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Judicial Services Exam

Bihar Public Service Commission (BPSC)

Volume - 5

Transfer of Property Act, Specific Relief Act & Indian Contract Act



INDEX

Transfer of Property Act, 1882		
1.	Maxims related to doctrines under the TPA (Section-wise)	1
2.	Chapter I – Preliminary	6
3.	Immovable Property	7
4.	Things Attached to the Earth	8
5.	How to determine whether a movable property, when attached to the earth or permanently fastened to something attached, becomes immovable property?	9
6.	Attested	10
7.	Actionable Claim	10
8.	Notice of a Fact	11
9.	Doctrine of Constructive Notice	12
10.	Define “transfer of property” with reference to cases. Is partition a transfer or property?	12
11.	Section 6 - What may be transferred	14
12.	Mere Right to Sue (Section 6e)	15
13.	Spes Successionis (Expectation of Succession)	15
14.	Persons Competent to Transfer	16
15.	Effects of transfer	17
16.	Section 9 - Oral transfer	18
17.	Section 10 - Rule against alienability/condition restraining alienation	19
18.	Section 11 - Restriction Repugnant to Interest Created	20
19.	Section 12 - Condition Making Interest Determinable on Insolvency or Attempted Transfer	21
20.	Section 13 - Transfer for benefit of unborn person	22
21.	Section 14 - Rule against perpetuity	23
22.	Section 17 - Doctrine of Accumulation	23
23.	Effect of Invalid Prior Disposition or Ulterior Disposition	24
24.	Section 19 - Vested Interest	25
25.	Section 20 - Vested Interest of Unborn Person	26
26.	Section 21 - Contingent Interest	27
27.	Section 22-24 - Contingent Transfers	27
28.	Section 25 - Conditional Transfer	28
29.	Section 26 - Fulfillment of Condition Precedent	30
30.	Section 27 - Rule of Acceleration of Subsequent Interest on Failure of Prior Disposition	31
31.	Section 28 - Conditional Limitation and Its Exceptions	32
32.	Section 29 - Fulfillment of Condition Subsequent	33
33.	Section 30 - Prior disposition not affected by invalidity of ulterior disposition	34
34.	Section 31 - Condition for Termination of Transfer	35
35.	Section 35 - Doctrine of Election	35
36.	Section 36-37 - Doctrine of Apportionment	38

37.	Section 38 - Transfer by Person Authorised Only Under Certain Circumstances to Transfer	39
38.	Section 39 - Transfer Where a Third Person Has a Right to Maintenance	40
39.	Section 40	41
40.	Section 41 - Transfer by an Ostensible Owner	42
41.	Section 43 - Transfer by an unauthorised person who subsequently acquires interest in property transferred Or Doctrine or Rule of Feeding the Grant by Estoppel	45
42.	Priority of Rights Created by Transfer OR Section 48 - Doctrine of Priority	52
43.	Section 50 - Rent bona fide Paid to Holder under Defective Title	54
44.	Section 52 - Doctrine of Lis Pendens	55
45.	Section 53 - Fraudulent Transfer	57
46.	Doctrine of Part Performance (Sec-53A)	60
47.	Sale (Sec-54)	63
48.	Section 55 - Rights and Liabilities of Buyer and Seller	65
49.	Section 56 - Doctrine of Marshalling	67
50.	Mortgage and its related terms Essential of mortgage Modes of creation of mortgage	69
51.	Kinds of Mortgages	71
52.	Rights of Mortgagor	75
53.	Right of Redemption	76
54.	Doctrine of "Once a Mortgage, Always a Mortgage"	77
55.	Clog on Redemption	79
56.	Extinguishment of Right of Redemption	80
57.	Partial Redemption	81
58.	Separate or Simultaneous Redemption & Doctrine of Consolidation	82
59.	Section 62 - Right of Usufructuary Mortgagor to Recover Possession	83
60.	Duties of Mortgagor	84
61.	Rights of the Mortgagee	85
62.	Section 67 - Right of Foreclosure of Mortgagee	86
63.	Section 68 - Right of Mortgagee to Sue Mortgagor for Recovery of Mortgage-Money	88
64.	Section 69 - Right of Mortgagee to Sell Mortgaged Property Without Court Intervention	89
65.	Section 73 - Doctrine of Substituted Security	91
66.	Section 76 - Duties of a Mortgagee in Possession	92
67.	Doctrine of Priority	94
68.	Section 81 - Doctrine of Marshalling	95
69.	Section 82 - Doctrine of Contribution	95
70.	Section 92 - Subrogation	97

71.	Redeem Up, Foreclose Down (Sec-91(a) & Sec-94)	98
72.	Doctrine of Tacking	99
73.	Charge	100
74.	Define Lease. What are the Essential Elements of Lease? Explain with the help of Relevant Case Laws.	102
75.	Modes of Creation of Leases	103
76.	Kinds of Leases	105
77.	Duration of Certain Leases in the Absence of Written Contract or Local Usage	106
78.	Notice for Determination of Lease	107
79.	Rights and Liabilities of Lessor and Lessee	108
80.	Determination of Lease	110
81.	Forfeiture of Lease, Waiver, and Relief	110
82.	Section 116 - Doctrine of Holding Over	111
83.	Tenancy at Sufferance and Tenancy at Will	113
84.	Exchange	113
85.	Gift	114
86.	Section 126 - Suspension or Revocation of Gift	116
87.	Onerous Gift and Universal Donee	117
88.	Define Actionable Claim and discuss the mode of its transfer. Give some instances of actionable and non-actionable claims	118
89.	Whether notice of transfer of actionable claim is necessary for completing the transfer? What will be the effect of transfer on debtor? What are the requirements for a valid notice?	119
90.	Short Note on Unsecured Debt	120

Specific Relief Act

S. No.	Chapter Name	Page No.
	Part – I Preliminary	
1.	Section 1: Short Title, Extent, and Commencement	121
2.	Section 2: Definitions	121
3.	Section 3: This Act does not	121
4.	Section 4: Specific Relief Enforces Only Individual Civil Rights	121
	Part – II	
	Chapter - 1 Recovery of Possession of Property	
5.	Section 5: Recovery of Specific Immovable Property (Based on Title)	122
6.	Section 6: Recovery Based on Possession (Not Title)	123
7.	Section 7: Recovery of Specific Movable Property	124
8.	Section 8: Liability to Deliver Movable Property	125
	Chapter - 2 Specific Performance of Contracts	
9.	Section 9: Defences to Specific Performance	127
10.	Section 10: Cases in Which Specific Performance is Enforceable	128
11.	Section 11: Specific Performance of Contracts Related to Trusts	128
12.	Section 12: Specific Performance of Part of Contract	129
13.	Section 13: Rights of Purchaser or Lessee Against Person with No or Imperfect Title	130
14.	Section 14: Contracts That Cannot Be Specifically Enforced	131
15.	Section 15: Who May Obtain Specific Performance	132
16.	Section 16: Personal Bars to Relief	134
17.	Section 17: Contract to Sell/Lease Immovable Property by Person Without Title	135
18.	Section 18: Non-Performance Due to Fraud, Mistake, Misrepresentation, etc.	135
19.	Section 19: Against Whom Specific Performance Can Be Enforced	135
20.	Section 20: Substituted Performance of Contract	135
21.	Section 21 – Power To Award Compensation in Certain Cases	136
22.	Section 22 – Power to Grant Relief for Possession, Partition, etc.	136
23.	Section 23 – Liquidation of Damages Not a Bar to Specific Performance	137
24.	Section 24 – Bar of Suit for Compensation for Breach After Refusal of Specific Performance	137
25.	Section 25 – Application of Chapter to Certain Awards and Testamentary Directions	137

26.	Section 26: When Instrument May Be Rectified	137
27.	Section 27: When Rescission May Be Granted or Refused	140
28.	Section 28: Rescission After Decree of Specific Performance	141
29.	Section 29: Alternative Prayer for Rescission in Specific Performance Suit	142
30.	Section 30: Court May Require Restoration/Compensation	142
31.	Section 31: When Cancellation May Be Ordered	143
32.	Section 32: Partial Cancellation	144
33.	Section 33: Power to Require Restoration/Compensation	145
34.	Section 34: Discretion of Court	146
35.	Section 38: Declaratory Relief vs Injunction	148
36.	Section 35: Effect of Declaration	148
37.	Section 36: Preventive Relief	149
38.	Section 39: Mandatory Injunction	151
39.	Section 40: Damages Instead of or Along with Injunction	152
40.	Section 41: Injunction When Refused	152
41.	Section 42: Injunction to Perform Negative Agreement	152

Indian Contract Act, 1872 (Part I)

1.	Introduction	153
2.	Proposal	157
3.	Acceptance (Sec. 2(b))	164
4.	Consideration	167
5.	Section 3 – Communication, Acceptance and Revocation	171
6.	Section 4 – When Communication is Complete	171
7.	Section 5 – Revocation of Proposals and Acceptances	171
8.	Section 6 – Modes of Revocation	172
9.	Section 7 – Acceptance must be Absolute	172
10.	Section 8 – Acceptance by Performing Conditions or Receiving Consideration	172
11.	Section 9 – Promises, Express and Implied	173
12.	Section 10 – What Agreements are Contracts	173
13.	Section 11 – Who are Competent to Contract	173
14.	Competency to Contract (Capacity to Contract)	174
15.	Section 12 – Sound Mind for Contracting	176
16.	Section 13 – Consent Defined	176
17.	Section 14 – Free Consent Defined	176
18.	Section 15 – Coercion	176
19.	Section 16 – Undue Influence	178
20.	Section 17 – Fraud	179
21.	Section 18 – Misrepresentation	180
22.	Section 19 – Voidability of Agreements without Free Consent	180
23.	Section 19A – Power to Set Aside Contract Induced by Undue Influence	181
24.	Section 20 – Bilateral Mistake of Fact	181
25.	Section 21 – Mistake of Law	182
26.	Section 22 – Unilateral Mistake of Fact	182
27.	Section 23 – Lawful Consideration and Object	183
28.	Section 24 – Agreements Void if Consideration or Object Unlawful in Part	184
29.	Section 25 (already discussed)	185
30.	Section 26 – Agreements in Restraint of Marriage	185
31.	Section 27 – Agreements in Restraint of Trade	186
32.	Section 28 – Agreements in Restraint of Legal Proceedings	186
33.	Section 29 – Agreements Void for Uncertainty	188
34.	Section 30 – Agreements by Way of Wager are Void	188
35.	Section 31 – Contingent Contract	190
36.	Section 32 – Enforcement When Event Happens	191
37.	Section 33 – Enforcement When Event Does Not Happen	192
38.	Section 34 – Conduct of a Living Person	192

39.	Section 35 – Contingency Within Fixed Time	192
40.	Section 36 – Impossible Events	192
41.	Section 37 – Obligation of Parties to Contracts	193
42.	Section 38 – Effect of Refusal to Accept Offer of Performance (Tender of Performance)	193
43.	Section 39 – Effect of Refusal to Perform Promise Wholly	193
44.	Section 40 – Person by Whom Promise is to be Performed	194
45.	Section 41 – Effect of Accepting Performance from Third Person	195
46.	Section 42 – Devolution of Joint Liabilities	195
47.	Section 43 – Any One of Joint Promisors May be Compelled to Perform	195
48.	Section 44 – Effect of Release of One Joint Promisor	196
49.	Section 45 – Devolution of Joint Rights	196
50.	Section 46 – Time for Performance (No Application, No Time Specified)	196
51.	Section 47 – Time and Place (Time Specified, No Application)	197
52.	Section 48 – Application for Performance (Time Specified, Application Needed)	198
53.	Section 49 – Place of Performance (No Place Fixed, No Application Needed)	198
54.	Section 50 – Performance in Manner or at Time Prescribed or Sanctioned by Promisee	199
55.	Section 51 – Promisor Not Bound Unless Reciprocal Promisee Ready and Willing	201
56.	Section 52 – Order of Performance of Reciprocal Promises	201
57.	Section 53 – Liability of Party Preventing Performance	201
58.	Section 54 – Effect of Default in Dependent Reciprocal Promises	202
59.	Section 55 – Effect of Failure to Perform at Fixed Time	202
60.	Section 56 - Agreement to do impossible act	203
61.	Section 57 – Reciprocal Promises to Do Legal and Illegal Things	206
62.	Section 58 – Alternative Promises (One Legal, One Illegal)	207
63.	Section 59 – Debtor Indicates Debt	207
64.	Section 60 – Debtor Omits, Creditor Chooses	208
65.	Section 61 – Neither Party Appropriates	208
66.	Section 62 – Novation, Rescission, and Alteration	210
67.	Section 63 – Promisee May Remit or Dispense Performance	210
68.	Section 64 – Consequences of Rescission of Voidable Contract	211
69.	Section 65 – Obligation of Person Who Has Received Advantage Under Void/Becomes Void Contract	211
70.	Section 66 – Mode of Communicating or Revoking Rescission	211
71.	Section 67 – Effect of Neglect of Promisee to Afford Facilities	212
72.	Certain relations resembling those created by contract" or Quasi-Contracts	212
73.	Section 68 – Claim for necessaries supplied to person incapable of contracting	212
74.	Section 69 – Reimbursement of person paying money due by another, in payment of which he is interested	213

75.	Section 70 – Obligation of person enjoying benefit of non-gratuitous act	213
76.	Section 71 – Responsibility of finder of goods	214
77.	Section 72 – Liability of person to whom money is paid, or thing delivered, by mistake or under coercion	214
78.	Section 73 – Compensation for loss or damage caused by breach of contract	215
79.	Section 74 – Compensation for breach of contract where penalty stipulated for	216
80.	Section 75 – Compensation on rightful rescission of contract	217

Indian Contract Act, 1872 (Part II)		
1.	Contract of Indemnity and Guarantee (Section : 124-147)	218
2.	Contract of Bailment (Section : 148-171)	230
3.	Bailment of Pledges (Section : 172-179)	248
4.	Suits by bailees or bailors against wrong-doers (Section : 180-181)	254
5.	Agency Appointment and authority of agents (Section : 182-238)	255

Transfer of Property Act, 1882

Maxims related to doctrines under the TPA (Section-wise)

Section 3 (Doctrine of Constructive Notice):

- Where a person doesn't actually know a fact, the court presumes knowledge under the circumstances. This means they are deemed to have notice, even without direct information. It ensures due diligence in property transactions.

Section 3 (Animo Attestandi):

- This refers to the intention to attest. It's crucial for valid attestation of documents like mortgages or wills, signifying the witness's purpose to verify execution.

Section 3 (Quicquid Plantatur solo, solo cedit):

- "Whatever is planted in or affixed to the soil, belongs to the soil." This maxim defines what constitutes immovable property, where things attached to the land become part of it.

Quicquid inaedificatur solo, solo cedit (No Section Mentioned):

- "Whatever is built into or embedded into or attached to soil becomes part of the earth and consequently whoever is the owner of that piece of land will also become owner of the thing attached or embedded in it." This maxim reinforces that constructions or permanent attachments become part of the land's ownership.

Section 6 (Alienation rei praefertur juri accrescendi):

- "Law favours alienation and not accumulation." This principle promotes the free transferability of property and is against tying up property indefinitely. It underlies restrictions on perpetuities and restraints on alienation.

Section 6 (Nemo est heres viventis):

- "A living person does not have any heir." This maxim means that until a person dies, their heir's interest is merely an expectancy and cannot be transferred as a vested right. It's about the transferability of contingent interests.

Sections 7, 41, 42, 43 and 44 (Nemo dat quod non habet):

- "No one can transfer a better title than he himself has." This fundamental rule prevents a transferor from conveying more rights than they possess in the property. Sections 41, 42, 43, and 44 provide exceptions or elaborations.

Section 8 (Accessorium non ducit, sed sequitur suum principale).

- The accessory does not lead, but follows its principal."
- This maxim underpins Section 8 of the TPA, which states that unless a different intention is expressed or necessarily implied, a transfer of property passes to the transferee all the interest which the transferor is then capable of passing in the property and in the legal incidents thereof. For example, when a house is sold, its doors, windows, keys, etc., being accessories, also pass to the buyer. Similarly, a transfer of debt also carries the securities for that debt

Section 13 (Doctrine of Double Possibilities):

- This rule prevents the creation of an interest that fetters the free disposition of property for more than one generation. It ensures that property doesn't remain tied up indefinitely for unborn persons.

Section 14 (Rule against Perpetuity):

- No transfer can create an interest that takes effect after the lifetime of persons living at the transfer date, plus the minority of a person who will exist at that period's end. This prevents property from being perpetually tied up.

Section 14: Rule against remoteness of vesting

- This is an alternative name for the Rule against Perpetuity. It addresses the delay in the vesting of an interest in property.

Section 16 (Doctrine of Failure of Prior Interest):

- If a prior interest in a property transfer fails under Section 13 (unborn person) or 14 (perpetuity), any subsequent interest created in the same transaction also fails. This ensures the entire scheme of transfer remains valid.

Section 17 (Doctrine of Accumulation):

- A direction to accumulate income from property means restraining its free enjoyment. This section limits the period for which income from property can be accumulated.

Section 23 (Real Property Rule):

- In transfers with a prior interest and a subsequent contingent interest, if the contingency doesn't occur before the prior interest terminates, the subsequent interest fails. This prevents interests from remaining in abeyance indefinitely.

Section 27 (Doctrine of Acceleration):

- If two interests are created in a transaction and the first fails, the subsequent interest takes effect immediately. This occurs even if the first interest's failure wasn't as originally intended by the transferor.

Section 28 (Doctrine of Conditional Limitation):

- This describes a limitation that divests an existing interest and vests it in another person upon the fulfillment of a condition. It allows for shifting interests based on specified events.

Section 29 (Martland's Rule):

- Section 29 requires strict fulfillment of a condition subsequent, as described in Section 28, for the second transfer to take place. This emphasizes the precise adherence to conditions that determine property interests.

Section 35 (Rule of Conscience):

- This equitable principle states that no one is allowed to "approve and reprobate" at the same time. It's the basis for the Doctrine of Election, ensuring fairness in accepting benefits and burdens.

Section 35 (Doctrine of Election):

- If a transaction confers benefits and imposes liabilities on a person, they must either accept both or reject both. They cannot selectively choose the beneficial part while rejecting the liabilities.

Section 35 (Qui sentit commodum, debet et sentire onus):

- "He who deserves a benefit ought also to bear a burden." This maxim is the foundational principle for the Doctrine of Election, linking benefits to corresponding obligations.

Section 36 (Doctrine of Contribution):

- If a tenant knows a property is co-owned, they should pay rent to each co-sharer proportionally to their contribution. This prevents disproportionate payments and ensures equitable distribution.

Section 36 (Doctrine of Apportionment):

- This doctrine deals with the proportional distribution of periodical payments (like rent or interest) when a person's interest in the property determines. It ensures fair division based on time or share.

Section 41 (Doctrine of Holding Out):

- Where a person allows another to appear as the owner of an estate, and a third party buys it for consideration from this ostensible owner, the original person cannot later deny the transfer. This protects innocent purchasers.

Section 43 (Feeding the Grant by Estoppel):

- When a person without authority professes to transfer immovable property, they are estopped from denying the transfer if they subsequently acquire the authority. This validates the initial transfer by later acquired title.

Sections 41, 43 (Assignatus Utitur Jure Auctoris):

- "An assignee is clothed with the rights of his principal." This means the transferee (assignee) acquires the same rights as the transferor (assignor). Sections 41 and 43 demonstrate this principle.

Section 44 (Dominium):

- This refers to ownership. Section 44 deals with the transfer of property by one of two or more co-owners, impacting their ownership rights.

Section 44 (Duo non possunt in solido unam rem possidere):

- "Two cannot possess one thing each in entirety." This maxim highlights that co-owners hold undivided shares, not separate complete ownership of the whole. It relates to joint ownership.

Section 48 (Doctrine of Priority):

- This doctrine states that when there are multiple transfers of the same property, the first one in time prevails. It determines the order of satisfaction among competing interests, such as multiple mortgagees.

Section 48 (Qui prior est tempore potior est jure):

- "He who is prior in time is stronger in right." This maxim is the foundational principle for the Doctrine of Priority, emphasizing that earlier rights generally take precedence over later ones.

Section 52 (Doctrine of Lis Pendens):

- "During the pendency of a suit, no new interest or title should be created." This doctrine prevents parties from transferring or dealing with property that is the subject of ongoing litigation, ensuring the court's decree is effective.

Section 52 (Pendente lite nihil innovature):

- "During litigation nothing should be changed." This maxim is another way of expressing the Doctrine of Lis Pendens, emphasizing the stability of rights during legal proceedings.

Section 53A (Doctrine of Part Performance):

- If a person takes possession of immovable property under a sale contract and has performed or is willing to perform their part, they cannot be dispossessed simply because the sale is incomplete or unregistered. This equitable doctrine protects possession.

Sections 56 and 81 (Doctrine of Marshalling):

- If a property owner mortgages multiple properties to one person and then sells some, the buyer can demand the mortgage debt be satisfied from the properties not sold to them first. This protects subsequent purchasers.

Section 61 (Doctrine of Consolidation):

- When two or more mortgages are made to the same mortgagee, the mortgagee can require the mortgagor to redeem all mortgages together. This allows for a combined redemption process.

Section 73 (Doctrine of Substituted Security):

- This is the mortgagee's right to claim the proceeds from a revenue sale or compensation if the mortgaged property is acquired. It ensures the security for the loan is maintained.

Section 92 (Doctrine of Subrogation):

- Any person, other than the mortgagor or co-mortgagor, who has an interest in the mortgaged property and redeems the mortgage, is entitled to step into the shoes of the mortgagee. This allows them to claim the rights of the original mortgagee.

Section 94 (Redeem up, Foreclose Down):

- In cases of multiple mortgagees, a later mortgagee can only redeem those mortgages prior to them and can foreclose on those subsequent to them. This establishes the order of rights among different mortgagees.

Section 111 (Doctrine of Merger):

- When a limited interest in property becomes an absolute interest, the smaller interest merges with the larger one and ceases to exist. This applies to leasehold interests when the lessee acquires the freehold.

Section 111 (Nemo potest esse tenens et dominus):

- No man can be at the same time tenant and landlord of the same tenement." This maxim explains the basis of the Doctrine of Merger, as one cannot hold both subservient and dominant interests simultaneously in the same property.

Section 112 (Doctrine of Waiver of Forfeiture):

- Forfeiture of a lease can be waived if the lessor accepts rent, distresses for rent, or performs any act indicating an intention to treat the lease as continuing. This prevents arbitrary termination by the lessor.

Section 116 (Doctrine of Holding Over):

- If a lessee remains in possession after their lease ends and the lessor accepts rent or assents to their continued possession, a new tenancy is created. This governs the status of a tenant remaining after lease expiry.

Section 127 (Qui sensit commodum debet et sentire onus):

- "He who enjoys the benefit ought also to bear the burden." This is a general principle applied in various contexts, including Section 127, where the donee of a gift is bound by the conditions attached

Chapter I – Preliminary

Act no. 4 of 1882

Date of enactment: 17th February 1882

Section 1 – Short Title, Commencement, and Extent

1. Short Title:

- ✓ This Act is called the Transfer of Property Act, 1882.

2. Commencement:

- ✓ The Act came into force on 1st July, 1882.

3. Extent:

- ✓ Initially, the Act applied to the whole of India except:
 - Part B States (before 1 November 1956),
 - Some parts of Bombay, Punjab, and Delhi.
- ✓ However, the State Government can, through a notification in the Official Gazette:
 - Extend this Act (or any part of it) to any area within its state.
 - Exempt any area (retrospectively or prospectively) from certain provisions:
 - Sections 54 (para 2 and 3), 59, 107, and 123.

4. Exception Clause:

- ✓ Even if the Act is extended to an area, Sections 54 (2 & 3), 59, 107, 123 won't apply in regions where the Indian Registration Act, 1908 is not in force.

Note:

- The Transfer of Property Act governs voluntary transfers (not inheritance or court-decreed ones).
- Certain areas or laws (like Registration Act exemptions) may restrict the operation of specific sections.
- States have the flexibility to apply or exempt parts of this Act as per their administrative needs.

Section 2 – Repeal and Saving Clause

- This section repeals old laws listed in the Schedule of the Act, but preserves certain rights and laws.

- What this section ensures:

1. What is repealed?

- ✓ The previous laws specified in the Schedule are repealed.

2. What is saved or protected?

- ✓ The following are not affected by this Act:

- a. Other laws which are not expressly repealed.

-
- b. Existing terms of contracts or incidents of property if they are:
 - Consistent with this Act.
 - Allowed by the law in force.
 - c. Rights or liabilities arising before this Act came into force.
 - d. Transfers by law or court orders (like inheritance, sale in execution of decree, etc.), except as mentioned in:
 - Section 57 (relating to charges and encumbrances).
 - Chapter IV (relating to Mortgages of Immovable Property).
3. Muslim Law Not Affected:
- ✓ Nothing in Chapter II (Transfer of Property – General Principles) affects any rule of Muslim Personal Law (previously referred to as Muhammadan law).

Immovable Property

Section 3 interpret the term 'immovable property'.

It provides that immovable property does not include standing timber, growing crops or grass. This section **does not define** 'immovable property' and also does not specify what is included in 'immovable property'.

According to **Section 3(26) of the General Clauses Act, 1897** immovable property includes

- (a) Land;
- (b) Benefits to arise out of land; and
- (c) Things attached to earth.

Section 2(6) of the Registration Act, 1908 provides that 'immovable property' includes land, buildings, hereditary allowances, right to ways, lights, ferries, fisheries or any other benefit to arise out of land, and things attached to the earth, or permanently fastened to anything which is attached to the earth, but not standing timber, growing crops or grass.

Examples of immovable property include, beneficial interests arising out of land, e.g, right of way, rights under lease or tenancy, right to extract minerals from mines, right of fishery, right of ferry, right to collect dues from fair or haat.

Following properties are **judicially recognised as Immovable properties**

1. Right to collect rent of Immovable property
2. Right to collect Ferry
3. A right of way, light, fishery.

-
4. Debt secured by Mortgage.
 5. Hereditary offices of worship.
 6. Equity on Redemption.
 7. Right to collect lac from trees.

Following properties are **not immovable properties**:

1. Right of worship, a royalty (a payment made to the writer of a book by publisher).
2. A decree for arrears of rent.
3. Right to recover maintenance.
4. Machinery which is not permanently attached to the earth.
5. Government promissory notes.
6. Standing Timber, Growing Crop, Gross

Things Attached to the Earth

Attached to the earth" means- (trick to remember is **RIA**)

1. **R**ooted in the Earth.
Ex. Trees and shrubs.
2. **I**mbedded in the Earth.
Ex. Walls or buildings that are fixed into the ground.
3. **A**ttached to an Imbedded Structure for Permanent Benefit.

Ex. Fixtures like doors, windows, or machinery permanently affixed to a building or land.

- **Things rooted in the earth:** Trees, plants or shrubs which grow on the land are rooted in the earth.

In **Suresh Chandra v. Kundan, (2001) 10 SCC 221** - the Supreme Court held that standing trees being rooted in earth are part of the land and when there is transfer of property in land the interest in the property would also include anything attached to the land agreed to be sold unless there is an intention, express or implied, to the contrary. As a general rule all the trees, plants, herbs and shrubs are immovable properties **except-**

- (a) standing timber
- (b) growing crops
- (c) growing grass

Things embedded in the earth: Things embedded in the earth means the things which are fixed firmly in the earth and as such become part of the land.

For example, buildings, houses, walls or electricity poles etc.

-
- **Things attached to an imbedded structure for permanent benefit** : Where a thing is attached to something which is embedded in the earth for its permanent beneficial enjoyment, the thing so attached also becomes immovable property. **For example**, doors, windows or shutters of a house are attached to its walls for the permanent enjoyment of that house.

How to determine whether a movable property, when attached to the earth or permanently fastened to something attached, becomes immovable property?

following maxims or tests are applied to determine whether a movable property, when attached to the earth or permanently fastened to something attached, becomes immovable property, -

English Law Maxims:

1. Quicquid plantatur solo, solo cedit – Anything planted in the earth becomes part of it.
2. Quicquid inaedificatur solo, solo cedit – Anything built into or attached to the land becomes part of it.

Tests to Determine Fixation:

1. Degree/Mode of Annexation Test: If an object is deeply fixed or cannot be removed without damage, it is presumed immovable (**Wake v. Holt, 1883**).
2. Object/Purpose of Annexation Test: If an object is permanently attached for the benefit of immovable property (e.g., electrical wiring), it is considered immovable.

Therefore, it all depends on the intention of the parties. If the intention is to make movable property part of immovable property, it will become part of immovable property and will be treated as immovable property. It will then shed its character as movable property.

Duncans Industries Ltd. v. State of Uttar Pradesh, (2000)

In this the supreme held held that whether a **machinery** embedded in the earth can be treated as movable property or immovable property depends upon the intention of the parties.

Attested

Section - 3

Attested" means witnessing the signing of an instrument by at least two witnesses.

1. Each witness must either:
 - ✓ See the executant sign or affix their mark on the instrument.
 - ✓ See another person sign the instrument on behalf of the executant, in their presence and under their direction.
 - ✓ Receive a personal acknowledgment from the executant confirming their signature, mark, or the signature of the other person.
2. Each witness must sign the instrument in the presence of the executant.
3. Both witnesses do not need to be present at the same time.
4. There is no specific format required for attestation.

The object of the attestation is :

- to ensure the authenticity or truthfulness of its execution.
- to protect the executant from coercion, fraud, or undue influence.

Kumar Harish Chandra Singh Deo v. Bansidhar Mohanty, 1965

- The Supreme Court held that attestation also protects the executant from being required to execute a document by the other party by force, fraud or undue influence.
- The Supreme **Court in M.L. Abdul Jabbar Sahib v. H. Venkata Sastri, 1969**, clarified that attestation requires a witness to sign *animo attestendi*—to affirm seeing the executant sign or acknowledge their signature. Signing for another purpose (e.g., as a scribe or identifier) does not qualify as attestation.

Actionable Claim

S. 3 - An **“actionable claim”** refers to, a claim:

- to any debt (unsecured debt), **except** when the debt is secured by:
 - (a) A mortgage on immovable property, or
 - (b) Hypothecation or pledge of movable property, or
- to a **beneficial interest** in movable property that the claimant does not physically possess, either directly or indirectly, or
- that Civil Courts recognize as a valid reason to seek legal relief.

➤ **whether the debt or interest is:**

- (a) Existing (already due),
- (b) Accruing (expected to be due soon),
- (c) Conditional (dependent on certain conditions),
- (d) Contingent (dependent on future events).

The expression "beneficial interest in movable property" includes the right to claim the benefit of a contract for the purchase of goods.

Examples of actionable claim include, claim for arrears of rent, claims for money due under insurance policy, claim for return of earnest money, right to get the proceeds of a business etc.

Actionable claim is regarded as a property, so it can be transferred. Provisions for the transfer of the actionable claims are provided in Chapter **VIII, Sections 130-137** of Transfer of Property Act, 1882.

Notice of a Fact

Section - 3 - A person is said to have notice of a fact in the following cases:

1. (Actual Knowledge) When the person knows the fact directly, or
2. (Constructive Knowledge) When the person should have known the fact but failed to inquire due to **willful neglect** or **gross negligence**.

Explanations:

➤ **Explanation I (Registration as notice):**

If a registered instrument is legally required for an immovable property transaction, any person acquiring rights in that property is presumed to have notice of the registered document from the date of its registration.

If the property is in multiple sub-districts, the notice is effective from the earliest date on which a memorandum of the registered instrument is filed in any relevant Sub-Registrar's office.

➤ **This presumption applies only if:**

1. The instrument is duly registered as per the Indian Registration Act, 1908.
2. It is entered or filed in official record books under Section 51 of the Act.
3. The transaction details are correctly recorded in indexes under Section 55 of the Act.

➤ **Explanation II (Actual possession of property as notice):**

If a person is acquiring immovable property or a share in it, they are presumed to have notice of any existing ownership or title rights of the person currently in actual possession of the property.

➤ **Explanation III (Notice to agent is notice to principal):**

If an agent learns of a fact while acting on behalf of their principal (employer/client) in a business matter, the principal is deemed to have notice of that fact.

Exception: If the agent fraudulently hides the fact, the principal is not responsible for the notice against persons aware of the fraud.

Doctrine of Constructive Notice

Doctrine of constructive notice is based on equity. **Equity treats a man who ought to have known a fact, as if he actually does know it.** Where a person actually does not know about a fact but the court treats that under the circumstances, he must be deemed to have knowledge of that fact, the notice is constructive.

Therefore, constructive notice is legally imputed notice.

Legal presumptions with the respect to constructive notice

Following are the legal presumptions raised in constructive notice: -

1. Wilful abstention from an enquiry or search
2. Gross negligence
3. Registration as notice (Exp.I)
4. Actual possession as notice (Exp.II)
5. Notice to agent is notice to principal (Exp.III)

Define “transfer of property” with reference to cases. Is partition a transfer or property?

According to section 5:

- A transfer of property means an act where a living person conveys property to:
- ✓ one or more other living persons, or
 - ✓ himself (alone or along with others),

The transfer can be for present or future ownership.

- A “**living person**” includes a company, an association, body of individuals, whether incorporated or not.

However, this definition does not override any existing laws on property transfers involving companies or associations.

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- In **Sk. Sattar Sk. Mohd. Choudhary v. Gunappa Amabads Bukati, 1997** Supreme Court held that Section 5 contemplates transfer of property by a person who has a title in the said property to another who has no title.
 - The person who makes the transfer is called 'transferor' and the person who receives transferred property is called 'transferee'.
 - ✓ In **Jugalkishore v. Raw Cotton Co. Ltd., 1995**, the Supreme Court held that the words 'in present or in future' in Section 5 of the Transfer of Property Act qualify the word 'conveys' and not the word 'property'. It means that the transfer is conveyance of such property that must be in existence at present. It does not refer to conveyance of **future property**.
 - ✓ In **V.N. Sarin v. Ajeet Kumar, 1966**, the supreme court held that **partition is not the transfer of property** - It involves division of property. After partition, share of each coparcener is specified and instead of collective rights, they acquire individual rights over the property. It does not involve any divesting or vesting of the rights.

In light of section 5 discuss -

- (i) Whether family arrangement is a transfer?
- (ii) Whether surrender amounts to transfer?
- (iii) Whether a transfer to an Idol amounts to transfer?
- (iv) Whether release deed amounts to transfer?

1. Family Arrangement:

- A family arrangement is an agreement between family members to divide and hold property separately. It does not involve transferring property from a person with title to one without title.
- The **Supreme Court in Sadhu Madho Das v. Pandit Mukund Ram and Ganeshi v. Ashok** held that a family arrangement is not a transfer under Section 5 of the Transfer of Property Act.

2. Surrender:

- Surrender means merging a smaller interest into a greater interest without expanding the greater interest.
- In **Makhanlal v. Nagendranath**, the court held that surrender of a lease is not a transfer under Section 5 because it is a merger, not a conveyance. Similarly, a widow surrendering her life interest is not considered a transfer.

3. Transfer to an Idol:

- Section 5 states that a transfer must be between living persons (i.e.,inter-vivos). Corporations and firms are considered living persons, but an idol is not.
- Since an idol is a juristic person but not a living person, dedicating property to an idol is not a transfer under Section 5 and is governed by religious or charitable endowment laws.

4. Release Deed:

- A release deed gives up a person's right or title over a property.
- In **Suresh Chand Gupta v. Man Mohan Gupta**, the court held that a release deed does not transfer property but can confirm an existing title.
- In **Thayyl Mammo v. K Ramunni**, the Supreme Court ruled that if a release deed transfers rights and title for consideration, it can be a transfer. Whether a release deed is a transfer depends on the case.

Section 6. What may be transferred.

- According to **section 6** of the transfer of property Act:
- **General Rule:** Any property can be transferred unless prohibited by this Act or any other existing law.

Exceptions (What Cannot Be Transferred):

- **Future & Uncertain Interests:**

- (a) The chance of an heir-apparent inheriting property, The chance of a relative receiving a legacy after someone's death, or any other mere possibility of a similar nature.

- **Restricted Rights:**

- (b) A right of re-entry for breach of a condition cannot except to the owner of the affected property.
- (c) An easement (right to use another's land) separately from the property it benefits.
- (d) Property interests that are meant only for the owner's personal use. (dd) A right to future maintenance, in any form.
- (e) A mere right to sue.

- **Public & Government-Related Interests:**

- (f) A public office and the salary of a public officer.
- (g) Stipends of military, naval, air-force, civil, and political pensions.

- **Illegal & Invalid Transfers:**

- (h) Transfers:
 1. that are against the nature of the interest, or
 2. for an unlawful object or consideration (as per Section 23 of the Indian Contract Act, 1872), or
 3. to a person legally disqualified from being a transferee.

- **Special Cases (Tenants, Farmers, and Lessees)**

- (i) Tenant, on transferable rights of occupancy,
Farmer of an estate who has defaulted on revenue payments, or
Lessee of an estate (under the management of a court of wards).

Mere Right to Sue (Section 6e)

1. Section 6(e) prohibits the transfer of a mere right to sue. The word "mere" is important as it means a right to sue without any interest in property is non-transferable. A right to sue is not considered as property but only an uncertain future claim.
 - For example, if A contracts to buy 2000 packets of biscuits from B for ₹5000 but later refuses, causing B a loss of ₹1000, B has a right to sue A for damages. However, B cannot transfer this right to sue to another person.
2. This clause only prohibits a mere right to sue, but if a property is transferred along with the right to recover damages related to that property, such a transfer is valid.
 - For instance, if A contracts to supply wheat to B, and before the due date, B transfers his beneficial interest in the wheat to C, then if A fails to deliver, C can sue A, since he has both the right to sue and an interest in the property.
 - In **Union of India v. Sri Sarada Mills Ltd.**, the Supreme Court held that a bare right to sue for damages cannot be assigned, as the law does not allow transactions resembling maintenance and champerty. However, if there is an existing interest in the subject matter, the transfer may be valid.

Spes Successionis (Expectation of Succession)

1. Section 6 (a) states that spes succession cannot be transferred.

Spes Successionis refers to the expectation of inheriting property in the future. It is not a present property and cannot be transferred.

 - In **Collyer v. Issacas (1881)**, the court ruled that a person cannot transfer what does not exist. Allowing such transfers would encourage speculation and litigation.
 - **Spes Successionis includes:**
 1. The chance of an heir-apparent inheriting property.
 2. The chance of receiving a legacy under a Will.
 3. Any other similar mere possibility.
 - **Heir-Apparent**

An heir-apparent is someone who may inherit property in the future but is not a legal heir until the person they may inherit from dies. The maxim "nemo est heres viventis" means a living person has no heir.