

Some Rare, Interesting Facts about ICAI & Accountancy Profession in India



Accountancy profession has existed in India in different forms for ages, even during the times of the Vedas, Sutras and the Upanishads. In fact, in Hindu mythology, Lord Chitragupta is revered as Lord Yamaraja's chief accountant and minister who keeps a complete record of the deeds of human beings from their birth to death. In this special feature, we bring to you some lesser known historical as well relatively recent facts about the ICAI and the accountancy profession in India taken from History of Accountancy Profession Volume I and II and the archives of The Chartered Accountant journal and respective ICAI Committees.

Membership

- **Membership Strength on 1st April, 1950:** After the first Council of the Institute started functioning, i.e., as on 1st April, 1950, there were 1,689 members—569 Fellows and 1,120 Associates.
- **Interesting Statistics of 1954**
 - 1) Number of CPAs (United States): Just crossed 50,000 mark.
 - 2) Number of U.K. Accountants (comprising three Chartered Institutes, The Society of Incorporated Accountants, and the other Association): Over 41,000 Members.

3) Number of Members of our ICAI (as on 31.03.1954): 2,819 members
(Source: *History of Accountancy Profession Volume 1*)

- **Membership Strength on 15th May, 2014:** The ICAI had a membership strength of 2,29,798 as on 15th May, 2014. Women comprised 21.1% of the total membership.

Women in Accountancy

- **First Among Indian Women CAs:**
 1. The first lady to have qualified as Accountant was Mrs. Shirin K. Engineer, who belonged to Mumbai. Having passed the B.Com

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Examination of the Bombay University with Advanced Accountancy and Auditing in the year 1930, she was awarded the GDA Diploma upon completion of her practical training in accounts in the year 1933. This enabled her to be enrolled as a Registered Accountant (R.A.) in December 1933, and as A.C.A in July 1949.

2. The first lady to have topped the CA Final Examination was Ms. Nandita Shah. She achieved this feat in November 1983 examination.
 3. The first lady to have got elected to the Council of The Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) was Ms. Priya Bhansali.
 4. CA. G. Rajani was the first ever visually impaired CA as recorded in ICAI history.
- **ICAI Groups/Committees for Women CAs in recent years:** A 17-member 'Women Steering Group' was constituted in 2009 and a full fledged non-standing 'Women Members Empowerment Committee' has been set up for Council Year 2014-15.
 - **Flexi Working Portal for Women Members:** In yet first in ICAI history, a Flexi Working Portal for women members (<http://womenportal.icai.org/>) was launched on 21st April 2014 to provide women CAs a platform to explore suitable opportunities with option for part time jobs, jobs with flexi hours or jobs with work-from-home facility.
 - **ICAI Women Members on 1st March, 2014:** No of CA as Women – 47,665, Associate Member – 41,483, Fellow Members – 6,182. Out of Associate members 10,866 had Full Time COP, 1,231 had Part Time COP, and 29,385 had No COP. Out of Fellow members 4,900 had Full Time COP, 265 had Part Time COP and 1,017 had No COP.
 - **ICAI Girl Students as on 1st March, 2014:** Girls had 36% share in ICAI's active studentship. 1,12,205 of them were in CPT, 1,11,909 in IPCC, 60,789 were in Final.

A CA Pioneered Commerce Education in India

Mr. Kalyan Subramani Aiyar (1859-1940), a CA, is regarded as the pioneer of commerce education in India. He set up his own firm, one of the oldest

Indian firms, in 1897 in Calicut and then shifted to Bombay in 1900. He established the Sydenham College of Commerce & Economics, Mumbai, as *Government College of Commerce* in October 1913, and became its first honorary principal. He also drafted the scheme of GDA (Government Diploma in Accountancy) to be accepted by the Government of Bombay which allowed the accountants to be eligible for Unrestricted Certificate.

(Source: *Accountancy Museum of India*)



Mr. Kalyan Subramani Aiyar

Opening of the ICAI Headquarters

The ICAI Headquarters was inaugurated on 2nd April, 1954 by the-then President of India Dr. Rajendra Prasad. He also inaugurated the first Conference of Chartered Accountants of India.



The-then President of India Shri Rajendra Prasad inaugurating the ICAI Headquarters

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In his speech, the President of India observed: "The fast increasing tempo of the industrial and economic development of the country makes it imperative that every Chartered Accountant should realise that he belongs to a profession which provides the first line of defence to the unwary public against money-grabbers and opportunists. Your responsibility in this matter becomes all the greater because of the autonomy which your profession enjoys. The confidence of the public in even reliable and well-managed business undertakings would be gravely undermined, if unscrupulous persons were allowed without let or hindrance, to manipulate company accounts or other wise indulge in malpractices only to serve 'their own ignoble ends. The Government and the public are therefore alike interested in the maintenance of the independence and integrity of the Accountancy profession, but it is primarily for the profession itself to create conditions favourable to the growth of these qualities in its members'".

Role of ICAI in Formation of IFAC



Shri B. L. Kabra President, signing on behalf of the Institute an Agreement constituting International Federation of Accountants at Munich, West Germany on 7th October 1977

The ICAI has been one of the founding members International Federation of Accountants, having played a crucial role in its formation in 1977. The ICAI hosted 6th Plenary Session of the International Coordination Committee for the Accountancy Profession between 14th and 16th February, 1977, which was attended by representatives of 11 leading countries. This was an event of considerable importance to the profession, as it gave final shape to the constitution of the International Federation of Accountants (IFAC), which came into existence at the International Congress later held at Munich.

Representatives of more than 50 nations attending the 11th International Congress of Accountants in Munich (West Germany) signed an agreement for establishment of International Federation of Accountants on 7th October 1977. At that time, it was decided that the affairs of the IFAC will be managed by the 15-member Council. It is matter of great pride that India was elected as member of the Council for two successive 5-year terms, and Shri B. L. Kabra, the-then President of ICAI, was elected as one of the Vice-Presidents of IFAC.

First Union Budget 1947-48

The First Budget (Year 1947-48) of free and independent India was presented by Shri R. K. Shanmukham Chetty (1892-1953), first Union Minister for Finance on 26th November, 1947. He had budgeted Revenue receipts of ₹171.15 crore (Tax revenue 80.00 crore + Non tax revenue 91.15 crore) for a period of 7.5 months starting from 15th August, 1947. Total Expenditure for the year 1947-48 was 197.39 crore (Defence Expenditure 92.74 crore + Civil Expenditure 104.65 crore). The revenue deficit for the year 1947-48 was 26.24 crore.

Inception of ICAI Technical Directorate

The ICAI Central Council at its 90th meeting in September, 1979 accepted the Executive Committee recommendation for the creation of the Technical Directorate in the Institute. The technical Directorate was set up in 1980 and its functions included 'Development of accounting and auditing standards; Preparation of research studies which contribute effectively to the development of theory and practice of accounting, auditing and taxation, etc; Provision of advisory services to members and compilation of the opinions given; Identification and development of areas – both in employment and practice which provide greater opportunities to members; Responses to queries from government and other regulatory agencies in areas of monetary policies, fiscal laws and corporate laws.'

(Source: History of the Accountancy Profession in India - Part II)

First edition of 'ICAI Corporate Awards'

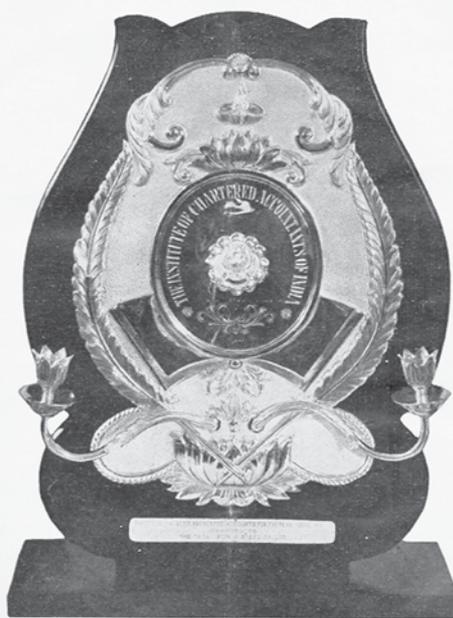
The prestigious annual ICAI corporate awards (ICAI Awards) to honour the exemplary work of Chartered Accountants in Industry was instituted in 2007 and the first edition of these awards, called

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'Exact Awards' were given away to 19 CAs in industry on 20th January 2008 at Hotel Grand Hyatt, Mumbai. The chairman of the six-member high-profile award jury was ICAI Past President CA. N. D. Gupta.

History of ICAI 'Awards for Best Presented Accounts'

The ICAI 'Awards for Best Presented Accounts' were instituted in 1958. An annual competition was started for the purpose. Earlier, the annual accounts of companies that participate in the competition were scrutinised by a panel of judges appointed by the Council. The practice of appointment of judges by the Council continued till the year 1965. The prize-winning companies in the first competition in the year 1958-59 were: 'The Tata Iron and Steel Company Ltd., Bombay (Shield),' and 'Indian Oxygen Ltd., Calcutta,' 'Mukand Iron & Steel Works Ltd., Bombay,' and 'Air India International, Bombay,' (all Certificate of Merit)



Inception of Accounting Research Foundation (ARF)

The Council at its 106th meeting held in July 1983 decided to establish the National Academy of Accounting. It was decided to name it after the First President of the Institute, Late Shri G. P. Kapadia. The Council at its 182nd meeting held in September 1996, considered the matter of establishing the National Academy, particularly the financial aspects and whether it should be a wing of the Institute or a separate trust or society. Finally, the Accounting Research Foundation has been set-up as a company u/s 25 of the Companies Act on 14th January, 1999, which may well be considered as a milestone as is evident from the objectives outlined in the Memorandum of Association as far as development of the accounting profession in India is concerned.

(Source: History of the Accounting Profession in India- Volume II)

First Merit and Loan Scholarships:

A scheme for awarding merit and loan scholarships was first introduced from 1st April, 1965. Merit scholarships were then awarded twice a year, five scholarships at a time on the basis of the results of each Intermediate Examination. Every apprentice who stands first in the order of merit among candidates from a region declared successful at an Intermediated Examination and who has secured a minimum of 60 % marks in the aggregate, was awarded the merit scholarship. Loan Scholarship was awarded to an articled clerk on the basis of the results of his examination qualifying for entry into the Course.

(Source: History of the Accountancy Profession in India – Volume I)

Some Recent Firsts in ICAI History

- **One of the Biggest Ever CSR initiatives:** In one of the biggest ever CSR initiatives in its history, the ICAI in 2013 contributed about ₹ 95 lakh to the Prime Minister's National Relief Fund. The amount was collected from ICAI members during a world-wide campaign, in order to help the victims of natural calamity in Uttarakhand.
- **First Ever IFASS Meet in India:** The first ever meeting of IFASS to be held in India was hosted by ICAI on 6-7 March 2014. As many as 77 delegates representing 26 countries participated in the meeting.
- **'ICAI Now Mobile App' & 'ICAI Knowledge Gateway':** Marked as yet another firsts in ICAI history, these hi-tech facilities were launched for members, students and other stake-holders in February 2014.
- **Google Hangout:** The ICAI's first ever interactive live session on 'Google Hangout' (video-conferencing done using the Google+ platform) with tech-savvy members was organised 13th May 2014.
- **Journal on Mobile/Tablet:** The e-Journal (online version of ICAI's The Chartered Accountant

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journal) was made compatible on iOS (used by mobiles and tablets like iPhone, iPad, etc.) and android devices from 1st March, 2013. It made the journal accessible on the above mentioned platforms without any specific download requirements, at <http://www.icai.org/> under e-Journal tab.

- **Digital Language Lab:** A 'language lab', a first in the ICAI history, was set up as a communication-skill development initiative for ICAI students in October 2013.

Some key points of Code and Courtesy of Display of ICAI Flag

1. The Flag can be flown on buildings of the Headquarter(s), Regional Councils, Regional Offices,



De-centralised Offices and Branches on all days including Sundays and holidays from sunrise to sunset, irrespective of the weather conditions.

2. The Flag may be flown on the aforementioned buildings at night also but only on very special occasions such as Chartered Accountants Day, Golden Jubilee Day, Diamond Jubilee Day, etc.
3. Whenever a Flag is flown on a Speaker's platform, the Flag should be on a staff on the Speaker's right as he faces the audience. If otherwise displayed, it should be flat against the wall above and behind the Speaker.
4. On special occasions like the Republic Day and the National week following it, Independence Day, or, any other particular day of National pride, the Institute's Flag can also be flown and without any restriction of the time limit followed on normal days.
5. When displayed in a straight line with Flags of other professional bodies in India–National as well as International–the Institute (ICAI) Flag should be on the extreme right. ■