

## **CHAPTER VII THE NEGOTIABLE INSTRUMENTS ACT, 1881**

1. M drew a cheque amounting to ` 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? **(Module Q)**

Ans: -

No, P does not become the holder of the cheque as the negotiation was not completed by delivery of the cheque to him. (Section 48, the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881)

2. M owes money to N. Therefore, he makes a promissory note for the amount in favor of N, for safety of transmission he cuts the note in half and posts one half to N. He then changes his mind and calls upon N to return the half of the note which he had sent. N requires M to send the other half of the promissory note. Decide how rights of the parties are to be adjusted. **(Module Q) (MTP Sept 24 Series 1)**

Ans: -

The question arising in this problem is whether the making of promissory note is complete when one half of the note was delivered to N. Under Section 46 of the N.I. Act, 1881, the making of a Promissory Note (P/N) 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 N to have the other half of the P/N sent to him is not maintainable. M 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 P/N.

3. 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? **(Module Q) (MTP June 24 Series 3)**

Ans: -

As per the facts stated in the question, Bholenath (drawer) after having issued the cheque, informs Surendar (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 Surendar.

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.

4. Rama executes a promissory note in the following form, 'I promise to pay a sum of `10,000 after three months'. Decide whether the promissory note is a valid promissory note. (Module Q) (MTP Sept 24 Series 1)

Ans: -

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.

5. 'Nakul' made promissory note in favour of 'Sahdev' of `10,000 and delivered to him. 'Sahdev' indorsed the promissory note in favour of 'Arjun' but delivered to Arjun's agent. Subsequently, Arjun's agent died, and promissory note was found by 'Arjun' in his agent's table drawer. 'Arjun' sued 'Nakul' for the recovery of promissory note. Whether 'Arjun' can recover amount under the provisions of the Negotiable Instrument Act 1881? (Module Q) (MTP Sept 24 Series 2)

Ans: -

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.

Further, delivery of an instrument is essential whether the instrument is payable to bearer or order for effecting the negotiation. The delivery must be voluntary, and the object of delivery should be to pass the property in the instrument to the person to whom it is delivered. The delivery can be, actual or constructive. Actual delivery takes place when the instrument changes hand physically. Constructive delivery takes place when the instrument is delivered to the agent, clerk or servant of the indorsee on his behalf or when the indorser, after indorsement, holds the instrument as an agent of the indorsee.

In the instant case, 'Sahdev' received a promissory note from 'Nakul' and indorsed the promissory note in favour of 'Arjun' and delivered to Arjun's agent. Subsequently, Arjun's agent died, and promissory note was found by 'Arjun' in his agent's table drawer. 'Arjun' sued 'Nakul' for the recovery of promissory note.

An order negotiable instrument can be transferred by endorsement and delivery. As delivery to Arjun's agent is sufficient delivery of promissory note to Arjun. Therefore, 'Arjun' is eligible to claim the payment of promissory note.

6. (i) With reference to provisions of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881, tell the instances where a person shall be deemed to have committed an offence for dishonour of cheque and what are the conditions to be complied with for not constituting such an offence? **(4 Marks PYQ Sept 24)**

(ii)

(A) All cheques are bills while all bills are not cheques. Explain the additional features of a cheque which differentiate a cheque from bill as per the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881.

(B) Ambiguous instrument **(3 Marks PYQ Sept 24)**

Ans: -

(i) 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 that account

- for the discharge, in whole or in part, of any debt or other liability, [A cheque given as gift or donation, or as a security or in discharge of a mere moral obligation, or for an illegal consideration, would be outside the purview of this section]

- is returned by the bank unpaid,

- either because of the—

- o amount of money standing to the credit of that account is insufficient to honor the cheque, or

- o that it exceeds the amount arranged to be paid from that account by an agreement made with that bank, such person shall be deemed to have committed an offence and 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.

When section 138 shall not apply: unless the below given conditions are complied with—

(a) Cheque presented within validity period: The cheque has been presented to the bank within a period of three months from the date on which it is drawn or within the period of its validity, whichever is earlier.

(b) Demand for the payment through the notice: the payee or the holder in due course of the cheque, as the case may be, makes a demand for the payment of the said amount of money by giving a notice, in writing, to the drawer of the cheque, within 30 days of the receipt of information by him from the bank regarding the return of the cheque as unpaid, and

(c) Failure of drawer to make payment: the drawer of such cheque fails to make the payment of the said amount of money to the payee or, as the case may be, to the holder in due course of the cheque, within fifteen days of the receipt of the said notice.

(ii) (A) According to the definition of cheque under section 6 of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881, a cheque is a species of bill of exchange. Thus, it should fulfil all the essential characteristics of a bill of exchange.

The following two features distinguish a cheque from bill

(a) Must be drawn on a specified banker

(b) It must be payable on demand

Thus, all cheques are bills while all bills are not cheques.

(B) Ambiguous Instrument: Section 17 of the Act, reads as: “Where an instrument may be construed either as a promissory note or bill of exchange, the holder may at his election treat it as either, and the instrument shall be thenceforward treated accordingly.”

Thus, an instrument which is vague and cannot be clearly identified either as a bill of exchange, or as a promissory note, is an ambiguous instrument.

7. Referring to the provisions of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881, answer the following in the given scenario:

(i) Aman drew the bill of exchange (the bill) on Baban, who accepted it, payable to Magan or order. Magan indorsed the bill to Gagan. Gagan indorsed the bill to Akash to be delivered to him on the next day. However, on the death of Gagan on the same day, his only son Ankit delivered the bill to Akash on the next day as intended by his deceased father. On presenting the bill on the due date, Baban refused to pay. Explaining the importance of delivery in negotiation, decide, whether Akash can enforce the payment of the bill against Baban or the previous parties. **(4 Marks PYQ Sept 24) (MTP Jan 25 Series 2) (RTP Sept 25)**

(ii) Reliable Limited, an Indian company, is a global leader in Petrochemical products. For payment of the sale price of machinery imported from Alex Manufacturing Limited, a USA based company (the exporter), the Indian company drew a bill of exchange on Manish, a resident of Mumbai (India) who accepted the bill at Mumbai payable to the exporter in Los Angeles, USA. Decide, whether the bill of exchange is an inland instrument or a foreign instrument. Assume that the bill of exchange was signed by the authorised person for the drawer company. **(3 Marks PYQ Sept 24) (RTP Jan 25) (MTP Jan 25 Series 2) (RTP Sept 25)**

Ans: -

(i) Importance of Delivery in Negotiation [Section 46 of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881]  
Delivery of an instrument is essential whether the instrument is payable to bearer or order for effecting the negotiation. The delivery must be voluntary, and the object of delivery should be to pass the property in the instrument to the person to whom it is delivered. The delivery can be, actual or constructive. Actual delivery takes place when the instrument changes hand physically. Constructive delivery takes place when the instrument is delivered to the agent, clerk or servant of the indorsee on his behalf or when the indorser, after indorsement, holds the instrument as an agent of the indorsee.

Section 46 also lays down that when an instrument is conditionally or for a special purpose only, the property in it does not pass to the transferee, even though it is indorsed to him, unless the instrument is negotiated to a holder in due course.

The contract on a negotiable instrument until delivery remains incomplete and revocable. 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 instant case, Ankit the only son of Gagan delivered the bill to Akash on the next day as intended by his deceased father (Gagan) which is not valid.

Hence, Akash cannot enforce the payment of the bill against Baban or the previous parties.

(ii) As per section 11 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.

In the instant case, the bill of exchange was:

- Drawn in India (since it was drawn by Reliable Limited, an Indian company).
- Accepted in India (Manish, a resident of Mumbai, accepted the bill in Mumbai).
- Payable outside India, in Los Angeles, USA.

The bill of exchange in this case is an inland instrument because it was drawn in India and accepted by a person resident in India, even though it is payable outside India (Los Angeles, USA).

**8. A promissory note, payable at a certain period after sight, must be presented to the maker thereof for payment. Under which scenarios presentment for payment is not necessary and the instrument is dishonoured at the due date for presentment according to the provisions of the Negotiable Instrument Act, 1881? (7 Marks PYQ June 24) (MTP Jan 25 Series 1) (RTP May 2025) (RTP Sept 25)**

Ans: -

As per Section 76 of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881:

No presentment for payment is necessary, and the instrument is dishonoured at the due date for presentment, in any of the following cases:

- (a) (i) If the maker, drawee or acceptor intentionally prevents the presentment of the instrument, or
- (ii) if the instrument being payable at his place of business, he closes such place on a business day during the usual business hours, or
- (iii) if the instrument being payable at some other specified place, neither he nor any person authorised to pay it attends at such place during the usual business hours, or (iv) if the instrument not being payable at any specified place, he cannot after due search be found;
- (b) as against any party sought to be charged therewith, if he has engaged to pay notwithstanding non-presentment;
- (c) as against any party if, after maturity, with knowledge that the instrument has not been presented—  
he makes a part payment on account of the amount due on the instrument,  
or promises to pay the amount due thereon in whole or in part,  
or otherwise waives his right to take advantage of any default in presentment for payment;
- (d) as against the drawer, if the drawer could not suffer damage from the want of such presentment.

9. Mr. Y issued a cheque for ₹ 10,000 to Mr. Z which was dishonoured by the Bank because Y did not have enough funds in his account and has no authority to overdraw. Examine as per the provisions of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881 whether-
- (i) Mr. Y is liable for dishonour of cheque, if yes, what are the consequences for such an offence?
- (ii) What would be your answer if Y issued a cheque as a donation to Mr. Z? **(7 Marks PYQ June 24) (RTP Jan 25) (MTP Jan 25 Series 1)**

Ans: -

Dishonour of Cheque for Insufficiency, Etc., of funds in the accounts [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 that account
  - for the discharge, in whole or in part, of any debt or other liability, [A cheque given as gift or donation, or as a security or in discharge of a mere moral obligation, or for an illegal consideration, would be outside the purview of this section]
  - is returned by the bank unpaid,
  - either because of the—
    - o amount of money standing to the credit of that account is insufficient to honour the cheque, or
    - o that it exceeds the amount arranged to be paid from that account by an agreement made with that bank,
- such person shall be deemed to have committed an offence and 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.

In the instant case,

(i) Since Y's cheque was dishonoured by the Bank due to insufficiency of funds in his account, he shall be deemed to have committed an offence and shall, be punished with imprisonment for a term which may extend to two years, or with fine which may extend to Rs. 20,000, or with both.

(ii) A cheque given as gift or donation, or as a security or in discharge of a mere moral obligation, or for an illegal consideration, would be outside the purview of this section. Hence, if Y issued a cheque as a donation to Mr. Z, he shall not be liable under section 138 of the Act.

10. What are Negotiable Instruments? Explain its essential characteristics under the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881. **(RTP Sept 24) (MTP June 24 Series 1)**



Ans: -

Meaning of Negotiable Instruments: Negotiable Instruments is an instrument (the word instrument means a document) which is freely transferable (by customs of trade) from one person to another by mere delivery or by indorsement and delivery. The property in such an instrument is passed to a bonafide transferee for value.

The Act does not define the term 'Negotiable Instruments'. However, Section 13 of the Act provides for only three kinds of negotiable instruments, namely bills of exchange, promissory notes and cheques, payable either to order or bearer.

Essential Characteristics of Negotiable Instruments

1. It is necessarily in writing.
2. It should be signed.
3. It is freely transferable from one person to another.
4. Holder's title is free from defects.
5. It can be transferred any number of times till its satisfaction.
6. Every negotiable instrument must contain an unconditional promise or order to pay money. The promise or order to pay must consist of money only.
7. The sum payable, the time of payment, the payee, must be certain.
8. The instrument should be delivered. Mere drawing of instrument does not create liability.

11. Manoj purchased some goods from Sagar. He issued a cheque to Sagar for the sale price on 14th June, 2023. Sagar presented the cheque in his bank and his bank informed him on 19th June, 2023 that cheque was returned unpaid due to insufficiency of funds in the account of Manoj. Sagar sued against Manoj under section 138 of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881. State with reasons, whether this suit is maintainable? (RTP Sept 24) (MTP June 24 Series 1)(RTP May 2025)

Ans: -

By virtue of provisions of Section 138 of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881, where cheque was issued by a person to discharge a legally enforceable debt was dishonoured by bank due to insufficiency of funds, such person shall be deemed to have committed an offence and shall, without prejudice to any other provision of this Act, 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.

However,

(a) the cheque has been presented to the bank within three months or validity period of the cheque, whichever is earlier;



(b) the holder makes a demand for the payment of the said amount of money by giving a notice in writing, to the drawer of the cheque within 30 days of the receipt of information from the bank regarding the return of the cheque as unpaid; and

(c) the drawer of such cheque fails to make the payment of the said amount of money within fifteen days of the receipt of the said notice.

In the instant case, Manoj issued a cheque to Sagar for payment of the price of goods purchased from him. When Sagar presented the cheque in bank, it was returned unpaid due to insufficiency of funds in the account of Manoj. Sagar sued against Manoj under section 138 of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881.

For filing the suit under section 138, Sagar should have to make a demand of payment by giving a notice in writing to Manoj upto 18th July, 2023. In case, Manoj failed in making the payment within fifteen days of the receipt of the said notice, Sagar could sue under section 138.

12. Sachin bought 1000 Kg rice from Saurabh for ` 1,50,000 on three months credit. For this purpose, Sachin issued a promissory note to Saurabh on the same date payable after 3 months. On the date of maturity, the promissory note was dishonoured. Saurabh filed suit for the recovery of the amount plus fees of advocate paid by him for defending the suit. Referring to the provisions of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881, what amount could be recovered by Saurabh from Sachin? (RTP June 24)(MTP May 25 Series 1)

Ans: -

According to section 117 of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881, the compensation payable in case of dishonour of promissory note, bill of exchange or cheque, by any party liable to the holder or any endorsee, shall be determined by the following rules:

(a) the holder is entitled to the amount due upon the instrument, together with the expenses properly incurred in presenting, noting and protesting it;

(b) when the person charged resides at a place different from that at which the instrument was payable, the holder is entitled to receive such sum at the current rate of exchange between the two places;

(c) an endorser who, being liable, has paid the amount due on the same is entitled to the amount so paid with interest at 18% per annum from the date of payment until tender or realisation thereof, together with all expenses caused by the dishonour and payment;

On the basis of the above provisions of law and facts of the case, Saurabh has right to claim price of rice plus fees of advocate plus interest @18% p.a. from the date of payment until tender or realisation thereof.

13. A purchased a watch from B. He issued a promissory note to B which was payable on demand but no specific place for payment was mentioned on it. On maturity, B did not

present the promissory note for payment. As the promissory note was not duly presented for payment, whether A would be discharged from liability under the provisions of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881? (RTP June 24) (MTP June 24 Series 2)

Ans: -

Section 64 of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881 provides, Promissory notes, bill of exchange and cheques must be presented for payment to the maker, acceptor or drawee thereof respectively, by or on behalf of the holder as hereinafter provided. In default of such presentment, the other parties thereto are not liable thereon to such holder. Provided that where a promissory note is payable on demand and is not payable at a specified place, no presentment is necessary in order to charge the maker thereof.

On the basis of the above law provisions and facts of the case, although non-presentment of promissory note for payment results in discharge of maker from liability but the given case is covered under the exception to section 64. Hence, A would not be discharged from liability even if the non-presentment by B as the promissory note was payable on demand and no specific place for payment was mentioned.

14. What are Inchoate and Ambiguous Instruments under the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881? (MTP Jan 25 Series 2) (MTP June 24 Series 2)

Ans: -

**Inchoate Instrument:** It means an instrument that is incomplete in certain respects. The drawer/ maker/ acceptor/ indorser of a negotiable instrument may sign and deliver the instrument to another person in his capacity leaving the instrument, either wholly blank or having written on it the word incomplete. Such an instrument is called an inchoate instrument and this gives a power to its holder to make it complete by writing any amount either within limits specified therein or within the limits specified by the stamp's affixed on it. The principle of this rule of an inchoate instrument is based on the principle of estoppel.

**Ambiguous Instrument:** Section 17 of the Act, reads as: "Where an instrument may be construed either as a promissory note or bill of exchange, the holder may at his election treat it as either, and the instrument shall be thenceforward treated accordingly." Thus, an instrument which is vague and cannot be clearly identified either as a bill of exchange, or as a promissory note, is an ambiguous instrument. In other words, such an instrument may be construed either as promissory note, or as a bill of exchange. Section 17 provides that the holder may, at his discretion, treat it as either and the instrument shall thereafter be treated accordingly. Thus, after exercising his option, the holder cannot change that it is the other kind of instrument.

15. What is a cheque under the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881, and who are the parties involved? What are the essential elements of a cheque? (MTP Sept 24 Series 2)

Ans: -

CHEQUE [Section 6 of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881]

A “cheque” is a bill of exchange drawn on a specified banker and not expressed to be payable otherwise than on demand and it includes the electronic image of a truncated cheque and a cheque in the electronic form.

Parties to Cheque

1. Drawer: The person who draws a cheque i.e., makes the cheque (Debtor). His liability is primary and conditional.
2. Drawee: The specific bank on whom cheque is drawn. He makes the payment of the cheque. In case of cheque, drawee is always banker.
3. Payee: The person named in the instrument (i.e., the person in whose favour cheque is issued), to whom or to whose order the money is, by the instrument, directed to be paid, is called the payee. The payee may be the drawer himself or a third party.

Essential Characteristics of a cheque

According to the definition of cheque under section 6, a cheque is a species of bill of exchange.

Thus, it should fulfil:

- a. all the essential characteristics of a bill of exchange
- b. Must be drawn on a specified banker.
- c. It must be payable on demand.

16. Utkarsh purchased some goods from Saksham for ` 50,000 on 14th August. Saksham drawn a bill of exchange on Utkarsh and sent to him for acceptance on the same day at 3:00 pm Utkarsh requested Saksham to allow him some time for acceptance. Saksham allowed him 48 hours for acceptance. Utkarsh could not accept till 16th August (3:00 pm). Saksham treated the bill as dishonoured for non-acceptance. Referring the provisions of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881, whether bill of exchange was dishonoured due to non-acceptance? (MTP Sept 24 Series 2)

Ans: -

According to Section 61 of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881, a bill of exchange must be presented to the drawee thereof for acceptance by a person entitled to demand acceptance, within a reasonable time after it is drawn, and in business hours on a business day. In default of such presentment, no party thereto is liable thereon to the person making such default. Further, section 63 provides that the holder must, if so required by the drawee of a bill of

exchange presented to him for acceptance, allow the drawee 48 hours (exclusive of public holidays) to consider whether he will accept it.

In the instant case, Saksham drawn a bill of exchange on Utkarsh and on request of Utkarsh, he allowed 48 hours to accept the bill. The bill was sent at 3:00 pm on 14th August. Bill was not accepted till 3:00 pm of 16th August. Saksham treated the bill as dishonoured for non-acceptance.

Here, As 15th August is a public holiday, his 48 hours would end on 17th August not on 16th August. Hence, bill could not be treated as dishonoured on 16th August.

**17. State the Difference between promissory note and bill of exchange." (MTP Sept 24 Series 1)**

Ans: -

Difference between promissory note and bill of exchange:

Basis	Promissory Note	Bill of Exchange
Definition	"A Promissory Note" is an instrument in writing (not being a banknote or a currency-note) containing an unconditional undertaking signed by the maker, to pay a certain sum of money only to, or to the order of, a certain person, or to the bearer of the instrument.	"A bill of exchange" is an instrument in writing containing an unconditional order, signed by the maker, directing a certain person to pay a certain sum of money only to, or to the order of a certain person or to the bearer of the instrument.
Nature of Instrument	In a promissory note, there is a promise to pay money.	In a bill of exchange, there is an order for making payment.
Parties	In a promissory note, there are only 2 parties namely: i. the maker and ii. the payee	In a bill of exchange, there are 3 parties which are as under: i. the drawer ii. the drawee iii. the payee
Acceptance	A promissory note does not require any acceptance, as it is signed by the person who is liable to pay.	A bill of exchange needs acceptance from the drawee.
Payable to bearer	A promissory note cannot be made payable to bearer	On the other hand, a bill of exchange can be drawn payable to bearer.

		However, it cannot be payable to bearer on demand.
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18. Explain the Rules as to compensation payable in case of dishonour of promissory note, bill of exchange or cheque, by any party liable to the holder or any endorsee covered under the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881. (MTP June 24 Series 3)

Ans: -

Rules as to compensation (Section 117)

The compensation payable in case of dishonour of promissory note, bill of exchange or cheque, by any party liable to the holder or any endorsee, shall be determined by the following rules:

- (a) the holder is entitled to the amount due upon the instrument, together with the expenses properly incurred in presenting, noting and protesting it;
- (b) when the person charged resides at a place different from that at which the instrument was payable, the holder is entitled to receive such sum at the current rate of exchange between the two places;
- (c) an endorser who, being liable, has paid the amount due on the same is entitled to the amount so paid with interest at 18% per annum from the date of payment until tender or realisation thereof, together with all expenses caused by the dishonour and payment;
- (d) when the person charged and such endorser reside at different places, the endorser is entitled to receive such sum at the current rate of exchange between the two places;
- (e) the party entitled to compensation may draw a bill upon the party liable to compensate him, payable at sight or on demand, for the amount due to him, together with all expenses properly incurred by him. Such bill must be accompanied by the instrument dishonoured and the protest thereof (if any). If such bill is dishonoured, the party dishonouring the same is liable to make compensation thereof in the same manner as in the case of the original bill.

19. Shiva gave a gift of ₹ 21,000 to his sister through a cheque issued in her favour on the occasion of Raksha Bandhan. Afterwards, Shiva informed his sister not to present the cheque for payment and also informed the bank to stop the payment. Examining the provisions of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881, decide whether Shiva's acts constitute an offence under section 138 of the Act? (MTP June 24 Series 2)

Ans: -

Section 138 of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881 provides where any cheque drawn by a person for the discharge, in whole or in part, of any debt or other liability, is returned by the bank unpaid due to insufficiency of fund, the drawer is punishable with imprisonment upto 2 years or fine upto 2 times the amount of cheque or Both. In other words, the liability under

section 138 arises only if the drawer had issued the cheque to discharge a legally enforceable debt or other liability. Thus, where the drawer issues a cheque as a gift or charity, he is not liable under section 138 even if cheque is dishonoured.

In the instant case, Shiva gifted a cheque of Rs. 21,000 to his sister. Afterwards, Shiva informed his sister not to present the cheque for payment and also informed the bank to stop the payment. On the basis of above, as the cheque was given as gift, provisions of section 138 will not be applicable on Shiva.

20. What are the rules governing the compensation payable in the event of dishonour of a negotiable instrument under the provisions of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881?(7 Marks PYQ Jan 2025)

Ans: -

Rules as to compensation (Section 117 of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881):

The compensation payable in case of dishonour of promissory note, bill of exchange or cheque, by any party liable to the holder or any endorsee, shall be determined by the following rules:

- (a) the holder is entitled to the amount due upon the instrument, together with the expenses properly incurred in presenting, noting and protesting it;
- (b) when the person charged resides at a place different from that at which the instrument was payable, the holder is entitled to receive such sum at the current rate of exchange between the two places;
- (c) an endorser who, being liable, has paid the amount due on the same is entitled to the amount so paid with interest at 18% per annum from the date of payment until tender or realisation thereof, together with all expenses caused by the dishonour and payment;
- (d) when the person charged and such endorser reside at different places, the endorser is entitled to receive such sum at the current rate of exchange between the two places;
- (e) the party entitled to compensation may draw a bill upon the party liable to compensate him, payable at sight or on demand, for the amount due to him, together with all expenses properly incurred by him. Such bill must be accompanied by the instrument dishonoured and the protest thereof (if any). If such bill is dishonoured, the party dishonouring the same is liable to make compensation thereof in the same manner as in the case of the original bill.

21. Anjali purchased various cosmetic products worth ` 15,000 during the last week from Sushil, a shopkeeper, on credit of one month. After a fortnight, she makes out a blank promissory note, signed it and delivered to Sushil who further endorsed it to Manish for the payment of his dues. Manish, who is holder in due course, filled up the due amount

of ` 17,000 from Sushil and on maturity presented it to Anjali for payment but she refused to pay because the amount filled up is more than the agreed amount of ` 15,000. It is to be noted that the amount of ` 17,000 is covered by the stamp affixed on it. Referring to the provisions of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881 decide, whether Anjali is liable to honour the promissory note to Manish for ` 17,000? **(4 Marks PYQ Jan 2025) (MTP May 25 Series 2)**

Ans: -

Section 20 of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881 reads as “Where one person signs and delivers to another a paper stamped in accordance with the law relating to negotiable instruments then in force in India, and either wholly blank or having written thereon an incomplete negotiable instrument, he thereby gives prima facie authority to the holder thereof to make or complete, as the case may be, upon it a negotiable instrument, for any amount specified therein and not exceeding the amount covered by the stamp.

The person so signing shall be liable upon such instrument, in the capacity in which he signed the same, to any holder in due course for such amount. Provided that no person other than a holder in due course shall recover from the person delivering the instrument anything in excess of the amount intended by him to be paid thereunder”.

In the instant case, Anjali is not liable to honour the promissory note to Manish for ` 17000. She is liable only for ` 15000.

22. Priya, a small business owner, receives a bill of exchange from her customer, Sanjay, which is due for payment on October 15th. On October 12th, Priya presents the bill of exchange for payment at Sanjay's office during regular business hours, but Sanjay is not present. Priya leaves the bill with Sanjay's assistant, requesting to be presented to Sanjay for payment when he returns. However, Sanjay's assistant forgot to give the bill, and Sanjay does not make the payment by the due date, and the bill is dishonoured. Based on the provisions of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881, examine whether Priya's presentation of the bill of exchange to Sanjay's assistant is valid under law. **(3 Marks PYQ Jan 2025) (MTP May 25 Series 2)**

Ans: -

Presentment for payment [Section 64 of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881]



As per section 64 of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881, promissory notes, bill of exchange and cheques must be presented for payment to the maker, acceptor or drawee thereof respectively, by or on behalf of the holder as hereinafter provided.

In default of such presentment, the other parties thereto are not liable thereon to such holder.

So, presentment for payment must be made to the person primarily liable on the instrument, or in their absence, at the proper place during the usual business hours.

In this case, Priya presented the bill at Sanjay's office during regular business hours, but since Sanjay was not present, she left the bill with his assistant.

While leaving the bill with the assistant might be considered a practical step, it does not fulfil the strict legal requirement of presenting the bill directly to the drawee (Sanjay) or his authorised representative for payment.

Therefore, the presentation of the bill by Priya to Sanjay's assistant is not valid under law.

23. "Explain the concept of 'presentment for payment' under Section 64 of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881. What are the consequences of non-presentment?" (MTP May 25 Series 1)

Ans: -

Presentment for payment [Section 64 of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881]

Promissory notes, bill of exchange and cheques must be presented for payment to the maker, acceptor or drawee thereof respectively, by or on behalf of the holder as hereinafter provided.

In default of such presentment, the other parties thereto are not liable thereon to such holder.

Where authorised by agreement or usage, a presentment through the post office by means of a registered letter is sufficient.

Exception: Where a promissory note is payable on demand and is not payable at a specified place, no presentment is necessary in order to charge the maker thereof.

Notwithstanding anything contained in section 6, where an electronic image of a truncated cheque is presented for payment, the drawee bank is entitled to demand any further information regarding the truncated cheque from the bank holding the truncated cheque in case of any reasonable suspicion about the genuineness of the apparent tenor of instrument,

and if the suspicion is that of any fraud, forgery, tampering or destruction of the instrument, it is entitled to further demand the presentment of the truncated cheque itself for verification.

Provided that the truncated cheque so demanded by the drawee bank shall be retained by it, if the payment is made accordingly.

**24. What is a Negotiable Instrument? Explain its meaning and essential characteristics. How does the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881 classify instruments as payable to order or payable to bearer? (MTP May 25 Series 2)**

Ans: -

Negotiable Instruments is an instrument (the word instrument means a document) which is freely transferable (by customs of trade) from one person to another by mere delivery or by indorsement and delivery. The property in such an instrument pass to a bonafide transferee for value.

The Act does not define the term 'Negotiable Instruments'. However, Section 13 of the Act provides for only three kinds of negotiable instruments namely bills of exchange, promissory notes and cheques, payable either to order or bearer.

It is to be noted that Hundies, Treasury Bills, Bearer Debentures, Railway Receipts, Delivery Orders, Bill of Lading etc. are also considered as negotiable instruments either by mercantile custom or usage.

(1) A negotiable instrument is payable to order when:

- a. It is expressed to be so payable
- b. When it is expressed to be payable to a specified person and does not contain words prohibiting its transfer. (i.e. it is transferrable by indorsement and delivery)

(2) A negotiable instrument is payable to bearer when:

- a. When it is expressed to be so payable e.g. pay bearer
- b. When the only or last indorsement (indorsement means signing of the instrument) on the instrument is an indorsement in blank i.e., the person who possesses it can demand payment.

Essential Characteristics of Negotiable Instruments

- 1. It is necessarily in writing.
- 2. It should be signed.

3. It is freely transferable from one person to another.
4. Holder's title is free from defects.
5. It can be transferred any number of times till its satisfaction.
6. Every negotiable instrument must contain an unconditional promise or order to pay money. The promise or order to pay must consist of money only.
7. The sum payable, the time of payment, the payee, must be certain.
8. The instrument should be delivered. Mere drawing of instrument does not create liability.

25. (i) "Delivery of an instrument is essential whether instrument is payable to bearer or order for effecting the negotiation." Discuss this statement with reference to provisions of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881. (3 Marks)

(ii) Differentiate between a promissory note and bill of exchange. (4 Marks) (PYQ Jan 2025)

Ans: -

(i) As per Section 46 of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881, delivery of an instrument is essential whether the instrument is payable to bearer or order for effecting the negotiation. The delivery must be voluntary, and the object of delivery should be to pass the property in the instrument to the person to whom it is delivered. The delivery can be, actual or constructive. Actual delivery takes place when the instrument changes hand physically. Constructive delivery takes place when the instrument is delivered to the agent, clerk or servant of the indorsee on his behalf or when the indorser, after indorsement, holds the instrument as an agent of the indorsee. Section 46 also lays down that when an instrument is conditionally or for a special purpose only, the property in it does not pass to the transferee, even though it is indorsed to him, unless the instrument is negotiated to a holder in due course.

(ii) Difference between promissory note and bill of exchange

Basis	Promissory Note	Bill of Exchange
Definition	"A Promissory Note" is an instrument in writing (not being a banknote or a currency-note) containing an unconditional undertaking signed by the maker, to pay a certain sum of money only to, or to the order of, a certain person, or to the bearer of the instrument.	"A bill of exchange" is an instrument in writing containing an unconditional order, signed by the maker, directing a certain person to pay a certain sum of money only to, or to the order of a certain person or to the bearer of the instrument.
Nature of Instrument	In a promissory note, there is a promise to pay money.	In a bill of exchange, there is an order for making payment.

Parties	In a promissory note, there are only 2 parties namely: i. the maker and ii. the payee	In a bill of exchange, there are 3 parties which are as under: i. the drawer ii. the drawee iii. the payee
Acceptance	A promissory note does not require any acceptance, as it is signed by the person who is liable to pay.	A bill of exchange needs acceptance from the drawee.
Payable to bearer	A promissory note cannot be made payable to bearer	On the other hand, a bill of exchange can be drawn payable to bearer. However, it cannot be payable to bearer on demand.

26. Ram purchased a second-hand car from his friend Rohan for ` 5 lakhs on 10th November, 2022. He paid ` 4 lakh immediately and promised to pay ` 1 lakh within a year. But, he could not pay the remaining amount till December-2023. On 5<sup>th</sup> January, 2024 Ram received an invitation for Rohan's wedding which he could not attend but sent a cheque of ` 51,000 as gift by post.

When Rohan deposited the cheque, it was returned unpaid due to insufficient balance in the account of Ram. Rohan considered it as an offence under Section 138 of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881.

Advise

- (i) Whether Ram would be held liable for dishonour of cheque?
- (ii) Whether Rohan was justified in considering this as an offence under Section 138 of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881. (7 Marks) (PYQ Jan 2025)

Ans: -

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 that account
- for the discharge, in whole or in part, of any debt or other liability, [A cheque given as gift or donation, or as a security or in discharge of a mere moral obligation, or for an illegal consideration, would be outside the purview of this section]
- is returned by the bank unpaid,
- either because of the—
  - o amount of money standing to the credit of that account is insufficient to honor the cheque,
  - or

o that it exceeds the amount arranged to be paid from that account by an agreement made with that bank,

such person shall be deemed to have committed an offence and 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.

Explanation: For the purpose of this section, “debt or other liability” means a legally enforceable debt or other liability.

(i) In the given question, Rohan received a cheque from Ram, for ` 51,000 as a gift for his marriage. In terms of section 138, cheque given as a gift does not fall within this section. Hence, Ram would not be held liable for dishonour of cheque.

(ii) The explanation to the section provides that for the purpose of section 138 only a legally enforceable debt or other liability is to be taken into consideration. The cheque of ` 51,000 was issued in the nature of a gift and not as a part of the payment for the balance amount of car. Hence, Rohan was not justified in considering the dishonour of cheque, an offence under section 138 of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881.