

PAPER – 2: CORPORATE AND OTHER LAWS

PART – I: ANNOUNCEMENTS STATING APPLICABILITY FOR MAY, 2021 EXAMINATIONS

Applicability for May, 2021 examinations

The Study Material (October 2020 edition) is applicable for May 2021 examinations. This material is updated for all relevant amendments up to 31st October 2020. For May 2021 examinations, amendments up to 31st October, 2020 are applicable.

Besides, refer booklet on MCQS and Case scenarios of December 2020 edition containing Independent MCQs and Case Scenarios on the topics covered under the study material for 30 marks segment of MCQs in the Examination.

Read thoroughly the study material first and then go with the said booklet to have practice and revision of concepts with an analytical and application approach with the thorough understanding of the subject.

PART I- COMPANY LAW

PART – II : QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

QUESTIONS

DIVISION A – CASE SCENARIO / MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS

1. Mr. Ajay is a renowned finance professional with wide experience in banking operations. Due to his experience, he has been appointed as director on the Board of various companies. He is working as the Executive Director - Finance of Doon Carbonates Limited (DCL) for the past 4-5 years and heading the finance department there. As per the object clause of the Memorandum of Association of DCL, it can raise funds by way of loans for the advancement of its business. Articles of Association of DCL authorizes the directors to borrow up to INR 50 lakhs on behalf of the company after passing a valid board resolution and any loans for amounts exceeding the above limit can be raised only after approval at a general meeting.

Board of Directors of DCL raised INR 80 lakhs from Srikant Finance Services after passing a board resolution and out of this amount, INR 60 lakhs was used to pay a legitimate liability of DCL by the directors. DCL is a widely held company with around 5600 members as per the members register. The 21st AGM of DCL is convened on 1st September 2020. A total of 34 members attended the meeting out of which 7 members attended through proxy. 6 of such members are represented by single proxy, Mr. Das. The articles of DCL is silent about the quorum.

Mr. Ajay is also director of Padmani Silk Limited (PSL). PSL was established around 25 years back as a private company operating as a micro business with 10 employees in a three- room building. During these years, the company grew exceptionally and went public and was also listed on SME exchange. PSL declares the interim dividend out of the previous year's undistributed profit on 31st August 2020 on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the company. PSL deposited the amount of said dividend in a separate bank account with a NBFC on 4th of September, 2020.

Mr. Ajay hails from a farming family and carries on the business of cultivation and milling of paddy. He is also the sole member of New-Deal Limited (NDL), a one person company. NDL is operated as rice sheller and also deals in trading of high quality basmati rice. Mr. Ajay's father is operating as a nominee for the purposes of this OPC. The accounts department of NDL prepared and published only Profit and Loss Account and Balance Sheet as a financial statement and did not prepare cash flow statements and explanatory notes to accounts. A statement of changes in equity is not required in the case of NDL.

Multiple Choice Questions

- 1.1 Regarding compliance for declaration and distribution of Interim dividend by PSL, which of the following statements is correct?
 - (a) There is a violation of the provisions because interim dividend can only be declared out of current year's profits.
 - (b) There is no violation at all, and all the provisions prescribed by law have been complied with.
 - (c) There is a violation because the bank account shall be designated and shall be one of existing banks account of company.
 - (d) There is a violation because the bank account shall be opened with scheduled banks only.
- 1.2 Which of the following statements is correct, with reference to the requirement for financial Statements of 'New Deal Limited' (One Person Company)
 - (a) NDL fails to meet the requirement because its financial statement do not include explanatory notes to accounts
 - (b) NDL fails to meet the requirement because its financial statements do not include cash flow statement
 - (c) NDL fails to meet the requirement because its financial statements do not include explanatory notes to account and cash flow statement
 - (d) NDL has complied with the requirements related to financial statements
- 1.3 The borrowing of the sum of INR 80 lakhs by the directors of DCL is
 - (a) Void-ab-initio

- (b) Void
- (c) Voidable
- (d) Valid

1.4 Regarding the validity of the 21st Annual General Meeting of DCL, which of the following statements is correct?

- (a) The meeting doesn't have a quorum, because 30 members need to be present in person at the meeting.
- (b) The meeting is valid and has a quorum because 30 members are present at meeting either personally or through a proxy.
- (c) The meeting is valid and has a quorum, because only 5 members are required to be present, either personally or through a proxy, if the number of members as on the date of the meeting is more than five thousand but not more than ten thousand
- (d) The meeting is valid and has a quorum, because only 15 members are required to be present, either personally or through a proxy, if the number of members as on the date of the meeting is more than five thousand but not more than ten thousand

2. Mr. M. Mishra is a director of Superior Carbonates and Chemicals Limited (SCCL). SCCL was incorporated by Mr. S. K. Mishra (father of Mr. M. Mishra) on 05th July 1995 as a public company. SCCL accepts a loan of ₹ 1.5 crores from Mr. M. Mishra for short term purpose and the loan is expected to be repaid after twenty four months. SCCL in its books of account, records the receipt as a loan under non-current liabilities. At the time of advancing loan, Mr. M. Mishra affirms in writing that such amount is not being given out of funds acquired by him by borrowing or accepting loans or deposits from others and complete details of his loan transactions are furnished in the boards' report.

DBSL which is an unlisted public company, also accept the deposits from the public as on 1st November 2018, which is due for repayment on 30th September 2023. DBSL also accepts a LAP (Loan against property) for a term of 10 years from a financial institution on 18th June 2020. Charge was created on that day, but DBSL has neglected to register the charge with the registrar. Finally, the application for registration of charge is furnished on 18th August 2020.

SCCL has registered office in Paonta-sahib (Himachal Pradesh) and corporate office is situated in Dehradun (Uttarakhand) but around 15% of members whose name is entered in members register are residents of Nainital (Uttarakhand). SCCL has a liaison Office at Nainital. Management of the company is willing to place, the Register of Members at the Nainital Liaison Office.

DBSL convene its 7th AGM on 10th September 2020 at the registered office of the company. Notice for same was served on 21st August 2020. 78% of members gave consent to

convening AGM at shorter notice due to ambiguity and possibility of another lockdown starting from 11th September 2020 on account of the second wave of COVID-19.

Multiple Choice Questions

- 2.1 Pick the right statement regarding SCCL's willingness to keep and maintain the register of members at the Nainital liaison office.
- (a) Register of members shall be kept at either registered office or within the same city that too after passing the resolution, hence SCCL is not correct in placing it at the Nainital liaison office
 - (b) Register of members cannot be kept at any other place by SCCL, without passing an ordinary resolution
 - (c) Register of members can be kept at Nainital liaison office, after passing a special resolution, because more than 1/10th of the total members entered in the register of members reside there
 - (d) Register of members cannot be kept at Nainital liaison office, even after passing a special resolution, because less than 1/5th of the total members entered in the register of members reside there
- 2.2 With reference to deposit accepted by DBSL and its duration, you are required to identify which of the following statements is correct:
- (a) There is no requirement relating to the duration of deposit, DBSL can accept a deposit for any duration.
 - (b) Since DBSL is an unlisted company, provision relating to the duration of the deposit is not applicable.
 - (c) There is a provision of a minimum duration of six months, but no upper cap to length is provided. Hence deposit accepted by DBSL is in compliance to provisions of Law.
 - (d) Acceptance of deposits by DBSL is in violation of provision of law, because the maximum period of acceptance of deposit cannot exceed thirty-six months.
- 2.3 With reference to application to the registrar for registration of charge by DBSL, which of the following statements is correct?
- (a) The charge cannot be registered now, even if the Registrar permits the same.
 - (b) The charge can be registered, if registrar permits with payment of ad-valorem fee.
 - (c) The charge can be registered, if registrar permits but with payment of an additional fee.
 - (d) The charge can be registered, with payment of a standard fee.

- 2.4 With reference to the loan advanced by Mr. M. Mishra to SCCL, state whether the same is to be classified as a deposit or not?
- (a) Deposit, because any sum advanced by the director whether loan or otherwise is always classified as a deposit.
 - (b) Deposit, because the tenor of the loan is for a period of more than six months.
 - (c) Not a deposit, because such amount is recorded as loan in books of account of SCCL.
 - (d) Not a deposit, because the written declaration is provided by Mr. M. Mishra, who was a director when the loan was advanced that the loan is not being given out of funds acquired by him by borrowing or accepting loans or deposits from others.
- 2.5 Considering the provision relating to length of Notice for AGM, pick out the right option:
- (a) Notice served by DBSL is not valid, because notice given within a shorter duration has to be consented to by all the members entitled to vote at AGM.
 - (b) Notice served by DBSL is not valid, because notice given within a shorter duration has to be consented to by at-least 95% of members entitled to vote thereat.
 - (c) Notice served by DBSL is valid because the shorter length has been consented to by 75% of members entitled to vote thereat.
 - (d) Notice served by DBSL is not valid, because notice given within a shorter length duration needs has to by at-least 50% of the members entitled to vote at AGM that too in writing.
3. Which of the following statement is contrary to the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013?
- (a) A private company can make a private placement of its securities.
 - (b) The company has to pass a special resolution for private placement.
 - (c) Minimum offer per person should have Market Value of ₹ 20,000.
 - (d) A public company can make a private placement of its securities.
4. Vishal lends a horse to Preet. The horse is vicious, which is known to Vishal but he does not disclose the fact to Preet. The horse runs away. Preet is thrown and injured. As per the provisions of the Contract Act, 1872, which is the correct statement:
- (a) Preet is responsible for his injury.
 - (b) Though the horse belonged to Vishal but he cannot be held responsible
 - (c) Vishal is responsible to Preet for damage sustained

- (d) No one can be held responsible for the damage sustained as no one can take guarantee for the horse
- 5. As per the Indian Contract Act, 1872, any guarantee which has been obtained by the means of misrepresentation made by the creditor concerning a material part of the transaction, is:
 - (a) Valid
 - (b) Invalid
 - (c) outside the ambit of the Indian Contract Act, 1872
 - (d) not revocable if the damage sustained is less than 10% of the amount for which the guarantee is given

DIVISION B - DETAILED QUESTIONS

COMPANY LAW

The Companies Act, 2013

1. The Board of Directors of Amit Ltd. requested its Statutory Auditor to accept the assignment of designing and implementation of suitable financial information system to strengthen the internal control mechanism of the Company. How will you approach to this proposal, as an Statutory Auditor of Amit Ltd., taking into account the consequences, if any, of accepting this proposal?
2. The Income Tax Authorities in the current financial year 2019-20 observed, during the assessment proceedings, a need to re-open the accounts of Curie Ltd. for the financial year 2008-09 and, therefore, filed an application before the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) to issue the order to Curie Ltd. for re-opening of its accounts and recasting the financial statements for the financial year 2008-09. Examine the validity of the application filed by the Income Tax Authorities to NCLT.
3. (i) Mr. Bindra is holding 950 equity shares of Bio safe Herbals, a section 8 company. Bio safe Herbals is planning to declare dividend in the Annual General Meeting for the Financial Year ended 31-03-2020. Examine whether the act of the company is in accordance with the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013.
(ii) Kiara, holder of 5000 equity shares of ₹ 100 each of Kanpur Leather Shoes Limited did not pay final call of ₹ 10 per share. Kanpur Leather Shoes Limited declared dividend @ 10%. Examine with reference to relevant provisions of the Companies Act, 2013, the amount of dividend Kiara should receive.
4. A General Meeting was scheduled to be held on 15th April, 2019 at 3.00 P.M. As per the notice the members who are unable to attend a meeting in person can appoint a proxy and the proxy forms duly filled should be sent to the company so as to reach at least 48 hours before the meeting. Mr. X, a member of the company appoints Mr. Y as his proxy and the proxy form dated 10-04-2019 was deposited by Mr. Y with the company at its

registered Office on 11-04-2019. Similarly, another member Mr. W also gives two separate proxies to two individuals named Mr. M and Mr. N. In the case of Mr. M, the proxy dated 12-04-2019 was deposited with the company on the same day and the proxy form in favour of Mr. N was deposited on 14-04-2019. All the proxies viz., Y, M and N were present before the meeting.

According to the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013, who would be the persons allowed to represent as proxies for members X and W respectively?

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

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

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

6. Pristine Limited, a listed public company, conducted its Annual General Meeting on 31st August, 2020. However, 10 days have passed since 31st August, 2020, but it has still not filed report on Annual General Meeting. The Accountant of the company has approached you to advise them whether Pristine Limited is required to file report on Annual General Meeting?
7. Keya Limited decides to issue 1,00,000 securities of the company. The company decides to publish an advertisement of the prospectus. Enumerate to the company about necessary contents of its memorandum to be specified therein.
8. Nadeem incorporated a "One Person Company" making his sister Nisha as the nominee. Nisha is leaving India permanently due to her marriage abroad. Due to this fact, she is withdrawing her consent of nomination in the said One Person Company. Taking into considerations the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013 answer the questions given below.
- (A) If Nisha is leaving India permanently, is it mandatory for her to withdraw her nomination in the said One Person Company?
- (B) If Nisha maintained the status of Resident of India after her marriage, then can she continue her nomination in the said One Person Company?

OTHER LAWS

The Indian Contract Act, 1872

9. Akash is a famous manufacturer of leather goods. He appoints Prashant as his agent. Prashant is entrusted with the work of recovering money from various traders to whom Akash sells leather goods. Prashant is paid a monthly remuneration of ₹ 15,000. Prashant during a particular month recovers ₹ 40,000 from traders on account of Akash. Prashant gives back ₹ 25,000 to Akash, after deducting his salary.

Examine with reference to relevant provisions of the Indian Contract Act, 1872, whether act of Prashant is valid.

The Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881

10. (i) Calculate the date of maturity of bill of exchange drawn on 1.6.2019, payable 120 days after considering the relevant provisions of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881.
- (ii) Chandra issues a cheque for ₹ 50,000/- in favour of Daye. Chandra has sufficient amount in his account with the Bank. The cheque was not presented within reasonable time to the Bank for payment and the Bank, in the meantime, became bankrupt. Decide under the provisions of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881, whether Daye can recover the money from Chandra?

The General Clauses Act, 1897

11. (i) Mr. Apar and Mr. New, both aspiring Chartered Accountants have met in a conference for CA students. Both are having an argument about the meaning of Financial Year. They have approached you as a senior in the profession to guide them about the meaning of Financial Year as per the provisions of the General Clauses Act, 1872. Also, brief them about the difference between a calendar year and financial year.
- (ii) What is the meaning of service by post as per provisions of the General Clauses Act, 1897?

Interpretation of Statutes

12. At the time of interpreting a statutes what will be the effect of 'Usage' or 'customs and Practices'?

SUGGESTED ANSWERS

DIVISION A - ANSWER TO CASE SCENARIO / MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS

- 1.1 (d)
- 1.2 (a)
- 1.3 (c)
- 1.4 (a)
- 2.1 (c)
- 2.2 (d)
- 2.3 (b)
- 2.4 (d)
- 2.5 (b)
- 3. (c)
- 4. (c)
- 5. (b)

DIVISION B - ANSWER TO DETAILED QUESTIONS

1. According to section 144 of the Companies Act, 2013, an auditor appointed under this Act shall provide to the company only such other services as are approved by the Board of Directors or the audit committee, as the case may be. But such services shall not include designing and implementation of any financial information system.

In the said instance, the Board of directors of Amit Ltd. requested its Statutory Auditor to accept the assignment of designing and implementation of suitable financial information system to strengthen the internal control mechanism of the company. As per the above provision said service is strictly prohibited.

In case the Statutory Auditor accepts the assignment, he will attract the penal provisions as specified in Section 147 of the Companies Act, 2013.

In the light of the above provisions, we shall advise the Statutory Auditor not to take up the above stated assignment.

2. As per section 130 of the Companies Act, 2013, a company shall not re-open its books of account and not recast its financial statements, unless an application in this regard is made by the Central Government, the Income-tax authorities, the Securities and Exchange Board, any other statutory body or authority or any person concerned and an order is made by a court of competent jurisdiction or the Tribunal to the effect that—
- (i) the relevant earlier accounts were prepared in a fraudulent manner; or

- (ii) the affairs of the company were mismanaged during the relevant period, casting a doubt on the reliability of financial statements:

However, no order shall be made in respect of re-opening of books of account relating to a period earlier than eight financial years immediately preceding the current financial year.

In the given instance, an application was filed for re-opening and re-casting of the financial statements of Qurie Ltd. for the financial year 2008-2009 which is beyond 8 financial years immediately preceding the current financial year.

Though application filed by the Income Tax Authorities to NCLT is valid, its recommendation for reopening and recasting of financial statements for the period earlier than eight financial years immediately preceding the current financial year i.e. 2019-2020, is invalid.

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

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

- (ii) As per the proviso to section 127 of the Companies Act, 2013, no offence will be deemed to have been committed by a director for adjusting the calls in arrears remaining unpaid or any other sum due from a member against the dividend declared by the company.

Thus, as per the given facts, Kanpur Leather Shoes Limited can adjust the unpaid call money of ₹ 50,000 against the declared dividend of 10%, i.e. $5,00,000 \times 10/100 = 50,000$. Hence, call money of ₹ 50,000 not paid by Kiara can be adjusted fully from the entitled dividend amount of ₹ 50,000 payable to her.

4. A Proxy is an instrument in writing executed by a shareholder authorizing another person to attend a meeting and to vote thereat on his behalf and in his absence. As per the provisions of Section 105 of the Companies Act, 2013, every shareholder who is entitled to attend and vote has a statutory right to appoint another person as his proxy. It is not necessary that the proxy be a member of the company. Further, any provision in the articles of association of the company requiring instrument of proxy to be lodged with the company more than 48 hours before a meeting shall have effect as if 48 hours had been specified therein. The members have a right to revoke the proxy's authority by voting himself before the proxy has voted but once the proxy has voted the member cannot retract his authority.

Where two proxy instruments by the same shareholder are lodged of in such a manner that one is lodged before and the other after the expiry of the date fixed for lodging proxies, the former will be counted.

Thus, in case of member X, the proxy Y will be permitted to vote on his behalf as form for appointing proxy was submitted within the permitted time.

However, in the case of Member W, the proxy M (and not Proxy N) will be permitted to vote as the proxy authorizing N to vote was deposited in less than 48 hours before the meeting.

5. According to Section 63 of the Companies Act, 2013, a company may issue fully paid-up bonus shares to its members, in any manner whatsoever, out of -
- (i) its free reserves;
 - (ii) the securities premium account; or
 - (iii) the capital redemption reserve account.

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

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

- (i) it is authorised by its Articles;
- (ii) it has, on the recommendation of the Board, been authorised in the general meeting of the company;
- (iii) it has not defaulted in payment of interest or principal in respect of fixed deposits or debt securities issued by it;
- (iv) it has not defaulted in respect of payment of statutory dues of the employees, such as, contribution to provident fund, gratuity and bonus;
- (v) the partly paid-up shares, if any, outstanding on the date of allotment, are made fully paid-up;
- (vi) it complies with such conditions as are prescribed by Rule 14 of the Companies (Share Capital and debentures) Rules, 2014 which states that the company which has once announced the decision of its Board recommending a bonus issue, shall not subsequently withdraw the same.

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

For the issue of bonus shares Shiva Cement Limited will require reserves of ₹50,00,000 (*i.e.* half of ₹1,00,00,000 being the paid-up share capital), which is readily available with the company. Hence, after following the above conditions relating to the issue of bonus shares, the company may proceed for a bonus issue of 1 share for every 2 shares held by the existing shareholders.

6. According to Section 121, every listed public company shall prepare a report on each annual general meeting including the confirmation to the effect that the meeting was convened held and conducted as per the provisions of the Act and the rules made

thereunder. A copy of the report is to be filed with the Registrar in Form No. MGT. 15 within thirty days of the conclusion of AGM along with the prescribed fee. If the company does not file such report on Annual General Meeting within 30 days of the conclusion of the Annual General Meeting then the company and defaulting officers are liable for prescribed penalties.

Since, Pristine Ltd. is a listed company, hence it has to file a copy of 1annual Report with the Registrar within 30 days from 31st August, 2020.

7. According to Section 30, where an advertisement of any prospectus of a company is published in any manner, it shall be necessary to specify therein the contents of its memorandum as regards the following:
 - (i) the objects,
 - (ii) the liability of members and the amount of share capital of the company,
 - (iii) the names of the signatories to the memorandum,
 - (iv) the number of shares subscribed for by the signatories, and
 - (v) the capital structure of the company.
8. As per Rule 3 & 4 of the *Companies (Incorporation) Rules, 2014* following the answers:
 - (A) Yes, it is mandatory for Nisha to withdraw her nomination in the said OPC as she is leaving India permanently as only a natural person who is an Indian citizen and resident in India shall be a nominee in OPC.
 - (B) Yes, Nisha can continue her nomination in the said OPC, if she maintained the status of Resident of India after her marriage by staying in India for a period of not less than 182 days during the immediately preceding financial year.
9. The given problem is based on the provision related to 'agency coupled with interest'. According to Section 202 of the Indian Contract Act, 1872 an agency becomes irrevocable where the agent has himself an interest in the property which forms the subject-matter of the agency, and such an agency cannot, in the absence of an express provision in the contract, be terminated to the prejudice of such interest.

In the given instance, Akash appointed Prashant as his agent to recover money from various traders to whom Akash sold his leather goods, on a monthly remuneration of ₹ 15,000. Prashant during a month recovers ₹ 40,000 from traders on account of Akash. Prashant after deducting his salary give the rest amount to Akash. In the said case, interest was created in favour of Prashant and the said agency is not revocable, therefore, the act of Prashant is valid.
10. (i) Date of maturity of the bill of exchange: In this case the day of presentment for sight is to be excluded i.e. 1st June, 2019. The period of 120 days ends on 29th September, 2019 (June 29 days + July 31 days + August 31 Days + September 29 days = 120 days). Three days of grace are to be added. It falls due on 2nd October, 2019, which

happens to be a public holiday. As such it will fall due on 1st October, 2019 i.e., the next preceding Business Day.

- (ii) Section 84(1) of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881 provides that cheque should be presented to Bank within reasonable time. If cheque is not presented within reasonable time, meanwhile the drawer suffers actual damage, the drawer is discharged to the extent of such actual damage. This would be so if the cheque would have been passed if it was presented within reasonable time. As per section 84(2), in determining what is a reasonable time, regard shall be had to (a) the nature of the instrument (b) the usage of trade and of bankers, and (c) facts of the particular case. The drawer will get discharge, but the holder of the cheque will be treated as creditor of the bank, in place of drawer. He will be entitled to recover the amount from Bank [section 84(3)].

In the above case drawer i.e. Chandra has suffered damage as cheque was not presented by Daye within reasonable time. Hence, Chandra will be discharged but Daye will be the creditor of bank for the amount of cheque and can recover the amount from the bank.

11. (i) **Financial Year:** According to section 3(21) of the General Clauses Act, 1897, financial year shall mean the year commencing on the first day of April.

The term Year has been defined under Section 3(66) as a year reckoned according to the British calendar. Thus, as per General Clauses Act, Year means calendar year which starts from January to December.

Difference between Financial Year and Calendar Year: Financial year starts from first day of April but Calendar Year starts from first day of January.

- (ii) **Meaning of Service by post:** According to section 27 of the General Clauses Act, 1897, where any legislation or regulation requires any document to be served by post, then unless a different intention appears, the service shall be deemed to be effected by:

- (i) properly addressing
- (ii) pre-paying, and
- (iii) posting by registered post.

A letter containing the document to have been effected at the time at which the letter would be delivered in the ordinary course of post.

12. **Effect of usage:** Usage or practice developed under the statute is indicative of the meaning recognized to its words by contemporary opinion. A uniform notorious practice continued under an old statute and inaction of the Legislature to amend the same are important factors to show that the practice so followed was based on correct understanding of the law. When the usage or practice receives judicial or legislative approval it gains additional weight.

In this connection, we have to bear in mind two Latin maxims:

- (i) '*Optima Legum interpret est consuetude*' (the custom is the best interpreter of the law); and
- (ii) '*Contemporanea exposito est optima et fortissinia in lege*' (the best way to interpret a document is to read it as it would have been read when made).

Therefore, the best interpretation/construction of a statute or any other document is that which has been made by the contemporary authority. Simply stated, old statutes and documents should be interpreted as they would have been at the time when they were enacted/written.

Contemporary official statements throwing light on the construction of a statute and statutory instruments made under it have been used as *contemporanea exposition* to interpret not only ancient but even recent statutes in India.