*C. R. Rao*

## C. R. Rao (1920 - )

Calyampudi Radhakrishna Rao was born to C.D. Naidu and A. Laxmikantamma on 10 September 1920 in Huvvina Hadagalli in present day Karnataka. He was the eighth in a family of 10 children. After his father's retirement, the family settled down in Vishakapatnam in Andhra Pradesh. From his earliest years, Rao had an interest in mathematics. After completing high school he joined the Mrs. A.V.N. College at Vishakapatnam for the Intermediate course. He received his M.A. in Mathematics with first rank in 1940. Rao decided to pursue a research career in mathematics, but was denied a scholarship on the grounds of late submission of the application.

He then went to Kolkata for an interview for a job. He did not get the job, but by chance he visited the Indian Statistical Institute, then located in a couple of rooms in the Physics Department of the Presidency College, Kolkata. He applied for a one-year training course at the Institute and was admitted to the Training Section of the Institute from 1 January 1941. In July 1941 he joined the M.A Statistics program of the Calcutta University. By the time he passed the M.A. exam in 1943, winning the gold medal of the University, he had already published some research papers! In 1943 he joined ISI as a technical apprentice, doing research, teaching in the Training Section of the Institute and at Calcutta University and assisting Professor Mahalanobis in editing *Sankhya* the Indian Journal of Statistics.

In 1946 he was deputed to the Cambridge University on a project. While working full time on this, he also worked in the genetic laboratory of R.A. Fisher, the father of modern statistics and completed his Ph.D. under Fisher. By this time Rao had already completed some of the work which carries his name: Cramer-Rao inequality, Rao-Blackwell theorem, Rao's score test and Rao's orthogonal arrays. He returned to ISI in 1948 and in 1949 was made a Professor at the very young age of 29. He headed and developed the Research and Training Section of the ISI, and went on to become Director of the ISI. He became the associate editor of the *Sankhya* in 1964 and became the editor in 1972. He left ISI in 1978 and joined the University of Pittsburgh. In 1988 he moved to the Pennsylvannia State University holding the Eberly Family Chair in Statistics and the Directorship of the Centre for Multivariate Analysis till 2001.

Dr. Rao is a Fellow of the Royal Society of London, and a Member of the National Academy of Sciences, U.S.A. He was awarded the Padma Vibhushan in 2001. The C.R. Rao Award for Statistics was instituted in his honor, to be given once in two years. In 2002 he was awarded the National Medal of Science of the U.S.A. The Advanced Institute of Mathematics, Statistics and Computer Science in the Osmania University Campus has been named after him.