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----- STAMPS OF INDIA COLLECTORS COMPANION -----
The First, Free & Only weekly on Philately & Postal Services of India

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Awards Received: Silver Medal with the 'Felicitations of the Jury' at  
'BELGICA 2001' World Philatelic Exhibition, Brussels, June 9-17, 2001

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NewsScan - Fake Stamp Papers, Printing Equipment Worth Rs 650 Cr Seized

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If you've found this newsletter useful recommend it to a friend.  
Better still forward this issue.

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JHINGANS JOTTINGS

Hi

We are pleased to announce that you can now access our flagship web site 'Stamps of India' once again at <http://www.stampsofindia.com>. This has been made possible by a free web hosting service. There shall be advertising banners at the top of the page, kindly bear with us till we are able to move to a paid for service where we shall have control on the display of ads.

The site at its current address <http://www.geocities.com/mjhingan> would continue to be regularly updated.

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

- M&SJ

Our thanks to the Contributors and sources to this issue: Joyce Brand from UK and ChaloMumbai.com.

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Mention this newsletter when contacting other philatelists

NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

TWO COMMEMORATIVES SCHEDULED FOR June 22

India Post will issue one stamp each on Babu Gullab Rai and Pandit Surya Narayan Vyas on June 22, 2002. These will be the first commemoratives in the new inland letter rate of Rs. 5.

HEPATITIS B PROJECT

The Prime Minister of India, Atal Bihari Vajpayee launched India's Immunization program against Hepatitis B on June 10, 2002 at a function held at New Delhi. The program begins in 15 major cities and 32 districts across the nation. The Prime Minister also released a Special Cover with Special Postmark on this occasion.

Hepatitis B is the 7<sup>th</sup> disease being targeted by the Universal Immunization Program. India and 39 other countries are introducing the vaccine this year that is already prevalent in 152 countries.

PCI PRESIDENT VISITS NEW DELHI FOR WORLD 2004

The President of the Philatelic Congress of India, Sahadeva Sahoo, was in New Delhi from June 11 to 14, 2002 to hold discussions with India Post for the holding of world philatelic exhibition in 2004 to commemorate 150 years of Indian postage stamps.

He also discussed steps that could be taken, for obtaining a waiver for stamps from the application of Antiquities Act with senior philatelist G B Pai and the officers of the philatelic division of India Post.

APPRENTICE JURY PROGRAM

The Philatelic Congress of India (PCI) has announced its Apprentice Jury Program for the State level exhibitions.

The minimum qualifications are a vermeil medal at the National Level Exhibition within past 10 years. The candidate should not be biased, have a flair for judging, have the understanding of all recognized branches of philately, and be fully conversant with FIP regulations and guidelines.

The nominations should be sent to the Secretary General, Dilip Shah, on prescribed application form through an institutional member of the PCI by August 31, 2002.

We urge all qualified persons to seize this opportunity and enroll themselves, as this is for the first time in the history of PCI that the qualifications have been spelled out and lowered to this level.

NEW APPOINTMENTS FOR POSTAL OFFICERS

The Principal Chief Postmaster General of Maharashtra, A S I S Paul was appointed as a Member of the Postal Services Board on June 10, 2002. An officer of 1966 batch of Indian Postal Service, he takes over the charge of 'Personnel' portfolio from S B Bhattacharya who has now moved to 'Operations' portfolio that he was looking after as an additional charge. Philately comes under 'Operations'.

R Ganesan, Chief Postmaster General of Madhya Pradesh is posted as the Chief Postmaster General of Maharashtra.

T R Sharma, Chief Postmaster General of Rajasthan is promoted as the Principal Chief Postmaster General of Rajasthan. Vijay Bhushan, Chief Postmaster General of Himachal Pradesh is promoted as the Principal Chief Postmaster General of Punjab. Vijay Chitale, Chief Postmaster General of Gujarat is promoted as the Principal Chief Postmaster General of Gujarat.

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OOPS DEPARTMENT

Max Smith was elected President of India Study Circle for a three-year term and not for a two-year term as erroneously reported in the previous issue.

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NEPAL NEW ISSUE

Two stamps were issued on June 5, 2002. A 10 rupees stamp in honor of their Late Majesties King Birendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev and Queen Aishwarya Rajya Laxmi Devi Shah. The Rs. 5 stamp marks His Majesty King Gyanendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev's accession to the throne with the portrait of the king and the throne.

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DAK PATRIKA

This is the quarterly house journal of India Post. Recently a combined issue Whole # 54-55 for period ending March 31, 2002 was issued. Meera Handa, Director in the Philately Division of India Post, edits this periodical. The Associate Editor P N Ranjit Kumar, Assistant Director General in the Philately Division and Sub Editor Shashi Chawla, assist her.

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CAG REVIEWS PERFORMANCE OF SPEED POST

The Comptroller and Auditor General of India is the supreme audit institution in India. It tabled in parliament on April 24, 2002, its report # 6 of 2002, for the year ended March 2001 on Union Government: Posts & Telecommunications.

For the performance review CAG this year picked up Speed Post - the Express Mail Service as one of the areas of focus. The highlight of their ten-page review is - Expenditure on Speed Post services is understated substantially on account of exclusion of manpower cost of personnel deployed from other wings of Department of Posts. Speed Post services short achieved financial targets by 40%. Percentage of revenue realised to cost of operation declined from 217 in 1996-97 to 141 in 1999-2000. Test check by Audit revealed that delivery efficiency during the months of April 2000, September 2000, and March 2001 was only 65%, 52%, and 52% respectively. The Department however, reported this as 98%, 98%, and 95% respectively indicating inaccuracy in maintenance of records of delivery. Although there was improvement over the years in the proportion of the settlement of complaints during the year, number of complaints from customers increased from 32,802 in 1996-97 to 291,005 in 2000-01 (an increase of 890%). Speed Post revenue of Rs. 33.88 million was outstanding against various parties under credit management facility i.e. the 'Book Now Pay Later' scheme. Rebate of Rs. 10.38 million was granted irregularly to bulk customers. There was loss of revenue of Rs. 10.23 million due to uncoordinated fixation of tariff for registered articles and speed post articles.

The complete report shall be available online at their web site. The CAG reports for earlier years since 1993 are also available online at <http://www.cagindia.org/reports/post/>

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FAKE STAMP PAPERS, STAMPS SEIZED by S Hussain Zaidi

The Mumbai and Pune police conducted raids across the city over the past couple of days and seized fake stamp papers and postal stamps worth Rs 7,500 million. The raids began late Monday evening and continued till late last night. The operation was shrouded in secrecy and police officers remain tight-lipped about it.

Police also could not provide accurate estimates of the seizure. "The last I heard, the net worth of the seizures was Rs 7,500 million. It is likely it could go over Rs 10,000 million," said Director General of Police Subhash Malhotra. Ten persons were arrested in all, he added.

Pune police had recently held three persons, who during interrogation disclosed the racket had its roots in Mumbai. Therefore, on Monday, Pune police in collaboration with the Mumbai police's Crime Branch began raids on several places in south Mumbai, including at Modi Street, Fort Market, MRA Marg, offices and vendors around the General Post Office (GPO) and Cuffe Parade.

"We have only provided logistical support and Unit I officers assisted in the raids. The investigation is being done by the Pune police," said Joint Commissioner of Police, Crime, Sridhar Wagal. Apart from Crime Branch sleuths, officers from the Azad Maidan, L T Marg and Cuffe Parade police stations also assisted Pune police. However, the top brass of the Pune police remain tight-lipped about the operation. "We are yet to receive information from Mumbai. Our officers are still engaged in the operation and investigation," Pune Police Commissioner Ranjit Singh Sharma said.

According to a senior police officer, reams of fake stamp papers of various denominations and a huge quantity of duplicate postal stamps and embossing materials were seized. The stamps were affixed on judicial papers and official documents. The officer said fake stamp papers were also seized earlier, but the rackets were confined to local areas and the amount did not exceed a few million rupees. However, the scam amount this time is a staggering Rs 10,000 million, and the racket too seems countrywide, the official noted.

According to CBI, one Narinder Singh used to get the fake stamps from Mumbai-based Hemant Corporation. So Mumbai remained the centre of the operations. Mumbai police is trying to trace Narinder Singh and his accomplices in the city.

In January 2001, the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) had busted a private firm selling fake government stamps worth crores of rupees to major banks and companies. Operating under the name of Blue Star Services, the company sold fake stamps not only in Delhi but in other cities including Chandigarh, Nashik, Ahmedabad, Madras, Kolkata, Mumbai, Bangalore and Bhopal.

Till date, the biggest such racket to have been busted was in Bangalore in August 2000, when stamps worth over Rs 120 million were seized. The Karnataka government took the matter so seriously that it formed a special task force and named it the Stamp Investigation Team under leadership of an additional director general of police.

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## VIEWS & OPINIONS

### PHILATELY IN TRANSITION IN INDIA, Part 12

In this issue we take up the matters raised by Shakil Ahmed and present some of the incidents that have taken place in the recent past during various exhibitions. However in the current philatelic scenario it could have been just about anybody, anywhere in India. For the record Shakil Ahmed is a philatelist from Cuttack, Orissa who participated in ORPEX state level exhibition organized by India Post in April 26-28, 2002 at Bhubaneswar. He was unhappy with the Large Silver medal awarded by the Jury as he had participated with the same exhibit at the International at Nepal and at the National exhibition held at Nashik in 2001 and received a Silver-Bronze and Silver respectively.

As he was not satisfied and wanted a reappraisal he immediately wrote on April 28, 2002 to the Chief Postmaster General of Orissa Circle who was also the Chairman of the Jury. Same day he raised this issue at the Regional Meeting of the Philatelic Congress of India (PCI) being held in Bhubaneswar and the President PCI who was also a Jury, and the Secretary of the exhibition was given a copy of his complaint.

The exhibitors and Jury in India equate the medals in relation to the level of the exhibition. A Silver medal at the National is equivalent to Large Silver at State and to Silver Bronze at International level. According to this recipe he was given the right award and should not have been complaining.

He compares the case of other, more privileged, exhibitors who were awarded Silver medals in the national exhibition and were now adjudged worthy of Vermeil Medals with special prizes. He also appealed that care should be taken in selection of Jurors as well as outsiders interfering and influencing their working.

On April 30, 2002 he wrote another letter to the Chief Postmaster General of Orissa Circle in which Ahmed says that Dhananjay Desai one of the jury, went through the exhibit with him, after the results were announced and couldn't explain satisfactorily the justification of the judgment. While in other cases, exhibits that were given higher markings, even with undesirable material were shown to Desai. The views of several other senior philatelists such as G Madan Mohan Das and Anil Suri who compared his exhibit with others were also favorable.

Ahmed also brings up the curious case of Omprakash Jagati who won Vermeil Medal with Chief Postmaster General Trophy in ORPEX-2002. Jagati is known for irregular and unpunished participation in the state level exhibitions at Orissa, Karnataka, and Gujarat. His exhibit was awarded Silver Bronze at 65 points at the last National in December 2001 where he participated from Karnataka.

He also sites cases of exhibitors A. K. Dash, J. Jyoti who along with him all got Silver Medals at the National whereas in ORPEX Dash and Jyoti got Vermeil medals with special prizes but he was left out.

Ahmed mentions the name of B K Sinha, PCI Secretary and Ajit Kumar Dash two local philatelists who freely intermixed with jury members and were instrumental in influencing the awards. Should we say contrary to norm or as is the norm the juries were not present when awards were declared

on April 27, 2002 and mark sheets were not available with the exhibition office. He says "had the Juries been present at the venue I could have got my doubts cleared by way of conversation at the spot which I could not avail due to their absence."

Not finding any answers to his queries he wrote on May 2, 2002 to PCI members with copies, amongst others, to S. C. Dutta the Director General of India Post asking for necessary action.

He then received a response from none other than PCI President who wrote to him on May 29, 2002. Ahmed must be somebody personally very important to the PCI President, Sahadeva Sahoo, as there are scores of complaints, several of them of serious nature, pending with him for years that have not had the good fortune of any response whatsoever, not even an acknowledgement.

Ahmed in his point-to-point response to Sahoo on June 3, 2002 brings up the case of Moomin Sinha, the daughter of B K Sinha, PCI Secretary, whose participation in the last national brought a Silver Bronze. The same exhibit won a Vermeil with Special Prize at ORPEX.

He also mentions that he had absolutely revised his exhibit and changed five better items in the exhibit shown in ORPEX-2002. "This is a sheer partiality, if not manipulation. ...From the first reading of your letter I find as President of the PCI you are bent upon to find out faults with me over my letters, so as to say that you are all right and I am all wrong. ...I pointed out large scale partiality has taken place in judging the exhibits and awarding the prizes in as much as some exhibits were down graded and some exhibits were surprisingly given extraordinary scoring without sufficient cause which needs rectification. But my request was not acceded to. The members present could give no reply to me in the meeting there or by you even though you heard it. The jury was surreptiously left the meeting hall and remained outside until PCI Governing Council meeting was called upon..."

Ahmed clarifies that "...My complaints are many fold as you can see from my letters and all those are aiming at correcting the incorrect ones and you cannot therefore throw the blame on me that had I received a higher medal I would not have gone into the inappropriate judging of exhibits..."

He feels so strongly about his stand that he is willing to take it to any forum and he goes on to ask the PCI President "In case you are not satisfied kindly give me the address of F. I. A. P. and F. I. P. so that I will place the matter before them for a fair decision which will also be a guiding line for the PCI for judging the forthcoming exhibitions."

Ahmed has since received response from many philatelists who have felt strongly enough to join their support to his cause.

However response times and the attitudes of the concerned senior philatelists have caused many budding philatelists to either take up arms against them or disgusted them so much as to give up philately. This unfortunately is what the newcomers in philately in India can expect with certainty instead of encouragement and guidance.

The Complete text of the Correspondence is posted on the website  
<http://www.stampsofindia.com/Content/Features/Ahmeds-orpex.htm> or  
<http://www.geocities.com/mjhingam/Content/Features/Ahmeds-orpex.htm>

#### 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>

#### SURAJ JAITLEY FROM LUDHIANA

Personally, I have e-mailed twice to Mr. B K Sinha for prospectus & forms of "INPEX-2002", but till date he has not sent me any thing. As per my information the organizers have sent the same to PCI members only. I think it is not a good practice for any National, as it seems that it is an exhibition for PCI members only. At least they should send the same to all participants of last National and to all Philatelic Bureaus in the country. Philatelic Clubs, which are not affiliated with PCI, have also not received any information either. Under these circumstances any one can imagine that instead of promoting philately in general, we all responsible for killing this hobby. As already in the present age of hi-tech & fast oriented hobbies, new generation is not accepting this hobby easily.

#### FEATURES & RESOURCES

#### ALSO IN THE NEWS

#### ASIANS NOW OWN SPINK

The ownership of 336-year-old British auction house Spink has changed in March this year. London auction house Christie's had owned Spink since 1993 but decided to sell it to refocus on its core business that of fine art auctioneering.

Spink - which deals in old coins, medals, stamps, banknotes and manuscripts - was bought by a group of Singapore-based investors reportedly for Singapore \$26 million. The members of buy-out team are Goldman Sachs investment banker - John Koh of Singapore, property developer - Daniel Teo of Singapore, the managing director of Spink - Tim Hirsch from England, and a member of the Philippines' prominent Zobel family - Mercedes Zobel.

#### NEWSSCAN

The Hindustan Times, June 13, 2002

FAKE STAMP PAPERS, PRINTING EQUIPMENT WORTH RS 650 CR SEIZED

<http://www.hindustantimes.com/nonfram/130602/detNAT08.asp>

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

#### RESEARCH NOTES

INDIAN POSTAL ORDERS, PART 3

After the independence a new set of 20 postal orders was issued in 1952. The portrait of King George VI was replaced with 'Asokan Capitol' - the official emblem of the Government of India. The denominations and the prefixes were same as the earlier issue in 1939.

India adopted decimal system and on April 1, 1957 and issued a set of 20 postal orders in the decimal currency. The commission was 5 New Paise (NP) up to Rs 5 and 10 NP from Rs 5.50 to Rs 10. The earlier commission of 1 Anna for all denominations was equivalent to 6 NP in the new currency. This was inscribed as "FIVE NAYE PAISE" and "TEN NAYE PAISE" on a new set of postal orders. The denominations now were NP 50, Re 1, Rs 1 & NP 50, Rs 2, Rs 2 & NP 50, Rs 3, Rs 3 & NP 50, Rs 4, Rs 4 & NP 50, Rs 5, Rs 5 & NP 50, Rs 6, Rs 6 & NP 50, Rs 7, Rs 7 & NP 50, Rs 8, Rs 8 & NP 50, Rs 9, Rs 9 & NP 50, and Rs 10. The serial numbers were prefixed by 'A', 'B', 'C', 'D', 'E', 'F', 'G', 'H', 'J', 'K', 'L', 'M', 'N', 'P', 'Q', 'R', 'S', 'T', 'V', and 'W' respectively. This was the first issue printed in Blue; all earlier issues were in Red.

On May 15, 1968 the rate of commission was increased to 10 Paise for all denominations. The earlier stock of postal orders up to Rs 5 was locally hand-stamped with new rates.

The design of the postal orders was modified. The inscriptions were made bilingual in English and in Hindi. The inscription for the commission now read "10 (Paise in Hindi) TEN PAISE". The denominations were reduced to 11 by elimination of all half Rupee denominations except 50 Paise.

On November 1, 1974 five new high values denomination were introduced through Indian Post Office (Amendment) Act 1970 revising section 45. These were Rs. 20, 30, 40, 50, and 100. The rate of commission was 20, 30, 40, 50 Paise and Re. 1 respectively. The prefixes used for these denominations were 'AA', 'BB', 'CC', 'DD', and 'EE'. This brought the total numbers of denominations available to 16. These postal orders were printed in Violet, Green, --, Red, and Vermilion respectively.

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.

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STAMPSONINDIA WEB SITE UPDATES

The Hub Site of Indian Philately presents info in following segments - NEWS, ISSUES, EVENTS, AUCTIONS, PUBLICATIONS, ORGANIZATIONS, DEALERS, and ARTICLES. In addition we provide question answers in ASK US. Also all Indian philatelic web sites as well as several useful philatelic sites are listed under LINKS.

Updated Segments This Week: News, Articles,  
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