

Course Name – LL.B 4th sem
Subject – Equity
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Concept – Rights and Liabilities of beneficiary

TOPIC: RIGHTS & LIABILITIES OF BENEFICIARY

INTRODUCTION:

Trust is primarily created for the benefit of beneficiary. So there are certain rights given to the beneficiaries and these rights are attached with the duties as well. So in order to answer this question we will look at the relevant provisions which deals with the rights and duties of beneficiaries.

WHO IS BENEFICIARY:

Beneficiary is a person for whom a trust is created.
According to sec:9, every person who is capable of holding property may be a beneficiary.

POSITION OF BENEFICIARY:

Beneficiary holds a very important position in a trust since the trust is created for him.

According to Snell:

“A trustee in a sense is a servant to the beneficiary.”

This statement itself speaks adequately about the position of the beneficiary.

RIGHTS OF BENEFICIARIES:

Sec:55-67, deals with the rights of beneficiary classified broadly under 2 heads.

- a) Rights of beneficiary (sec:55-61)
- b) Remedies available to beneficiary (sec:62-67)

55.Right to rents and profits.—The beneficiary has, subject to the provisions of the instrument of trust, a right to the rents and profits of the trust property.

56. Right to specific execution.—The beneficiary is entitled to have the intention of the author of the trust specifically executed to the extent of the beneficiary's interests. Right to transfer of possession. —And, where there is only one beneficiary and he is competent to contract, or where there are several beneficiaries and they are competent to contract and all of one mind, he or they may require the trustee to transfer the trust property to him or them, or to such

person as he or they may direct. When property has been transferred or bequeathed for the benefit of a married woman, so that she shall not have power to deprive herself of her beneficial interest, nothing in the second clause of this section applies to such property during her marriage.

Illustrations

(a) Certain Government securities are given to trustees upon trust to accumulate the interest until A attains the age of 24, and then to transfer the gross amount to him. A on attaining majority may, as the person exclusively interested in the trust property, require the trustees to transfer it immediately to him.

(b) A bequeaths Rs. 10,000 to trustees upon trust to purchase an annuity for B, who has attained his majority and is otherwise competent to contract. B may claim Rs. 10,000.

(c) A transfers certain property to B and directs him to sell or invest it for the benefit of C, who is competent to contract. C may elect to take the property in its original character.

57. Right to inspect and take copies of instrument of trust accounts, etc.—

The beneficiary has a right, as against the trustee and all persons claiming under him with notice of the trust, to inspect and take copies of the instrument of trust, the documents of title relating solely to the trust property, the accounts of the trust property, and the vouchers (if any) by which they are supported, and the cases submitted and opinions taken by the trustee for his guidance in the discharge of his duty.

58. Right to transfer beneficial interest.—The beneficiary, if competent to contract may transfer his interest, but subject to the law for the time being in force as to the circumstances and extent in and to which he may dispose of such interest: Provided that when property is transferred or bequeathed for the benefit of a married woman, so that she shall not have power to deprive herself of her beneficial interest, nothing in this section shall authorise her to transfer such interest during her marriage.

59. Right to sue for execution of trust.—Where no trustees are appointed or all the trustees die, disclaim or are discharged, or where for any other reason the execution of a trust by the trustee is or becomes impracticable, the beneficiary may institute a suit for the execution of the trust, and the trust shall, so far as may be possible, be executed by the Court until the appointment of a trustee or new trustee.

60. Right to proper trustees.—The beneficiary has a right (subject to the provisions of the instrument of trust) that the trust property shall be properly protected and held and administered by proper persons and by a proper number of such persons. **Explanation I.**—The following are not proper persons within

the meaning of this section:— A person domiciled abroad; an alien enemy; a person having an interest inconsistent with that of the beneficiary; a person in insolvent circumstances; and, unless the personal law of the beneficiary allows otherwise, a married woman and a minor. **Explanation II.**—When the administration of the trust involves the receipt and custody of money, the number of trustees should be two at least.

Illustrations

- (a) A, one of several beneficiaries, proves that B, the trustee, has improperly disposed of part of the trust property, or that the property is in danger from B's being in insolvent circumstances; or that he is incapacitated from acting, as trustee. A may obtain a receiver of the trust property.
- (b) A bequeaths certain jewels to B in trust for C. B dies during A's lifetime; than A dies, C is entitled to have the property conveyed to a trustee for him.
- (c) A conveys certain property to four trustees in trust for B. Three of the trustees die. B may institute a suit to have three new trustees appointed in the place of the deceased trustees.
- (d) A conveys certain property to three trustees in trust for B. All the trustees disclaim. B may institute a suit to have three trustees appointed in place of the trustees so disclaiming.
- (e) A, a trustee for B, refuses to act, or goes to reside permanently out of 1[India] or is declared an insolvent, or compounds with his creditors, or suffers a co-trustee to commit a breach of trust, B may institute a suit to have A removed and a new trustee appointed in his room.

61. Right to compel to any act of duty. —The beneficiary has a right that his trustee shall be compelled to perform any particular act of his duty as such, and restrained from committing any contemplated or probable breach of trust.

Illustrations

- (a) A contracts with B to pay him monthly Rs. 100 for the benefit of C, B writes and signs a letter declaring that he will hold in trust for C the money so to be paid. A fails to pay the money in accordance with his contract, C may compel B on a proper indemnity to allow C to sue on the contract in B's name.
- (b) A is trustee of certain land, with a power to sell the same and pay the proceeds to B and C equally. A is about to make an improvident sale of the land. B may sue on behalf of himself and C for an injunction to restrain A from making the sale.

62. Wrongful purchase by trustee.—Where a trustee has wrongfully bought trust property, the beneficiary has a right to have the property declared subject to the trust or re-transferred by the trustee, if it remains in his hands unsold, or, if it has been bought from him by any person with notice of the trust, by such person.

But in such case the beneficiary must repay the purchase-money paid by the trustee, with interest, and such other expenses (if any) as he has properly incurred in the preservation of the property; and the trustee or purchaser must

(a) account for the nett profits of the property, (b) be charged with an occupation-rent, if he has been in actual possession of the property, and (c) allow the beneficiary to deduct a proportionate part of the purchase-money if the property has been deteriorated by the acts or omissions of the trustee or purchaser. Nothing in this section—

(a) impairs the rights of lessees and others who, before the institution of a suit to have the property declared subject to the trust or re-transferred, have contracted in good faith with the trustee or purchaser; or

(b) entitles the beneficiary to have the property declared subject to the trust or re-transferred where he, being competent to contract, has himself, without coercion or undue influence having been brought to bear on him, ratified the sale to the trustee with full knowledge of the facts of the case and of his rights as against the trustee.

63. Following trust property into the hands of third persons.—Where trust property comes into the hands of a third person inconsistently with the trust, the beneficiary may require him to admit formally, or may institute a suit for a declaration, that the property is comprised in the trust. Into that into which it has been converted.—Where the trustee has disposed of trust property and the money or other property which he has received therefor can be traced in his hands, or the hands of his legal representative or legatee, the beneficiary has, in respect thereof, rights as nearly as may be the same as his rights in respect of the original trust property.

Illustrations

(a) A, a trustee for B of Rs. 10,000, wrongfully invests the Rs. 10,000 in the purchase of certain land, B is entitled to the land.

(b) A, a trustee, wrongfully purchases land in his own name, partly with his own money, partly with money subject to a trust for B. B is entitled to a charge on the land for the amount of the trust money so misemployed.

64. Saving of rights of certain transferees.—Nothing in section 63 entitles the beneficiary to any right in respect of property in the hands of—

(a) a transferee, in good faith for consideration without having notice of the trust, either when the purchase-money was paid, or when the conveyance was executed, or

(b) a transferee for consideration from such a transferee. A judgment-creditor of the trustee attaching and purchasing trust property is not a transferee for consideration within the meaning of this section. Nothing in section 63 applies to money, currency notes, and negotiable instruments in the hands of a bona fide holder to whom they have passed in circulation, or shall be deemed to affect the

Indian Contract Act, 1872 (9 of 1872), section 108, or the liability of a person to whom a debt or charge is transferred.

65. Acquisition by trustee of trust property wrongfully converted.—Where a trustee wrongfully sells or otherwise transfers trust property and afterwards himself becomes the owner of the property, the property again becomes subject to the trust, notwithstanding any want of notice on the part of intervening transferees in good faith for consideration.

66. Right in case of blended property.—Where the trustee wrongfully mingles the trust property with his own, the beneficiary is entitled to a charge on the whole fund for the amount due to him.

67. Wrongful employment by partner-trustee of trust property for partnership purposes.—If a partner, being a trustee, wrongfully employs trust property in the business or on the account of the partnership, no other partner is liable therefor in his personal capacity to the beneficiaries, unless he had notice of the breach of trust. The partners having such notice are jointly and severally liable for the breach of trust.

Illustrations

(a) A and B are partners. A dies, having bequeathed all his property to B in trust for Z, and appointed B his sole executor. B instead of winding-up the affairs of the partnership, retains all the assets in the business. Z may compel him, as partner, to account for so much of the profits as are derived from A's share of the capital. B is also answerable to Z for the improper employment of A's assets.

(b) A, a trader, bequeaths his property to B in trust for C, appoints B his sole executor, and dies. B enters into partnership with X and Y in the same trade, and employs A's assets in the partnership business. B gives an indemnity to X and Y against the claims of C. Here X and Y are jointly liable with B to C, as having knowingly become parties to the breach of trust committed by B.

68. Liability of beneficiary joining in breach of trust.—Where one of several beneficiaries—

(a) joins in committing breach of trust, or

(b) knowingly obtains any advantage therefrom, without the consent of the other beneficiaries, or

(c) becomes aware of a breach of trust committed or intended to be committed, and either actually conceals it, or does not within a reasonable time take proper steps to protect the interests of the other beneficiaries, or

(d) has deceived the trustee, and thereby induced him to commit a breach of trust, the other beneficiaries are entitled to have all his beneficial interest impounded as against him and all who claim under him (otherwise than as transferees for consideration without notice of the breach) until the loss caused by the breach has been compensated. When property has been transferred or bequeathed for the benefit of a married woman, so that she shall not have power to deprive herself of her beneficial interest, nothing in this section applies to such property during her marriage.

69. Rights and liabilities of beneficiary's transferee. —Every person to whom a beneficiary transfers his interest has the rights, and is subject to the liabilities, of the beneficiary in respect of such interest at the date of the transfer.

LAIBILITIES OF BENEFICARY

I. DUTY TO COMPENSATE TRUSTEE

Beneficiary should compensate the trustee if he caused any injury or damage to the trust property.

II. LIABILITY IN BREACH OF' TRUST

Beneficiary is liable if he commits breach of trust.

III. LIABILITY NOT TO HARM OTHER INTEREST

Beneficiary should not harm other interest He is liable if harms other interest.

IV. LIABILITY NOT OBTAIN ANY ADVANTAGE WITHOUT THE

CONSENT OF BENEFICIARIES

Beneficiary should not obtain any advantage without the consent of other beneficiaries.

V. LIABILITY TO RECEIVE HIS INTEREST

Beneficiary is entitled to receive his interest but he should not claim more than his interest in trust property.

VI. LIABILITY TO BECOME AWARE OF BREACH OF TRUST

Beneficiary is liable to become aware of breach of trust and proceed against trustee for such breach.

VII. LIABILITY IN CASE TO DECEIVE THE TRUSTEE

Beneficiary is liable in case he deceive the trustee and induced him to commit a breach of trust.

VIII. LIABILITY TO TAKE REASONABLE STEPS

Beneficiary is liable in case if he fails to take reasonable steps within right and duties of other beneficiaries.

CONCLUSION

To conclude I can say that under the Trust Act, the beneficiary is entitled to some rights but he is also liable if he commits breach of trust, knowingly obtains any advantage without the consent of other beneficiaries, becomes aware of breach of trust and fails to proceed against trust: for such breach etc. The beneficiary should cooperate with the trustee.