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---------- STAMPS OF INDIA COLLECTORS COMPANION ----------

The First, Free & Only weekly on Philately & Postal Services of India

AWARDS: Silver Medal with 'Felicitations of the Jury' at BELGICA 2001

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Issue # 61 - April 18, 2002. Published Every Thursday

Edited by Madhukar and Savita Jhingan

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IMPORTANT NOTICE

Our main web site, the 'Stamps of India' is, at present, available ONLY at its alternate location – http://www.geocities.com/mjhingan and all our other web sites are off air for the time being. This is a temporary arrangement and we therefore have not changed the links either here or at site. This necessitates that you substitute stampsofindia.com with geocities.com/mjhingan in the links for them to work.

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JHINGANS JOTTINGS

Hi

India is a large country with over 1000 million people spread over in 3.29 million square kilometers administered in 28 States, 6 Union Territories and 1 National Capital Territory. We always feel that we are able to gather only a small portion of philatelic and postal news of the country and seek your help to widen the coverage.

We need reports on all philatelic activity, be it a meeting of a philatelic club, talk given at the local school, competitive and non-competitive exhibitions. However the timely coverage of special and commemorative postmarks undoubtedly deserves the top priority.

The powers to approve special postmarks were decentralized at postal circle level. A certain number of copies were also required to be sent to the National Philatelic Museum. This is not happening for quite some time now. Neither is the availability of special postmarks publicized.

It was not always like this. India Post used to include information on special postmarks in their monthly ‘Stamp News’ and quarterly ‘Indian Philatelist’ publication. Furthermore a cumulative fully illustrated list used to be published in the Souvenir publication of national philatelic exhibitions. India Post discontinued their monthly publication and the quarterly is replaced with a colorful newsletter on art paper that contains no news of special postmarks available. The Souvenir publication of the last national organized by India Post in 1993, for the first time, did not carry the list of special postmarks since the earlier national in 1986.

Also disappearing is the practice of providing first day postmark at locations - such as the place of birth associated with the person or the institution that is being honored with the stamp.

Our guesstimate is that in a year over 250 special postmarks are provided in the country. This is an appeal to all stamp collectors and postal officials to help us record the Special Postmarks of India.

Until next week, please enjoy the rest of the newsletter.

- M&SJ

Our thanks to the Contributors and sources to this issue: Dr. S K Sondhi from Ludhiana, Naresh K Pahwa from Jallandhar, Rakesh Walia from Chandigarh, Shyam P Nhuchhe Pradhan from Kathnmandu, Nepal and The Telegraph.
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Mention this newsletter when contacting other philatelists
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NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

NEW STAMPS RELEASED – 150 Years of Railways in India
Pramod Mahajan, Minister for Communications & IT and Parliamentary Affairs released a stamp to commemorate 150 years of Railways in India at Mumbai on April 16, 2002. The grand function at Mumbai included the a commemorative 'steam run' train from 'Boribunder' (now Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus) to 'Tannah' (Thane) to recreate the historic journey, of the first train service in the country, 150 years ago. The train, on the pattern of the original first run, with almost the same level of coaches, passengers and invitees was flagged off by Maharashtra Governor Dr P C Alexander and Railways minister Nitish Kumar.

Large advertisements were carried in the national dailies to publicize this occasion however the pictures of this well designed stamp and miniature sheet were nowhere to be seen in the ads.

The stamp is in the denomination of Rs. 15 that is the current overseas airmail letter rate. Sankha Samanta designed the stamp, the First Day Cover and the pictorial first day postmark. Calcutta Security Printers Limited of Kanpur printed the stamps by photo-offset in six colors on imported matt chromo paper in the quantity of 3 million. The issued

sheets contain 27 stamps. A Miniature Sheet containing the stamp and extending its design was also released. The Miniature sheet also priced at Rs. 15 was printed in the quantity of 100,000 sheets only. An informative brochure containing write-up and technical data, priced at Rs. 2, was also brought out.

The stamps, First Day Covers along with the information sheets are available on sale at nearly 1000 selected Post Offices, including all Philatelic Bureaus and Counters, all over India.
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INDIA JAPAN DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS

India Post will issue on April 26, 2002 a se-tenant pair of stamps in the denomination of Rs. 15 each to commemorate the 50 Years of India Japan Diplomatic Relations. A miniature sheet priced at Rs. 30 and containing the se-tenant pair shall also be issued on the occasion.
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LUPHILA

Ludhiana Division of India Post and Ludhiana Philatelic Club (LPC) needs to be congratulated for successfully organizing LUPHILA 2002 the second district level stamp exhibition that was a veritable treat for philatelists and general public of the region. It was held on April 13 and 14, 2002 at the Philatelic Museum, Head Post Office, Ludhiana.

Rakesh Pandey, Minister for Printing and Stationery, Government of Punjab and Anurag Aggarwal, Deputy Commissioner, Ludhiana inaugurated the show in the presence of a large gathering of school children and philatelists on the festival of Baisakhi. The students from different schools presented cultural show consisting of famous folk songs and dances of Punjab on this occasion.

About 150 children from six public schools participated in an on-the-spot painting competition with the festival of Baisakhi as its theme. In the Senior Group Poonam of Spring Dale Public School received the First Prize, Varinderjit Kaur of Tagore Public School the Second And Simranjit Singh of BCM Arya Public School the Third Prize. In the Junior Group Shivali of Tagore Public School received the First, Navreet of Spring Dale Public School the Second and Pawan of Defence Public School the Third Prize.

Another highlight of the first day was the holding of a written Quiz competition that was first of its kind in India on stamp collecting. There were 70 participants and fifteen questions pertaining to Post-independence India were given to them for answering in 30 minutes. It was not an easy competition. One participant scored fifteen out of fifteen marks with three scoring fourteen. Jagatarn Singh of Spring Dale Public School won the First and Candy Sikand of BCM Public School the Second Prize. Kajol of Tagore Public School, Deepika of BCM Arya Public School, and Anirudh Puri of Spring Dale Public School all won the Third Prize.

On April 14, 2002, About 25 students attended the philatelic workshop conducted by Prof. T R Bhatia, Senior Vice President, LPC. A philatelic kit was distributed to each participant.

There were about 15 entries arranged in 30 frames and majority of these were from youth. In addition, the national award winning exhibit of Dr. Sondhi on ‘Blood the Gift of Life’ was displayed in invitee class.

Another attraction for the visitors was the chocolate stamps from Switzerland displayed by R P Oswal. The jury consisted of Madhukar Jhingan from Delhi and Naresh Pahwa from Jallandhar and decided to award the prizes to participants of Youth Class only and others were given mementos. M L Summan, Senior Superintendent of Post Offices, Ludhiana City and M K Khan, Senior Superintendent of Post Offices, Railway Mail Service, Ludhiana distributed the prizes as follows: First Prize - Sumi Jain, Second Prize - Nishu Mittal, and Third Prize - Sumit Jain. In addition a special 'Award of Honor' was presented to R P Oswal

More than 10 stamps and coins dealers from all over India participated in the exhibition by taking tables and did brisk business.

A colorful special cover with a pictorial special postmark on each day was released. These were designed by Naresh K Pahwa and depict Bhangra dance on the special cover and Bhangra dancer on the postmark for day one and harvesting of wheat crop on the second day. The covers are priced Rs. 10 each and are available from the Philatelic Bureau, Head Post Office, Ludhiana

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LPC QUIZZES FOR STAMP COLLECTORS

The Deputy Commissioner of Ludhiana Anurag Aggarwal released a book "LPC Quizzes for Stamp Collectors" written by Dr. S K Sondhi and Yashpal Bangia on April 13, 2002 during LUPHILA 2002.

The book has questions and answers on various aspects of philately and is priced at Rs. 50 or US$ 5 or GB£ 3. It is available from Ludhiana Philatelic Club, 20-A, Sarabha Nagar, Ludhiana 141001. The book shall be supplied, as a special offer to our readers, free of postal charges by airmail anywhere in the world.

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SWASTIK TRADERS PRICE LIST

Swastik Traders of Bikaner have recently published their Price List 2002. The six page illustrated list is available free and covers a range of philatelic and numismatic material and accessories. Contact marubkn@hotmail.com for more information.

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FESTIVAL OF GARDENS

A Special Cover and Special postmark was issued to mark the Festival of Gardens at Chandigarh on February 22, 2002. This festival was earlier known as the Rose Festival. The covers are available from Rakesh Walia citco17@satyam.net.in or stampswalia@indiatimes.com at Rs. 10 plus postal charges.

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NEPAL ISSUE HONORS SCOUTS

Minister of State for Information and Communication Shree Hari Narayan Chaudhary affixed the first day postmark on the postage stamp issued by the Postal Services Department to commemorate the Golden Jubilee of Nepal Scouts on 09 April 2002. The stamp in the denomination of Rs. 2 and depicts the scout activities as well as its logo.

The stamp is designed by M N Rana and printed by Austrian Government Printing Office at Vienna in two colors by Offset Lithography on High quality stamp paper in the quantity of 1 million in sheets of 50.

This stamp was scheduled for issue in March 2002 in the denomination of Rs. 5 and Our correspondent in Nepal, Shyam P Nhuchhe Pradhan feels that

it should have been issued more appropriately on June 18, 2002, the exact date when the late King Tribhuvan Bir Bikram Shah Dev established the association by hoisting the flag of Nepal Scouts and Guides fifty years ago.

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LORD MAHAVIR ON NEPALESE COIN

A silver commemorative coin of Rs. 250 denomination was issued on April 12, 2002 to commemorate the 2600 anniversary of Bhagawan Mahavir with an image of the lord inscribed on it.

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BANGLADESH EGROUP REDISCOVERED

Dak Tiket Club was started as a Club on Yahoo on May 22, 2001. Following the recent merger of clubs and groups at yahoo it was rediscovered and got active from April 15, 2002. Earlier to this it had only one message and one member other than the moderator – Iqbal from Bangladesh.

To subscribe please click on daktiketclub-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

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PENSION RACKET AT POST OFFICE

A racket of misappropriating pension benefits, by suppressing the death certificates of government employees who had retired, has come to light at the Jhargram head post office.

The scandal came to the surface when Dhananjay Mahato of Radhanagar received a notice from the railways demanding that he refund Rs 62,000 his father, Srihari Mahato, purportedly overdrew between 1999 and 2002. This stunned Mahato as his father, a former employee of South Eastern Railway, had died in March 1999.

Srihari used to collect his pension through the post office and his pension papers were kept with a postal agent. However, according to a complaint lodged with S N Singh Senior Superintendent of Post Offices, Midnapore the death certificate of his father, which was submitted to the post office, is missing.

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VIEWS & OPINIONS

PHILATELY IN TRANSITION IN INDIA, Part 4

In this issue we take you on a ‘journey through judgments’ and our first stop is an excerpt from 'A View of INDIA–89' by Gerald Sattin published in ‘India Post’, The Journal of the India Study Circle for Philately, Vol. 23 # 3, whole # 101, July - September 1989 issue.

“What our friends in India have to realize is that philatelic leaders have a responsibility to aspiring collectors. Their role is not the wielding of power, privilege and patronage, but to help and guide collectors as to what is good or bad, quality or tat, and inspire them, from beginners with only a desire to collect, to more advanced collectors with philatelic knowledge and experience. This was most forcefully impressed upon me when one collector asked me to view his display. I found he had a quite obvious forgery, and told him so, only to be assured that one of the ‘powers that be’ had insisted that it was genuine. That person was an Indian juror!”

No prizes for guessing the identity of ‘powers that be’. India-89 was a world philatelic exhibition organized by India Post. Read more at the web site

http://www.geocities.com/mjhingan/Content/Features/satting.htm

A K Bayanwala commenting on the state of affairs at INDEPEX-ASIANA 2000, again organized by India Post, in the column 'From The Desk Of President' published in GPA NEWS, Vol. 4 # 6, Whole # 42, January 2001, Monthly publication of Gujarat Philatelists' Association:

"In my opinion, an exhibitor should be allowed to put his defence, when he is penalized for exhibiting his materials. The Constitution of India does not give power to any judge to punish a person, without giving him an opportunity to defend him."

Read more at the site
http://www.geocities.com/mjhingan/Content/Features/bayanwalaak.htm

Late V V Mehar in his letter of February 27, 2001 to PCI President wrote about Indian Juries, M G Pittie and Dilip Shah, at HONG KONG 2001

"This cavalier attitude of some of the Indian Jury is also responsible for the fast decline of Indian Philately. Favoritism & Nepotisms in Indian philatelic competitions is now universally discussed at all International meets."

The complete text of his letter is available at
http://www.geocities.com/mjhingan/Content/Features/meherv.htm

Umesh Kakkeri in his letter to PCI President recounts his experience at INPEX-EMPIREPEX 2001

"When I personally asked one of the juries one Mr. M G Pittee about reconsidering about my result. He flatly replied that nothing can be done as the results are already announced, but I also wish to bring to your kind notice that Mr. M G Pittee changed one persons result from 'out of the exhibit' category to Large Silver medal very much from the stage at the time of prize distribution ceremony. I would like to request PCI to elaborate me that under what capacity Mr. Pittee can do this after the results are already announced and displayed them on the notice boards at every nook & corner of exhibition hall."

The complete text of his letter is available at
http://www.geocities.com/mjhingan/Content/Features/kakkeriu.htm

The exhibit referred to in his letter belongs to Pragya Kothari Jain son of Pradip Jain of Patna. Pradip Jain accompanied by Dr. Ranjit Singh Gandhi had hand carried this exhibit and arrived on the first day of the exhibition. By that time it was already marked as absent. That all exhibits at INPEX-EMPIREPEX 2002 were not mounted and the youth class was the worst sufferers is now well known. This does not do much for the promotion of youth philately in India through stamp exhibitions. This exhibit was shown as 'absent' in the award list published by the Organizing Committee but while the award ceremony was in progress, Dr. Gandhi walked over to M G Pittie sitting on the dais and reportedly requested him to let this exhibit have the medal it was awarded last time – Large Silver. Don't know why but Pittie readily agreed and the award was announced. It is interesting to note that Dr. Gandhi is responsible for preparing this exhibit and hence his concern?

Even more interesting is the correspondence between Dhirubhai Mehta and Vispi Dastur on Kakkeri's complaint. Complete text is available at
http://www.geocities.com/mjhingan/Content/Features/mehtad.htm
http://www.geocities.com/mjhingan/Content/Features/dasturv.htm

Rajesh Varma, another collector who has been disheartened by the decision of the Jury members of INPEX-EMPIREPEX 2001 has complained to the PCI President

"Mine is not the only case at this or earlier exhibitions. These persons have demonstrated time and again, thru their actions, that they have neither any knowledge of philately nor that of managing a public organization or exhibitions. And have no inclination to change. All this has been possible due to uneven distribution of institutional seats on the PCI Governing Council where one state will have 3 seats and 4 states together have 1 seat, and several states have no seat at all. Instead of a federation of philatelic societies as was the original idea; the PCI has become a society of individuals. A few persons, for whom it appears as a source of livelihood, control it. PCI, since its birth in 1976, has never had any role to play in promotion of philately in India, which has clearly declined. In a country of 1 billion people sending 20 exhibits abroad in a year is neither an achievement nor promotion of philately although it does provide enough opportunities for a handful of persons to gain monetarily and hold authority over aspiring collectors. Any honest person would be ashamed to be associated with such persons."

The complete text of his letter is available at
http://www.geocities.com/mjhingan/Content/Features/varmar.htm

As in the case of dissatisfied customers there are hundreds who do not lodge their complaints. This is the time for philatelists in India to come together for safeguarding the future of philately. The need of the hour is to set examples for the younger philatelists to emulate. And to lay down of just, transparent and suitable regulations for conducting meetings, elections, exhibitions, exhibiting, and judging.

We solicit your comments and suggestions to carry forth the task of moving Indian philately through its transitional phase to its rightful place in the philatelic world.

READERS FORUM
<Dear Reader, Your feedback is important to us as it helps evolve the newsletter. We strive hard to bring you comprehensive coverage of the latest on Indian philately and improve with every issue. Please do let us have your thoughts and suggestions. We also would like to learn how our newsletter impacts your collecting and the value you feel it provides to you. Do send in your comments, views, reports, articles and other features for publication>

MANSOOR BOLAR from Mangalore
"I am really happy to see that my letter published in issue No.57 has initiated others to come out with their grievances regarding tampering of foreign mails.

It's really sad to hear from beginners like Renu, that they are discouraged to exchange with foreigners due to the loss in transit of

philatelic materials and also from others who had similar experience. Yes, whenever it is enquired about the tampering of mails at local Post Office the same reason, 'that it is not done here but somewhere else' is given.

I would like to say that if the Postal Authorities has any doubts with regard to the material enclosed in the cover, it can be forwarded to the concerned Postal Officer like the Senior Post Master, Post Master or Postman etc. at the place of delivery and can be opened in front of the receiver of the letter and the doubts cleared, which when the receiver is a stamp collector he receives his stamps or covers without being torn or tampered.

I would be happy to hear from the Postal Department regarding this issue.”

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FEATURES & RESOURCES

ALSO IN THE NEWS

STAMP ISSUED 4,545 YEARS TOO LATE

Red-faced Sri Lankan postal authorities ordered an inquiry on Thursday after a printing error left an important Buddhist commemorative stamp 4,545 years out of date, officials said. The stamp, issued on September xx, 2001 in honor of one of the country's premier Buddhist societies, was dated 2544 BC, for "before Christ," instead of BE, for "Buddhist era," which would have signified the current year of the Buddhist calendar.

An official of the Philatelic Bureau told Reuters an inquiry had been launched, but said it was too late to recall the stamps from hundreds of post offices across the country. "It was a terribly embarrassing mistake. The whole point of using a Buddhist era date is lost," the official said.

Buddhists, about 70 percent of Sri Lanka's population, prefer to use a calendar dating from death of the Buddha, about 500 years before the birth of Christ, particularly in matters of religious significance.

Click here to view the image of this error
http://www.geocities.com/mjhingan/Content/News/srilanka.htm

NEWSSCAN

<We invite you to contribute clippings on philatelic and postal matters, from other print and electronic publications, for inclusion here>

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RESEARCH NOTES

INDIA POST IN THE YEAR 1873, PART 9

OFFICIAL CORRESPONDENC RULES

The Governor General in Council is pleased to prescribe the following rules for the treatment of official correspondence which may be posted on or after the 1st April 1873.

The principal change is the withdrawal of the privilege under which certain public offices have been allowed to send and receive official

correspondence through the post without payment of postage. The rates of postage chargeable on letters and parcels being at the same time reduced, and the postage charges regulated by a scale which for all weights over half a tola rises by limits of 10 tolas.

Official Correspondenc Rules

Note – The following rule may facilitate this calculation of postage on letters exceeding 10 tolas: - Find the weight in tolas, take the next lower multiple of 10 tolas and divide it by 2; the result will be the number of annas chargeable. Thus, for a cover weighing (say) 38 or 40 tolas, the next lower multiple of 10 will be 30, which, divided by 2 gives 15, being the number of annas chargeable.

Prepayment by means of service labels.

2. Official covers from Government offices should be prepaid by means of service postage stamps purchased at the Government Treasury or other local stamp depot. These stamps, when used in payment of postage, must be supported by the superscription on the cover "On Her Majesty's Service," under the full signature and official designation of the Government Officer who sends the cover, or of the head clerk or superintendent of his office, or of other responsible officer, to whom the duty of dispatching is confided. The Superscription and signature should be entered in the form marginally given. Service stamps affixed to a cover without the above superscription will not be recognized by the post office in payment of postage. Treasury officers are enjoined not to sell service stamps to any but the Government officials.

3. Official Gazettes should be registered at the Post Master General's Office, and when so registered are eligible for transmission at the lower rates above given under the same rules and condition as apply to ordinary registered newspapers.

Unpaid official covers.

4. Official letters and parcels properly superscribed under Rule (2), but without stamps, are charged with postage on delivery at prepaid rates.

In cases where it not thought advisable to entrust postage stamps to a subordinate official, who has to correspond with, or send returns to, a superior, he may be allowed by his superior to address official covers to him under this rule, and the same course may be adopted in other cases, where it is found convenient or proper to make the postage charge fall on the receiving office.

Economy to be observed in the use of the post.

5. Government officials should be careful not to incur needlessly the higher charge on account of the transmission of heavy covers by letter post. Similarly, the transmission of heavy covers as parcels, (which are conveyed by post under a system of registration) is more expensive than their conveyance as packets, and the parcel post should not therefore be needlessly used by Government officials.

To be Continued

ASK US

Please send your queries in detail (illustrations welcome) on all matters related to Philately and Postal History of India and Indian States. We will attempt to provide an answer to you online.

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CONTRIBUTORS INVITED

We require regular correspondents everywhere in India to cover the philatelic activities in their area. We shall reimburse the costs of photos, covers, publications, courier and other charges. All contributions shall be acknowledged. Please Contact admin@stampsofindia.com today!

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