23]

OR

What do you understand by the term 'Good Faith'. Explain it as per the provisions of the General Clauses Act, 1897. Mr. X purchased a watch from Mr. Y carelessly without proper enquiry. Whether the purchase made could said to be made in good faith.

[Nov 19]

OR

What do you understand by the term 'Good Faith'. Explain as per the provisions of the General Clauses Act, 1897.

[MTP Aug 18, March 19, Nov 20]

Answer

In general, anything done with due care and attention, which is not malafide is presumed to have been done in good faith. But, according to section 3(22) of the General Clauses Act, 1897, a thing shall be deemed to be done in "good faith" where it is in fact done honestly, whether it is done negligently or not.

The question of good faith under the General Clauses Act is one of fact. It is to determine with reference to the circumstances of each case. It is therefore understood that the General Clauses Act, 1897 considers the honesty in doing the Act as a primary test to constitute the thing done in good faith and therefore the act done honestly but with negligence may also be termed as done in good faith as per the General Clauses Act, 1897.

The term "Good faith" has been defined differently in different enactments. This definition of the good faith does not apply to that enactment which contains a special definition of the term "good faith" and there the definition given in that particular enactment has to be followed. This definition may be applied only if there is nothing repugnant in subject or context, and if that is so, the definition is not applicable.

Question 8

Income Tax Act, 1961 provides that the gratuity paid by the government to its employees is fully exempt from tax. You are required to explain the scope of the term 'government' and clarify whether the exemption from gratuity income will be available to the State Government Employees? Give your answer in accordance with the provisions of the General Clauses Act, 1897.

[Jan 21, MTP-1 May 23]

Answer

According to section 3(23) of the General Clauses Act, 1897, 'Government' or 'the Government' shall include both the Central Government and State Government.

Hence, wherever, word 'Government' is used, it will include Central Government and State Government both. Thus, when the Income Tax Act, 1961, provides that gratuity paid by the government to its employees is fully exempt from tax, the exemption from gratuity income will be available to the State Government employees also.

Question 9

Elucidate the term "Commencement" as per the General Clauses Act, 1897

[MTP April 21]

Answer

Section 3(13) of the General Clauses Act, 1897, defines the term "Commencement".

"Commencement" used with reference to an Act or Regulation, shall mean the day on which the Act or Regulation comes into force.

Coming into force or entry into force (also called commencement) refers to the process by which legislation, regulations, treaties and other legal instruments come to have a legal force and effect.

A law cannot be said to be in force unless it is brought into operation by legislative enactment, or by the exercise of authority by a delegate empowered to bring it into operation. The theory of a statute being "in operation in a constitutional sense" though it is not in fact in operation has no validity. (State of Orissa Vs. Chandrasekhar Singh Bhai — AIR 1970 SC 398).

Question 10

When does an enactment is said to have come into operation if the Act has not specified any particular date of its enforcement. Explain with help of an example as per provisions of the General Clauses Act, 1897

[MTP March 18]

Answer

"Coming into operation of enactment": According to section 5 of the General Clauses Act, 1897, where any Central Act has not specifically mentioned a particular date to come into force, it shall be implemented on the day on which it receives the assent of the Governor General in case Central Acts made before the commencement of the Indian Constitution and/or, of the President in case of an Act of Parliament.

Example: The Companies Act, 2013 received assent of President of India on 29 th August, 2013 and was notified in official gazette on 30th August, 2013 with the enforcement of section 1 of the Act. Accordingly, the Companies Act, 2013 came into enforcement on the date of its publication in the Official Gazette.

Question 11

Explain the provision related to 'Effect of Repeal' as per the General Clauses Act, 1897.

[May 2022]

Answer

"Effect of Repeal": According to section 6 of the General Clauses Act, 1897, where any Central legislation or any regulation made after the commencement of this Act repeals any Act made or yet to be made, unless another purpose exists, the repeal shall not:

- Revive anything not enforced or prevailed during the period at which repeal is effected or;
- Affect the previous operation of any enactment so repealed or anything duly done or suffered thereunder; or
- Affect any right, privilege, obligation or liability acquired, accrued or incurred under any enactment so repealed; or
- Affect any penalty, forfeiture or punishment incurred in respect of any offence committed against any enactment so repealed; or
- Affect any inquiry, litigation or remedy with regard to such claim, privilege, debt or responsibility or any inquiry, litigation or remedy may be initiated, continued or insisted

Question 12

Explain briefly any four effects by repeal of an existing Act by central legislation enumerated in Section-6 of The General Clauses Act, 1897

[May 18]

Answer

According to Section 6 of the General Clauses Act, 1897, where any Central legislation or any regulation made after the commencement of this Act repeals any Act made or yet to be made, unless another purpose exists, the repeal shall not:

i. Revive anything not enforced or prevailed during the period at which repeal is effected or;
ii. Affect any right, privilege, obligation or liability acquired, accrued or incurred under any enactment

so repealed; or

iii. Affect any penalty, forfeiture or punishment incurred in respect of any offence committed against any enactment so repealed; or

iv. Affect any inquiry, litigation or remedy with regard to such claim, privilege, debt or responsibility or any inquiry, litigation or remedy may be initiated, continued or insisted.

Question 13

As per the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013, a whole time Key Managerial Personnel (KMP) shall not hold office in more than one company except its subsidiary company at the same time. Referring to the Section 13 of the General Clauses Act, 1897, examine whether a whole time KMP can be appointed in more than one subsidiary company?

[Nov 20, MTP Aug 18]

Answer

Section 203(3) of the Companies Act, 2013 provides that whole time key managerial personnel shall not hold office in more than one company except in its subsidiary company at the same time. With respect to the issue that whether a whole time KMP of holding company be appointed in more than one subsidiary companies or can be appointed in only one subsidiary company.

It can be noted that Section 13 of General Clauses Act, 1897 provides that the word 'singular' shall include the 'plural', unless there is anything repugnant to the subject or the context. Thus, a whole time key managerial personnel may hold office in more than one subsidiary company as per the present law.

Question 14

Komal Ltd. declares a dividend for its shareholders in its AGM held on 27th September, 2018. Referring to provisions of the General Clauses Act, 1897 and Companies Act, 2013, advice:

i. The dates during which Komal Ltd. is required to pay the dividend?

ii. The dates during which Komal Ltd. is required to transfer the unpaid or unclaimed dividend to unpaid dividend account?

[Nov 18, MTP May 20]

OR

The Companies Act, 2013 provides that the amount of dividend remained unpaid/unclaimed on expiry of 30 days from the date of declaration of dividend shall be transferred to unpaid dividend account within 7 days from the date of expiry of such period of 30 days. If the expiry date of such 30 days is 30.10.2018, decide the last date on or before which the unpaid/unclaimed dividend amount shall be required to be transferred to a separate bank account in the light of the relevant provisions of the General Clauses Act, 1897?

[May 19]

OR

Excel Ltd. declared dividend for its shareholder in its Annual General Meeting held on 30/09/2017. Under the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013, company is required to pay declared dividend within 30 days from the date of declaration. As per the provisions of the General Clauses Act, 1897, discuss what will be the commencement and termination time for posting of declared dividend.

[MTP March 18, Oct 18]

Answer

As per section 9 of the General Clauses Act, 1897, for computation of time, the section states that in any legislation or regulation, it shall be sufficient, for the purpose of excluding the first in a series of days or any other period of time to use the word "from" and for the purpose of including the last in a series of days or any other period of time, to use the word "to".

i. Payment of dividend: In the given instance, Komal Ltd. declares dividend for its shareholder in its Annual General Meeting held on 27/09/2018. Under the provisions of Section 127 of the Companies Act, 2013, a company is required to pay declared dividend within 30 days from the date of declaration, i.e. from 28/09/2018 to 27/10/2018. In this series of 30 days, 27/09/2018 will be excluded and last 30th day i.e. 27/10/2018 will be included.

Accordingly, Komal Ltd. will be required to pay dividend within 28/09/2018 and 27/10/2018 (both days inclusive)

ii. Transfer of unpaid or unclaimed divided: As per the provisions of Section 124 of the Companies Act, 2013, where a dividend has been declared by a company but has not been paid or claimed within 30 days from the date of the declaration, to any shareholder entitled to the payment of the dividend, the company shall, within 7 days from the date of expiry of the said period of 30 days, transfer the total amount of dividend which remains unpaid or unclaimed to a special account to be opened by the company in that behalf in any scheduled bank to be called the "Unpaid Dividend Account" (UDA).

Therefore, Komal Ltd. shall transfer the unpaid/unclaimed dividend to UDA within the period of 28th October, 2018 to 3rd November, 2018 (both days inclusive).

Question 15:

Referring to the provisions of the General Clauses Act, 1897, find out the day/ date on which the following Act/Regulation comes into force. Give reasons also,

(1) An Act of Parliament which has not specifically mentioned a particular date.

(2) The Securities and Exchange Board of India (Issue of Capital and Disclosure Requirements) (Fifth Amendment) Regulations, 2015 was issued by SEBI vide Notification dated 14th August, 2015 with effect from 1st January, 2016.

[ICAI Module]

Answer

(1) According to section 5 of the General Clauses Act, 1897, where any Central Act has not specifically mentioned a particular date to come into force, it shall be implemented on the day on which it receives the assent of the President in case of an Act of Parliament.

(2) If any specific date of enforcement is prescribed in the Official Gazette, the Act shall come into enforcement from such date.

Thus, in the given question, the SEBI (Issue of Capital and Disclosure Requirements) (Fifth Amendment) Regulations, 2015 shall come into enforcement on 1st January, 2016 rather than the date of its notification in the gazette.

Question 16:

'Repeal' of provision is different from 'deletion' of provision. Explain.

[Nov 18, MTP Oct 19, Nov 20]

Answer

In Navrangpura Gam Dharmada Milkat Trust Vs. Rmtuji Ramaji, AIR 1994 Guj 75 case, it was decided that 'Repeal' of provision is in distinction from 'deletion' of provision. 'Repeal' ordinarily brings about complete obliteration (abolition) of the provision as if it never existed, thereby affecting all incoherent rights and all causes of action related to the 'repealed' provision while 'deletion' ordinarily takes effect from the date of legislature affecting the said deletion, never to effect total effecting or wiping out of the provision as if it never existed.

Question 17

There are two ways to reach city A from city B. The distance between the two cities by roadways is 100 kms and by water ways 80 kms. How is the distance measured for the purpose of any Central Act under the provisions of the General Clauses Act, 1897?

[Nov 20]

Answer

"Measurement of Distances" [Section 11]: In the measurement of any distance, for the purposes of any Central Act or Regulation made after the commencement of this Act, that distance shall, unless a different intention appears, be measured in a straight line on a horizontal plane.

Question 18

PK and VK had a long dispute regarding the ownership of a land for which a legal suit was pending in the court. The court fixed the date of hearing on 29.04.2018, which was announced to be a holiday subsequently by the Government. What will be the computation of time of the hearing in this case under the General Clauses Act, 1897?

[Jan 21, MTP-1 May 23]

OR

Ajit was supposed to submit an appeal to High Court of Kolkata on 30th March, 2020, which was the last day on which such appeal could be submitted. Unfortunately, on that day High Court was closed due to total Lockdown all over India due to Covid-19 pandemic. Examine the remedy available to Ajit under the provisions of the General Clauses Act, 1897.

[July 21]

Answer

According to Section 10 of the General Clauses Act, 1897, where by any legislation or regulation, any act or proceeding is directed or allowed to be done or taken in any court or office on a certain day or within a prescribed period then, if the Court or office is closed on that day or last day of the prescribed period, the act or proceeding shall be considered as done or taken in due time if it is done or taken on the next day afterwards on which the Court or office is open.

In the given question, the court fixed the date of hearing of dispute between PK and VK, on 29.04.2018, which was subsequently announced to be a holiday.

Applying the above provisions we can conclude that the hearing date of 29.04.2018, shall be extended to the next working day.

Question 19

Examine the validity of the following statements with reference to the General Clauses Act, 1897:

i. Insurance Policies covering immovable property have been held to be immovable property
ii. The word "bullocks" could be interpreted to include "cows".

[July 21, MTP-2 May 23]

Answer

i. Insurance Policies covering immovable property have been held to be immovable property: This statement is not valid.
   Insurance policy is a written document containing an agreement between the insurer and insured. It includes a matter intended to be used or may be used for the purpose or recording of the matter. Hence, the insurance policies covering immovable property is not covered under the definition of immovable property.
ii. The word 'bullocks' could be interpreted to include 'cows': This statement is not valid.
   Where a word connoting a common gender is available but the word used conveys a specific gender, there is a presumption that the provisions of General Clauses Act, 1897 do not apply. Thus, the word 'bullocks' could not be interpreted to include 'cows'.

Question 20:

Examine the validity of the following statements with reference to the General Clauses Act, 1897:
Board of Directors of Sabarwal Construction Private Limited authorised by passing resolution in board meeting Mr. Munim to appoint five employees for accounts department of company. Mr. Munim appointed five employees including Mr. Rupal who was relative of one of the director of company. After one month, Mr. Munim observed that Mr. Rupal was not performing his duties honestly. Mr. Munim issued the order of dismissal of Mr. Rupal with proper reasons. Mr. Rupal filed a petition in the court that his dismissal order is not valid as Board of Directors had authorised Mr. Munim only for appointment of employees not for dismissal. Whether is Mr. Rupal correct with his words?

[MTP April 22]

Answer

As per the provisions of section 16 of the General Clauses Act, 1897, the authority having for the time being

power to make the appointment shall also have power to suspend or dismiss any person appointed whether by itself or any other authority in exercise of that power.

Mr. Munim was appointed in board meeting of Sabarwal Construction Private Limited to appoint five employees for accounts department of company. Mr. Munim appointed five employees. After one month, he issued the order of dismissal to one of those five employees. That employee filed an application in the court challenging the validity of dismissal order with the words that Mr. Munim was authorised only for appointment of employees not for dismissal.

On the basis of above provisions and facts of the case, Mr. Rupal was not correct with his words because as per the General Clauses Act, 1897, power to appoint includes power to suspend or dismiss. Hence, Mr. Munim has power to dismiss Mr. Rupal.

Question 21

What is the effect on the implementation of the Rules that are issued between passing and commencement of enactment. Explain as per the provisions of the General Clauses Act, 1897.

[MTP Oct 18]

Answer

"Making of rules or bye-laws and issuing of orders between passing and commencement of enactment" [Section 22]

Where, by any Central Act or Regulation which is not to come into force immediately, on the passing thereof, a power is conferred to make rules or bye-laws, or to issue orders with respect to the application of the Act or Regulation or with respect to the establishment of any Court or the appointment of any Judge or officer thereunder, or with respect to the person by whom, or the time when, or the place where, or the manner in which, or the fees for which, anything is to be done under the Act or Regulation, then that power may be exercised at any time after passing of the Act or Regulation; but rules, bye-laws or orders so made or issued shall not take effect till the commencement of the Act or Regulation.

Question 22

Explain various provisions applicable to rules or bye-laws being made after previous publications as enumerated in Section-23 of the General Clauses Act, 1897.

[Nov 18]

Answer

Provisions applicable to making of rules or bye-laws after previous publications [Section 23 of the General Clauses Act, 1897]:

Where, by any Central Act or Regulation, a power to make rules or bye-laws is expressed to be given subject to the condition of the rules or bye-laws being made after previous publication, then the following provisions shall apply, namely:-

(i) Publish of proposed draft rules/ bye - laws: The authority having power to make the rules or bye-laws shall, before making them, publish a draft of the proposed rules or bye-laws for the information of persons likely to be affected thereby;

(ii) To publish in the prescribed manner: The publication shall be made in such manner as that authority deems to be sufficient, or, if the condition with respect to previous publication so requires, in such manner as the Government concerned prescribes;

(iii) Notice annexed with the published draft: There shall be published with the draft a notice specifying a date on or after which the draft will be taken into consideration;

(iv) Consideration on suggestions/objections received from other authorities: The authority having power to make the rules or bye-laws, and, where the rules or bye- laws are to be made with the sanction, approval or concurrence of another authority, that authority also shall consider any objection or suggestion which may be received by the authority having power to make the rules or

bye-laws from any person with respect to the draft before the date so specified;

(v) Notified in the official gazette: The publication in the Official Gazette of a rule or bye-law purporting to have been made in exercise of a power to make rules or bye- laws after previous publication shall be conclusive proof that the rule or bye-laws have been duly made.

Question 23

Mr. Ram, an advocate has fraudulently deceived his client Mr. Shyam, who was taking his expert advise on taxation matters. Now, Mr. Ram is liable to a fine for acting fraudulently both under the Advocates Act, 1961 as well as the Income Tax Act, 1961. State the provision as to whether his offence is punishable under the both the Acts, as per the General Clauses Act, 1897.

[RTP Nov 18, MTP April 21]

Answer

"Provision as to offence punishable under two or more enactments" [Section 26]: Where an act or omission constitutes an offence under two or more enactments, then the offender shall be liable to be prosecuted and punished under either or any of those enactments, but shall not be punished twice for the same offence. Thus, Mr. Ram shall be liable to punished under the Advocates Act, 1961 or the Income Tax Act, 1961, but shall not be punished twice for the same offence.

Question 24

What is the meaning of 'Official Gazette' as per the provisions of the General Clauses Act, 1897?

[Nov 22]

Answer

"Official Gazette" [Section 3(39) of the General Clauses Act, 1897]: 'Official Gazette' or 'Gazette' shall mean:

(i) The Gazette of India, or
(ii) The Official Gazette of a state.

The Gazette of India is a public journal and an authorised legal document of the Government of India, published weekly by the Department of Publication, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs. As a public journal, the Gazette prints official notices from the government. It is authentic in content, accurate and strictly in accordance with the Government policies and decisions. The gazette is printed by the Government of India Press.

Question 25

A notice when required under the Statutory rules to be sent by "registered post acknowledgment due" is instead sent by "registered post" only. Whether the protection of presumption regarding serving of notice by "registered post" under the General Clauses Act is tenable? Referring to the provisions of the General Clauses Act, 1897, examine the validity of such notice in this case.

[RTP May 18, May 19]

OR

What is the meaning of service by post as per provisions of the General Clauses Act, 1897?

[May 18, MTP April 19, May 20, RTP May 21, MTP Nov 22]

Answer

As per the provisions of Section 27 of the General Clauses Act, 1897, where any legislation or regulation requires any document to be served by post, then unless a different intention appears, the service shall be deemed to be effected by:

(i) properly addressing,
(ii) pre-paying, and
(iii) posting by registered post.

A letter containing the document to have been effected at the time at which the letter would be delivered in the ordinary course of post.

Therefore, in view of the above provision, since, the statutory rules itself provides about the service of

notice that a notice when required under said statutory rules to be sent by 'registered post acknowledgement due', then, if notice was sent by 'registered post' only it will not be the compliance of said rules. However, if such provision was not provided by such statutory rules, then service of notice if by registered post only shall be deemed to be effected.

Furthermore, in similar case of In United Commercial Bank v. Bhim Sain Makhija, AIR 1994 Del 181: A notice when required under the statutory rules to be sent by 'registered post acknowledgement due' is instead sent by 'registered post' only, the protection of presumption regarding serving of notice under 'registered post' under this section of the Act neither tenable not based upon sound exposition of law.

Question 26

Mr. A (landlord) staying in Delhi, rented his flat of Bengaluru to Mr. B (tenant) for ₹20,000 per month to be paid annually. An agreement was made between them that during the tenancy period, if A requires his flat to be vacated, one-month prior notice is to be given to Mr. B. After eight months a notice was sent by Mr. A to Mr. B to vacate his flat by registered post which was refused to be accepted by Mrs. C (wife of Mr. B) and Mr. B denied to vacate the flat on ground of non-receipt of notice. Examine, as per the General Clauses Act, 1897, whether the notice is tenable?

[Nov 22]

OR

Mr. Mike has lent his house property to Mr. Wise at a monthly rent of Rs. 15,0000 per month. The yearly rent agreement was due to expire in near future. However, Mr. Mike does not intend to continue this agreement and he has sent a notice to Mr. Wise for the termination of the agreement. Mr. Wise on the other hand does not want to vacate the property and hence has returned the notice with an endorsement of refusal. Now, Mr. Wise has contended that the no notice was served to him and hence there is no need for him to vacate the property. As per the provisions of the General Clauses Act, 1897, discuss whether a notice was served to Mr. Wise.

[MTP Aug 18]

Answer

As per section 27 of the General Clause Act, 1897, where any legislation or regulation requires any document to be served by post, then unless a different intention appears, service shall be deemed to be effected by:

(i) properly addressing
(ii) pre-paying, and
(iii) posting by registered post.

Case Laws

(i) In Smt. Vandana Gulati Vs. Gurmeet Singh alias Mangal Singh, AIR 2013 All 69, it was held that where notice sent by registered post to person concerned at proper address is deemed to be served upon him in due course unless contrary is proved.
(ii) In Jagdish Singh Vs. Nathu Singh, AIR 1992 SC 1604, it was held that where a notice is sent by the landlord by registered post and the same is returned by the tenant with an endorsement of refusal, it will be presumed that the notice has been served.

In other words, **Endorsement 'not claimed/not met' is sufficient to prove deemed service of notice**.

In the given question, Mr. A has served the notice to Mr. B by registered post which was refused to be accepted by Mrs. C (wife of Mr. B). However, Mr. B cannot deny to vacate the flat on ground of non- receipt of notice, since Mrs. C had refused to accept the notice served by Mr. A through registered post.
Hence, the notice served by Mr. A is tenable provided one- month prior notice given to Mr. B.

Question 27

A notice was served on Mr. P for appearing in the court. However, the notice could not be served on account of the fact that the house of the Mr. P was found locked. Thus, Mr. P. did not appear in the court at the

said date. Examine the situation as per the provisions of the General Clauses Act, 1897 and determine whether Mr. P. will be liable in the given situation.

[MTP April 19]

Answer

According to section 27 of the General Clauses Act, 1897, where any legislation or regulation requires any document to be served by post, then unless a different intention appears, the service shall be deemed to be effected by:

(i) properly addressing
(ii) pre-paying, and
(iii) posting by registered post.

A letter containing the document to have been effected at the time at which the letter would be delivered in the ordinary course of post.

Hence, where the where the notice could not be served on account of the fact that the house of Mr P was found locked, it will be deemed that the notice was properly served as per the provisions of Section 27 of the General Clauses Act, and it would be for Mr. P to prove that it was not really served and that he was not responsible for such non- service.

Question 28:

The Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA) published in the Gazette of India, the proposed draft of Rules further to amend certain rules under the Companies Act, 2013. The MCA made some modifications in the draft Rules already published. In the light of the provisions of the General Clauses Act, 1897, answer the following:

(i) Is it required for MCA to publish a draft of th e proposed Rules?
(ii) In case of any irregularities in the publication of the draft, can it be questioned?
(iii) Is MCA entitled to make suitable changes in the draft?
(iv) Is it necessary to re-publish the Rules in the amended form when the changes made are ancillary to the earlier draft?

[May 2022]

Answer

The answer can be given in terms of section 23 of the General Clauses Act, 1897. Following shall be the answers in the light of the given information and the relevant legal provisions:

(i) Yes, MCA is required to publish a draft of the proposed Rules for the information of persons likely to be affected thereby.
(ii) No, in case of any irregularities in the publication of the draft, it cannot be questioned. The publication in the Official Gazette of a rule or bye-law after previous publication, shall be conclusive proof that the rule or bye-laws has been duly made. It raises a conclusive presumption that after the publication of the rules in the Official Gazette, it is to be inferred that the procedure for making the rules had been followed. Any irregularities in the publication of the draft cannot therefore be questioned.
(iii) Yes, MCA is entitled to make suitable changes in the draft before finally publishing them.
(iv) No, it is not necessary to re-publish the Rules in the amended form when the changes made are ancillary to the earlier draft.

Question 29:

Section 2(18)(aa) of the Income Tax Act, 1961, provides that a company is said to be a company in which the public are substantially interested, if it is a company which is registered under section 25 of the Companies Act, 1956. After the advent of Companies Act, 2013, the corresponding change has not been made in section 2(18) of the Income tax Act, 1961. Explain, with reference to the provisions of the General Clauses Act 1897, how will the provisions of section 2(18)(aa) of the Income Tax Act, 1961, will be considered after the enactment of the Companies Act 2013?

[RTP Nov 22]

Answer

According to section 8 of the General Clauses Act, 1897, where this Act or Central Act or Regulation made after the commencement of this Act, repeals and re-enacts, with or without modification, any provision of a

former enactment, then references in any other enactment or in any instrument to the provision so repealed shall, unless a different intention appears, be construed as references to the provision so re-enacted.
Also, in Gauri Shankar Gaur v. State of U.P., AIR 1994 SC 169, it was held that every Act has its own distinction. If a later Act merely makes a reference to a former Act or existing law, it is only by reference and all amendments, repeals new law subsequently made will have effect unless its operation is saved by the relevant provision of the section of the Act.

Question 30:

Mr. Sridhar has issued a promissory note of ₹1000 to Mr. Mohan on 17th May 2022 payable 3 months after date. After that, a sudden holiday was declared on 20th August 2022 due to Moharram. As per the provisions of the General Clauses Act 1897, what should be the date of presentment of promissory note for payment? Whether it should be 19th August 2022 or 21st August 2022?

[MTP Nov 22]

Answer

Section 10 of the General Clauses Act, 1897 provides where by any legislation or regulation, any act or proceeding is directed or allowed to be done or taken in any court or office on a certain day or within a prescribed period then, if the Court or office is closed on that day or last day of the prescribed period, the act or proceeding shall be considered as done or taken in due time if it is done or taken on the next day afterwards on which the Court or office is open.

A promissory note of ₹1000 was issued by Mr. Sridhar to Mr. Mohan on 17th May 2022 which was payable 3 months after date. After that, a sudden holiday was declared on 20 th August 2022 due to Moharram.

In the given case, the period of 3 months ends on 17th August 2022. Three days of grace are to be added. It falls due on 20th August 2022 which declared to be a public holiday after the issue of Promissory Note. In the light of provisions of section 10 of the General Clauses Act 1897, the due date will be on next day when office is open i.e., 21st August 2022.

Chapter 4 – Interpretation of Statutes

Question 1

Give the difference between interpretation and construction

[MTP March 18, March 21]

Answer

Difference between Interpretation and Construction-

Interpretation differs from construction. Interpretation is of finding out the true sense of any form and the construction is the drawing of conclusion respecting subjects that lie beyond the direct expression of the text.

When the legislature uses certain words which have acquired a definite meaning over a period of time, it must be assumed that those words have been used in the same sense.

Thus, where the Court adheres to the plain meaning of the language used by the legislature, it would be 'interpretation' of the words, but where the meaning is not plain, the court has to decide whether the wording was meant to cover the situation before the court.

Here the court would be resorting to what is called 'construction', however, the two terms – 'interpretation' and 'construction'– overlap each other and it is rather difficult to state where 'interpretation' leaves off and 'construction' begins.

It would also be worthwhile to note, at this stage itself, the difference between the terms 'Interpretation' and Construction. While more often the two terms are used interchangeably to denote a process adopted by the courts to ascertain the meaning of the legislature from the words with which it is expressed, these two terms have different connotations.

Interpretation is the art of ascertaining the meaning of words and the true sense in which the author intended that they should be understood. It is the drawing of conclusions from a statute that lie beyond the direct expression of the words used therein. [Bhagwati Prasad Kedia v. C.I.T,(2001)]

It is the duty of the courts to give effect to the meaning of an Act when the meaning can be equitably gathered from the words used. Words of legal import occurring in a statute which have acquired a definite and precise sense, must be understood in that sense. (State of Madras v. Gannon Dunkerly Co. AIR 1958)

Conclusions drawn by means of construction are within the spirit though not necessarily within the letter of the law. In practice, construction includes interpretation and the terms are frequently used synonymously.

Question 2

Define Grammatical Interpretation. What are the exceptions to grammatical interpretation?

[May 18]

Answer

Grammatical Interpretation and its exceptions: 'Grammatical interpretation' concerns itself exclusively with the verbal expression of the law, it does not go beyond the letter of the law. In all ordinary cases, 'grammatical interpretation' is the sole form allowable. The Court cannot take from or add to modify the letter of the law.

This rule, however, is subject to some exceptions:

(1) Where the letter of the law is logically defective on account of ambiguity, inconsistency or incompleteness. As regard the defect to ambiguity, the Court is under a duty to travel beyond the letter of the law so as to determine from the other sources the true intention of the legislature. In the case of the statutory expression being defective on account of inconsistency, the court must ascertain the spirit of the law.

(2) If the text leads to a result which is so unreasonable that it is self-evident that the legislature could not mean what it says, the court may resolve such impasse by inferring logically the intention of the legislature.

Question 3

Explain the principles of "Grammatical Interpretation" and "Logical Interpretation" of a Statute. What are the duties of a court in this regard?

[ICAI Module, MTP March 19, March 21, MTP Nov 22, Nov'22]

Answer

Principles of Grammatical Interpretation and Logical Interpretation: In order to ascertain the meaning of any law/ statute the principles of Grammatical and Logical Interpretation is applied to conclude the real meaning of the law and the intention of the legislature behind enacting it.

Meaning: Grammatical interpretation concerns itself exclusively with the verbal expression of law. It does not go beyond the letter of the law, whereas Logical interpretation on the other hand, seeks more satisfactory evidence of the true intention of the legislature.

Application of the principles in the court: In all ordinary cases, the grammatical interpretation is the sole form allowable. The court cannot delete or add to modify the letter of the law. However, where the letter of the law is logically defective on account of ambiguity, inconsistency or incompleteness, the court is under a duty to travel beyond the letter of law so as to determine the true intentions of the legislature. So that a statute is enforceable at law, however, unreasonable it may be. The duty of the court is to administer the law as it stands rather it is just or unreasonable.

However, if there are two possible constructions of a clause, the courts may prefer the logical construction which emerges from the setting in which the clause appears and the circumstances in which it came to be enacted and also the words used therein.

Question 4

How will you interpret the term "Instrument" used in a statutes?

[Nov 19]

Answer

'Instrument': In common parlance, 'instrument' means a formal legal document which creates or confirms a right or records a fact. It is a formal writing of any kind, such as an agreement, deed, charter or record, drawn up and executed in a technical form. It also means a formal legal document having legal effect, either as creating liability or as affording evidence of it. Section 2(14) of the Indian Stamp Act, 1899 states that 'instrument' includes every document by which any right or liability is or purports to be created, transferred, extended, extinguished or recorded.

Question 5

Explain how does 'natural and grammatical meaning' helps in the interpretation of a statute?

[MTP March18]

Answer

Natural and grammatical meaning: Statute are to be first understood in their natural, ordinary, or popular sense and must be construed according to their plain, literal and grammatical meaning. If there is an inconsistency with any express intention or declared purpose of the statute, or it involves any absurdity, repugnancy, inconsistency, the grammatical sense must then be modified, extended or abridged only to avoid such an inconvenience, but no further. [(State of HP v. Pawan Kumar(2005)]

Example: In a question before the court whether the sale of betel leaves was subject to sales tax. In this matter the Supreme Court held that betel leaves could not be given the dictionary, technical or botanical meaning when the ordinary and natural meaning is clear and unambiguous. Being the word of everyday use, it must be understood in its popular sense by which people are conversant with it as also the meaning which the statute dealing with the matter would attribute to it. Therefore, the sale of betel leaves was liable to

sale tax. (Ramavtar V. Assistant Sales Tax Officer, AIR 1961 SC 1325).

Question 6

Briefly explain the meaning and application of the rule of "Harmonious Construction" in the interpretation of statutes?

[MTP Aug 18]

Answer

Meaning of rule Harmonious Construction: When there is doubt about the meaning of the words of a statute, these should be understood in the sense in which they harmonise with the subject of the enactment and the object which the legislature had in view. Where there are in an enactment two or more provisions which cannot be reconciled with each other, they should be so interpreted, wherever possible, as to give effect to all of them. This is what is known as the Rule of Harmonious Construction.

It must always be borne in mind that a statute is passed as a whole and not in sections and it may well be assumed to be animated by one general purpose and intent. The Court's duty is to give effect to all the parts of a statute, if possible. But this general principle is meant to guide the courts in furthering the intent of the legislature, not overriding it.

Application of the Rule: The Rule of Harmonious Construction is applicable only when there is a real and not merely apparent conflict between the provisions of an Act, and one of them has not been made subject to the other. When after having construed their context the words are capable of only a single meaning, the rule of harmonious construction disappears and is replaced by the rule of literal construction.

Question 7

Explain the rule in 'Heydon's Case' while interpreting the statutes quoting an example.

[ICAI Module, MTP March 21]

OR

Explain 'Mischieve Rule' for interpretation of statute. Also, give 4 matters it considers in construing an Act

Answer

Where the language used in a statute is capable of more than one interpretation, the most firmly established rule for construction is the principle laid down in the Heydon's case. This rule enables, consideration of four matters in constituting an act:

(1) what was the law before making of the Act,
(2) what was the mischief or defect for which the law did not provide,
(3) what is the remedy that the Act has provided, and
(4) what is the reason for the remedy.

The rule then directs that the courts must adopt that construction which 'shall suppress the mischief and advance the remedy. Therefore, even in a case where the usual meaning of the language used falls short of the whole object of the legislature, a more extended meaning may be attributed to the words, provided they are fairly susceptible of it.

If the object of any enactment is public safety, then its working must be interpreted widely to give effect to that object. Thus in the case of Workmen's Compensation Act, 1923 the main object being provision of compensation to workmen, it was held that the Act ought to be so construed, as far as possible, so as to give effect to its primary provisions.

However, it has been emphasized by the Supreme Court that the rule in Heydon's case is applicable only when the words used are ambiguous and are reasonably capable of more than one meaning [CIT v. Sodra Devi (1957) 32 ITR 615 (SC)]

Question 8

Explain the rule of 'beneficial construction' while interpreting the statutes quoting an example.

[MTP April 19]

Answer

Where the language used in a statute is capable of more than one interpretation, the most firmly established rule for construction is the principle laid down in the Heydon's case. This rule enables, consideration of four matters in constituting an act:

(1) what was the law before making of the Act,
(2) what was the mischief or defect for which the law did not provide,
(3) what is the remedy that the Act has provided, and
(4) what is the reason for the remedy.

The rule then directs that the courts must adopt that construction which 'shall suppress the mischief and advance the remedy'. Therefore, even in a case where the usual meaning of the language used falls short of the whole object of the legislature, a more extended meaning may be attributed to the words, provided they are fairly susceptible of it.

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Question 9

'The meaning of a word is to be judged by the company it keeps'. Explain the concept of 'Noscitur A Sociis'.

[MTP May 20]

OR

"Associate words to be understood in common sense manner". Explain this statement with reference to rules of interpretation statutes.

[Nov 20, MTP Nov 22]

Answer

Associated Words to be Understood in Common Sense Manner: When two words or expressions are coupled together one of which generally excludes the other, obviously the more general term is used in a meaning excluding the specific one. On the other hand, there is the concept of 'Noscitur A Sociis' ('it is known by its associates'), that is to say 'the meaning of a word is to be judged by the company it keeps'. When two or more words which are capable of analogous (similar or parallel) meaning are coupled together, they are to be understood in their cognate sense (i.e. akin in origin, nature or quality). They take, as it were, their color from each other, i.e., the more general is restricted to a sense analogous to the less general. It is a rule wider than the rule of ejusdem generis, rather ejusdem generis is only an application of the noscitur a sociis. It must be borne in mind that nocitur a sociis, is merely a rule of construction and it cannot prevail in cases where it is clear that the wider words have been deliberately used in order to make the scope of the defined word correspondingly wider.

For example, in the expression 'commercial establishment means an establishment which carries on any business, trade or profession', the term 'profession' was construed with the associated words 'business' and 'trade' and it was held that a private dispensary was not within the definition. (Devendra M. Surti (Dr.) vs. State of Gujrat, AIR 1969 SC 63 at 67).

Question 10

Sohel, a director of a Company, not being personally concerned or interested, financially or otherwise, in a matter of a proposed motion placed before the Board Meeting, did not disclose his interest although he has

knowledge that his sister is interested in that proposal. He restrains from making any disclosure of his interest on the presumption that he is not required by law to disclose any interest as he is not personally interested or concerned in the proposal. He made his presumption relying on the 'Rule of Literal Construction'. Explaining the scope of interpretation under this rule in the given situation, decide whether the decision of Sohel is correct?

[Jan 21, MTP-1 May 23]

Answer

Rule of Literal Construction:

Normally, where the words of a statute are in themselves clear and unambiguous, then these words should be construed in their natural and ordinary sense and it is not open to the court to adopt any other hypothetical construction. This is called the rule of literal construction.

This principle is contained in the Latin maxim "*absoluta sententia expositore non indeget*" which literally means "an absolute sentence or preposition needs not an expositor". In other words, plain words require no explanation. Sometimes, occasions may arise when a choice has to be made between two interpretations – one narrower and the other wider or bolder. In such a situation, if the narrower interpretation would fail to achieve the manifest purpose of the legislation, one should rather adopt the wider one. When we talk of disclosure of 'the nature of concern or interest, financial or otherwise' of a director or the manager of a company in the subject-matter of a proposed motion (as referred to in section 102 of the Companies Act, 2013), we have to interpret in its broader sense of referring to any concern or interest containing any information and facts that may enable members to understand the meaning, scope and implications of the items of business and to take decisions thereon. What is required is a full and frank disclosure without reservation or suppression, as, for instance where a son or daughter or father or mother or brother or sister is concerned in any contract or matter, the shareholders ought fairly to be informed of it and the material facts disclosed to them. Here a restricted narrow interpretation would defeat the very purpose of the disclosure.

In the given question, Sohel (a director) did not disclose his interest in a matter placed before the Board Meeting (in which his sister has interest), as he is not personally interested or concerned in the proposal. Here, he ought to have considered broader meaning of the provision of law; and therefore, even though he was personally not interested or concerned in the proposal, he should have disclosed the interest.

Question 11

Explain the meaning of term 'Proviso'. Give the distinction between proviso, exception and Saving Clause.

[RTP May 18]

Answer

Proviso: The normal function of a proviso is to except something out of the enactment or to qualify something stated in the enactment which would be within its purview if the proviso were not there. The effect of the proviso is to qualify the preceding enactment which is expressed in terms which are too general. As a general rule, a proviso is added to an enactment to qualify or create an exception to what is in the enactment. Ordinarily a proviso is not interpreted as stating a general rule.

It is a cardinal rule of interpretation that a proviso to a particular provision of a statute only embraces the field which is covered by the main provision. It carves out an exception to the main provision to which it has been enacted as a proviso and to no other. (Ram Narain Sons Ltd. vs. Assistant Commissioner of Sales Tax, AIR 1955 SC 765).

Distinction between Proviso, exception and saving Clause

There is said to exist difference between provisions worded as 'Proviso', 'Exception', or 'Saving Clause'.

Proviso	Exception	Saving Clause
Exception' is intended to restrain the enacting clause to particular cases	'Proviso' is used to remove special cases from general enactment and provide for them specially	'Saving clause' is used to preserve from destruction certain rights, remedies or privileges already existing

Question 12

How far are (i) title and (ii) preamble in an enactment helpful in interpreting any of the parts of an enactment?

[MTP Aug 18]

Answer

i) Title: An enactment would have what is known as 'Short Title' and also a 'Long Title'. The short title merely identifies the enactment and is chosen merely for convenience. The 'Long title' describes the enactment and does not merely identify it.

The Long title is a part of the Act and, therefore, can be referred to for ascertaining the object and scope of the Act.

(ii) Preamble: It expresses the scope and object of the Act more comprehensively than the long title. The preamble may recite the ground and the cause for making a statute and or the evil which is sought to the remedied by it.

The preamble like the Long title can legitimately be used for construing it. However, the preamble cannot over ride the provisions of the Act. Only if the wording of the Act gives rise to doubts as to its proper construction (e.g., where the words or a phrase has more than the one meaning and doubts arise as to which of the two meanings is intended in the Act) the preamble can and ought to be referred to arrive at the proper construction.

Question 13

How far are 'marginal notes' in an enactment helpful in interpreting any of the parts of an enactment?

[MTP Oct 18]

Answer

Marginal Notes: Although there is difference of opinion regarding resort to Marginal Notes for construing an enactment, the generally held view is that the Marginal Notes appended to a Section can not be used for construing the Section.

In C.I.T. vs. Ahmedbhai Umarbhai & Co. (AIR 1950 SC 134 at 141), Patanjali Shastri, J., had declared: "Marginal notes in an Indian statute, as in an Act, of Parliament cannot be referred to for the purpose of construing the statute", and the same view has been taken in many other cases. Many cases show that reference to marginal notes may be permissible in exceptional cases for construing a section in a statute. [Deewan Singh v. Rajendra Pd. Ardevi, (2007)10 SCC , Sarabjit Rick Singh v. Union of India, (2008) 2 SCC]

However, marginal notes appended to Articles of the Constitution have been held to be part of the Constitution as passed by the Constituent Assembly and therefore have been made use of in construing the Articles.

Example: Article 286 of the constitution furnishing "prima facie", some clue as to the meaning and purpose of the Article [Bengal Immunity Co. Ltd. v. State of Bihar, AIR 1955 SC]

Question 14

(i) What is the effect of proviso? Does it qualify the main provisions of an Enactment?

(ii) Does an explanation added to a section widen the ambit of a section?

[ICAI Module, May 2022, MTP 2 May'23]

Answer

(i) Normally a Proviso is added to a section of an Act to except something or qualify something stated in that particular section to which it is added. A proviso should not be, ordinarily, interpreted as a general rule. Usually, a proviso is embedded in the main body of the section and becomes an integral part of it.

The effect of the proviso is to qualify the preceding enactment which is expressed in terms which are too general.

It is a cardinal rule of interpretation that a proviso or exception to a particular provision of a statute only embraces the field which is covered by the main provision. It carves out an exception to the main provision to which it has been enacted as a proviso and to no other. (Ram Narain Sons Ltd. vs. Assistant Commissioner of Sales Tax, AIR 1955 SC 765).

(ii) Sometimes an explanation is added to a section of an Act for the purpose of explaining the main provisions contained in that section. If there is some ambiguity in the provisions of the main section, the explanation is inserted to harmonise and clear up and ambiguity in the main section. Something may added be to (or something may be excluded from) the main provision by insertion of an explanation. But the explanation should not be construed to widen the ambit of the section.

Question 15

The 'Statute should be read as a Whole'. Explain the statement.

[RTP Nov 18]

Answer

'Read the Statute as a Whole': It is the elementary principle that construction of a statute is to be made of all its parts taken together and not of one part only. The deed/ statute must be read as a whole in order to ascertain the true meaning of its several clauses, and the words of each clause should be so interpreted as to bring them into harmony with other provisions – if that interpretation does no violence to the meaning of which they are naturally susceptible. And the same approach would apply with equal force with regard to Acts and Rules passed by the legislature.

One of the safest guides to the construction of sweeping general words is to examine other words of like import in the same enactment or instrument to see what limitations must be imposed on them. If we find that a number of such expressions have to be subjected to limitations and qualifications and that such limitations and qualifications are of the same nature, that circumstance forms a strong argument for subjecting the expression in dispute to a similar limitation and qualification.

Question 16

Gaurav Textile Company Limited has entered into a contract with a Company. You are invited to read and interpret the document of contract. What rules of interpretation of deeds and documents would you apply while doing so?

[ICAI Module]

Answer

The rules regarding interpretation of deeds and documents are as follows:

First and the foremost point that has to be borne in mind is that one has to find out what reasonable man, who has taken care to inform himself of the surrounding circumstances of a deed or a document, and of its scope and intendments, would understand by the words used in that deed or document. It is inexpedient to construe the terms of one deed by reference to the terms of another. Further, it is well established that different meanings the same word cannot have two in the same documents, unless the context compels the adoption of such a rule.

The Golden Rule is to ascertain the intention of the parties of the instrument after considering all the words in the documents/deed concerned in their ordinary, natural sense. For this purpose, the relevant portions of the document have to be considered as a whole.

The circumstances in which the particular words have been used have also to be taken into account. Very often, the status and training of the parties using the words have also to be taken into account as the same words maybe used by an ordinary person in one sense and by a trained person or a specialist in quite another sense and a special sense. It has also to be considered that very many words are used in more than one sense. It may happen that the same word understood in one sense will give effect to all the clauses in the deed while taken in another sense might render one or more of the clauses ineffective. In such a case the word should be understood in the former and not in the latter sense. It may also happen that there is a conflict between two or more clauses of the same documents. An effect must be made to resolve the conflict by interpreting the clauses so that all the clauses are given effect. If, however, it is not possible to give effect of all of them, then it is the earlier clause that will override the latter one.

Question 17

How will you interpret the definitions in a statute, if the following words are used in a statute?
(i) Means
(ii) Includes
Give one illustration for each of the above from statutes you are familiar with.

[ICAI Module, RTP Nov 22, MTP Nov 22]

Answer

Interpretation of the words "Means" and "Includes" in the definitions- The definition of a word or expression in the definition section may either be restricting of its ordinary meaning or may be extensive of the same. When a word is defined to 'mean' such and such, the definition is 'prima facie' restrictive and exhaustive, we must restrict the meaning of the word to that given in the definition section.

But where the word is defined to 'include' such and such, the definition is 'prima facie' extensive, here the word defined is not restricted to the meaning assigned to it but has extensive meaning which also includes the meaning assigned to it in the definition section.

Example— Definition of Director [section 2(34) of the Companies Act, 2013]—Director means a director appointed to the board of a company.

The word "means" suggests exhaustive definition. Definition of Whole time director [Section 2(94) of the Companies Act, 2013]—Whole time director includes a director in the whole time employment of the company.

The word "includes" suggests extensive definition. Other directors may be included in the category of the whole time director.

Question 18

Differentiate Mandatory Provision from a Directory Provision. What factors decide whether a provision is directory or mandatory?

[ICAI Module]

Answer

Practically speaking, the distinction between a provision which is 'mandatory' and one which is 'directory' is that when it is mandatory, it must be strictly observed; when it is 'directory' it would be sufficient that it is substantially complied with.

However, we have to look to the substance and not merely the form, an enactment in mandatory form might substantially be directory and, conversely, a statute in directory form may in substance be mandatory.
Hence, it is the substance that counts and must take precedence over mere form. If a provision gives a power coupled with a duty, it is mandatory: whether it is or is not so would depend on such consideration as:
–the nature of the thing empowered to be done,
–the object for which it is done, and
–the person for whose benefit the power is to be exercised

Question 19

Define Grammatical Interpretation. What are the exceptions to grammatical interpretation?

[ICAI Module]

Answer

Grammatical Interpretation and its exceptions: 'Grammatical interpretation' concerns itself exclusively with the verbal expression of the law, it does not go beyond the letter of the law. In all ordinary cases, 'grammatical interpretation' is the sole form allowable. The Court cannot take from or add to modify the letter of the law.
This rule, however, is subject to some exceptions:

(1) Where the letter of the law is logically defective on account of ambiguity, inconsistency or incompleteness. As regard the defect to ambiguity, the Court is under a duty to travel beyond the

letter of the law so as to determine from the other sources the true intention of the legislature. In the case of the statutory expression being defective on account of inconsistency, the court must ascertain the spirit of the law.

(2) If the text leads to a result which is so unreasonable that it is self-evident that the legislature could not mean what it says, the court may resolve such impasse by inferring logically the intention of the legislature.

Question 20

Explain how 'Dictionary Definitions' can be of great help in interpreting/ constructing an Act when the statute is ambiguous.

[ICAI Module, Nov 18, MTP Oct 18, April 19, Oct 19]

Answer

Dictionary Definitions: First we refer the Act in question to find out if any particular word or expression is defined in it. Where we find that a word is not defined in the Act itself, we may refer to dictionaries to find out the general sense in which that word is commonly understood. However, in selecting one out of the several meanings of a word, we must always take into consideration the context in which it is used in the Act. It is the fundamental rule that the meanings of words and expressions used in an Act must take their color from the context in which they appear. Further, judicial decisions laying down the meaning of words in construing statutes in pari material will have greater weight than the meaning furnished by dictionaries. However, for technical terms, reference may be made to technical dictionaries.

Question 21

Preamble does not over-ride the plain provision of the Act. Comment. Also give suitable example.

[ICAI Module]

Answer

Preamble: The Preamble expresses the scope, object and purpose of the Act more comprehensively. The Preamble of a Statute is a part of the enactment and can legitimately be used as an internal aid for construing it. However, the Preamble does not over-ride the plain provision of the Act. But if the wording of the statute gives rise to doubts as to its proper construction, for example, where the words or phrase has more than one meaning and a doubt arises as to which of the two meanings is intended in the Act, the Preamble can and ought to be referred to in order to arrive at the proper construction. In short, the Preamble to an Act discloses the primary intention of the legislature but can only be brought in as an aid to construction if the language of the statute is not clear. However, it cannot override the provisions of the enactment. Example: Use of the word 'may' in section 5 of the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955 provides that "a marriage may be solemnized between two Hindu" has been construed to be mandatory in the sense that both parties to the marriage must be Hindus as defined in section 2 of the Act. It was held that a marriage between a Christian male and a Hindu female solemnized under the Hindu Marriage Act was void. This result was reached also having regard to the preamble of the Act which reads: 'An Act to amend and codify the law relating to marriage among Hindus" [GullipoliSowria Raj V. BandaruPavani, (2009)1 SCC714].

Question 22

When can the Preamble be used as an aid to interpretation of a statute?

[ICAI Module, MTP-2 May 23, RTP May 23]

Answer

While the Preamble can be used to know the aims and objects of the legislation it cannot be used to control or qualify the precise and unambiguous language of an enactment. The preamble is the key to the mind of the maker of the law, but it cannot override in order to enlarge or restrict the enacting provision of the Act. A provision contained in the Act cannot be considered as invalid because they do not accord with the preamble, which is only a brief summary of legislative objectives behind the Act, and if there is any conflict between the preamble and any provision of an Act, the provision prevails. The preamble merely affords help in the matter of construction if there is any ambiguity. Where the language of the Act is clear, the court is bound to give it effect. When will courts refer to the preamble as an aid to construction?

Situation 1: Where there is any ambiguity in the words of an enactment the assistance of the preamble may be taken to resolve the conflict.

Situation 2: Where the words of an enactment appear to be too general in scope or application then courts may resort to the preamble to determine the scope or limited application for which the words are meant.

Question 23

At the time of interpreting a statutes what will be the effect of 'Usage' or 'customs and Practices'?

[ICAI Module]

Answer

Effect of usage: Usage or practice developed under the statute is indicative of the meaning recognized to its words by contemporary opinion. A uniform notorious practice continued under an old statute and inaction of the Legislature to amend the same are important factors to show that the practice so followed was based on correct understanding of the law. When the usage or practice receives judicial or legislative approval it gains additional weight.

In this connection, we have to bear in mind two Latin maxims:
(i) *'Optima Legum interpres est consuetude'* (the custom is the best interpreter of the law); and
(ii) *'Contemporanea Expositio est optima et fortissinia in lege'* (the best way to interpret a document is to read it as it would have been read when made).

Therefore, the best interpretation/construction of a statute or any other document is that which has been made by the contemporary authority. Simply stated, old statutes and documents should be interpreted as they would have been at the time when they were enacted/written. Contemporary official statements throwing light on the construction of a statute and statutory instruments made under it have been used as contemporanea expositio to interpret not only ancient but even recent statutes in India.

Question 24

Write short note with reference to interpretation of Statutes, Deeds and Documents on:

(i) Provision
(ii) Explanation,

[Nov 18]

Answer

(i) Proviso: The normal function of a proviso is to except something out of the enactment or to qualify something stated in the enactment which would be within its purview if the proviso were not there. The effect of the proviso is to qualify the preceding enactment which is expressed in terms which are too general. As a general rule, a proviso is added to an enactment to qualify or create an exception to what is in the enactment. Ordinarily a proviso is not interpreted as stating a general rule.
It is a cardinal rule of interpretation that a proviso to a particular provision of a statute only embraces the field which is covered by the main provision.

(ii) Explanation: An Explanation is at times appended to a section to explain the meaning of the text of the section. An Explanation may be added to include something within the section or to exclude something from it. An Explanation should normally be so read as to harmonise with and clear up any ambiguity in the main section. It should not be so construed as to widen the ambit of the section. The meaning to be given to an explanation will really depend upon its terms and not on any theory of its purpose.

Question 25

If it is defined as:

(i) "Company means a company incorporated under the Companies Act, 2013 or under any previous company Law".
(ii) "Person" includes, _____ under the Consumer Protection Act,1986.

How would you interpret/construct the nature and scope of the above definitions?

[Nov 19, MTP Oct 20, RTP May 21]

Answer

Restrictive and extensive definitions: The definition of a word or expression in the definition section may either be restricting of its ordinary meaning or may be extensive of the same.

When a word is defined to 'mean' such and such, the definition is 'prima facie' restrictive and exhaustive, we must restrict the meaning of the word to that given in the definition section.

But where the word is defined to 'include' such and such, the definition is 'prima facie' extensive: here the word defined is not restricted to the meaning assigned to it but has extensive meaning which also includes the meaning assigned to it in the definiti on section.

Thus,

(i) The definition is restrictive and exhaustive to the effect that only an entity incorporated under the Companies Act, 2013 or under any previous Companies Act, shall deemed to be company.

(ii) The definition is inclusive in nature, thereby the meaning assigned to the respective word (here 'person') is extensive. It has a wider scope to include other terms into the ambit of the definition having regard to the object of the definition.

Question 26

In what way are the following terms considered as external aid in the interpretation of statutes:

(i) Historical Setting

(ii) Use of Foreign Decisions

[MTP Nov 22]

OR

Explain whether Foreign Decisions be used for construing Indian Acts.

[July 21, RTP Nov 19]

Answer

(i) Historical Setting: The history of the external circumstances which led to the enactment in question is of much significance in construing any enactment. We have, for this purpose, to take help from all those external or historical facts which are necessary in the understand ing and comprehension of the subject matter and the scope and object of the enactment. History in general and Parliamentary History in particular, ancient statutes, contemporary or other authentic works and writings all are relevant in interpreting and construing an Act.

(ii) Use of Foreign Decisions: Foreign decisions of countries following the same system of jurisprudence as ours and given on laws similar to ours can be legitimately used for construing our own Acts. However, prime importance is always to be given to the language of the Indian statute. Further, where guidance can be obtained from Indian decisions, reference to foreign decisions may become unnecessary.

Question 27

What is External Aid to interpretation? Explain how the Dictionary definitions are the External Aids to Interpretations?

[Jan 21]

Answer

External aids are the factors that help in interpreting/construing an Act and have been given the convenient nomenclature of 'External Aids to Interpretation'. Apart from the statute itself there are many matters which may be taken into account when the statute is ambiguous. These matters are called external aids.

Dictionary Definitions: Dictionary Definitions is one of the External Aids to interpretation. First we have to refer to the Act in question to find out if any particular word or expression is defined in it. Where we find that a word is not defined in the Act itself, we may refer to dictionaries to find out the general sense in which that word is commonly understood. However, in selecting one out of the several meanings of a word, we must always take into consideration the context in which it is used in the Act. It is the fundamental rule that the meanings of words and expressions used in an Act must take their colour from the context in which they appear. Further, judicial decisions laying down the meaning of words in construing statutes in 'pari materia' will have greater weight than the meaning furnished by dictionaries. However, for technical terms reference may be made to technical dictionaries.

Question 28:
Enumerate when does the rule of Ejusdem Generis apply

[MTP Nov 22]

Answer
The rule of Ejusdem Generis applies when:
1. The statute contains an enumeration of specific words
2. The subject of enumeration constitutes a class or category
3. That class or category is not exhausted by the enumeration
4. General terms follow the enumeration; and
5. There is no indication of a different legislative intent.

Question 29
Explain in reference to Interpretation of Statutes, the cases where Rule of Ejusdem Generis will not apply.
[Nov 22]

Answer
The Rule of **Ejusdem Generis** will **not apply in the following** situations:

1	If the preceding term is general, as well as that which follows this rule cannot be applied.
2	Where the particular words exhaust the whole genus.
3	Where the specific objects enumerated are essentially diverse in character.
4	Where there is an express intention of legislature that the general term shall not be read ejusdem generis the specific terms.

Question 30
Explain the following in context of use of definitional sections in Interpretation of Statutes:
(i) Definitions subject to a contrary context
(ii) Ambiguous definitions

[MTP-1 May 23]

Answer
(i) Definitions subject to a contrary context: When a word is defined to bear a number of inclusive meanings, the sense in which the word is used in a particular provision must be ascertained from the context of the scheme of the Act, the language of the provision and the object intended to be served thereby.

(ii) Ambiguous definitions: Sometime, we may find that the definition section may itself be ambiguous, and so it may have to be interpreted in the light of the other provisions of the Act and having regard to the ordinary meaning of the word defined. Such type of definition is not to be read in isolation. It must be read in the context of the phrase which it defines, realising that the function of a definition is to give accuracy and certainty to a word or phrase which would otherwise be vague and uncertain but not to contradict it or depose it altogether.

The End!