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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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Issue # 95 - December 12, 2002. Published Every Thursday
Edited by Madhukar and Savita Jhingan

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I N T H I S I S S U E

India New Issue Update  
FICCI Platinum Jubilee Special Postmark  
New web Site  
New Issues of Pakistan  
Another Suit Filed Against PCI  
Periodicals Received - ITS Stamp News  
Transfers & Postings Of Senior Postal Officers  
Postal Jobs For Retired Persons  
Mobile Postman  
Immunity For Postal Services  
Advocate Held For Selling Fake Stamp Papers  
Philately in Transition in India, Part 36  
Readers Forum - Sharad Mohan  
Also in the News - Calendar of Philatelic Exhibitions in Europe 2003

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

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JHINGANS JOTTINGS

Hi

We have enquired from Visva Bharati University at Santiniketan  
regarding their logo that is partly visible on Santidev Ghose  
commemorative issued on December 1, 2002. We are awaiting their reply.

We have attempted to fax our query but their Fax is out of order and  
they do not have an email address in spite of having a decent web site.  
As the speed post service for Santiniketan is not available from New  
Delhi, even with the best of our efforts we have been unable to get a  
response from them till the time of sending this newsletter. We will  
update you the moment a response is received from the University.

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

- M&SJ

Our thanks to the Contributors and sources to this issue: The Telegraph, the Hindu Business Line, and the Business Standard.

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Mention this newsletter when contacting other philatelists
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#### NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

##### NEW ISSUE UPDATE

The next issue scheduled for December 17, 2002 on Tamralipta Jatiya Sarkar is a se-tenant pair in the denomination of Rs. 5 each. The stamp shall be produced in the quantity of 800,000 only in sheets of 14 se-tenant pairs.

The issue scheduled for December 23, 2002 on Anglo Bengali Inter College Allahabad is in the denomination of Rs. 5. The stamp shall be produced in the quantity of 800,000 only in sheets of 40.

The issue scheduled for December 28, 2002 on Dhirubhai Ambani is in the denomination of Rs. 5. The stamp shall be produced in the quantity of 3.8 million only in sheetlets of 16. This will be the 5<sup>th</sup> sheetlet issued by India Post. The first four were India Japan, Arya Vaidyasala, Nagpur Tercentenary, and Children's Day.

The stamps along with the First Day Covers and the information sheets, at Rs. 2 each, shall be available on sale at nearly 1000 selected Post Offices including all Philatelic Bureaus and Counters.

##### ~~~~~ FICCI PLATINUM JUBILEE SPECIAL POSTMARK

India Post provided a special postmark to commemorate the platinum jubilee of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) at New Delhi on December 12, 2002. A special cover was also released on this occasion.

##### ~~~~~ NEW WEB SITE

B D Mehrotra of Lucknow, a dealer of long standing specializing in errors and varieties of India post-independence stamps, recently launched a new web site [www.indiapostphil.com](http://www.indiapostphil.com)

##### ~~~~~ NEW ISSUES OF PAKISTAN

Pak Post recently issued the following commemorative stamps

November 9, 2002

A set of 2 stamps in the denomination of Rs. 4 each on Allama Muhammad Iqbal Year 2002.

November 14, 2002

A colorful stamp in the denomination of Rs. 4 to mark the joyous festival of Eid-ul-Fitr that was celebrated on December 6, 2002.

##### ~~~~~ ANOTHER SUIT FILED AGAINST PCI

Rajesh Varma, President of Uttranchal Philatelists Association, and Secretary General of Olympic Philatelists of India has filed a suit for declaration with consequential relief of perpetual injunction against Philatelic Congress of India and others on December 11, 2002. The next date of hearing is fixed for December 19, 2002.

The subject matter of this suit is holding of philatelic exhibitions including forthcoming INPEX 02.

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PERIODICALS RECEIVED

ITS STAMP NEWS, Whole # 20, Vol. 5 # 4, Oct-Dec 2002, Quarterly
Editor: Suraj Jaitly sjits@satyam.net.in
Publisher: Indian Thematic Society indianthematicsociety@redeiffmail.com
Postal Address: MIG # 3464, Phase 2, Dugri Road, Ludhiana 141002
Annual Subscription: Rs. 100 or US \$8 by airmail

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TRANSFERS & POSTINGS OF SENIOR POSTAL OFFICERS

R S Natarajamurthy, Chief General Manager of Business Development Directorate of India Post was promoted as Principal Chief General Manager of Business Development Directorate of India Post, New Delhi with effect from November 29, 2002.

L K Puri was posted as the Chief Postmaster General of Jammu & Kashmir Circle with effect from November 29, 2002.

Radhika Doraiswamy, General Manager of Business Development Directorate of India Post was promoted and posted as the Chief Postmaster General of Gujarat Circle with effect from December 2, 2002 as Meera Datta who was posted vide orders of November 20, 2002 as reported in issue # 93 has declined.

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POSTAL JOBS FOR RETIRED PERSONS

The Chief Postmaster General of Kerala Circle has invited applications for the post of Field Officers (Postal Life Insurance) from among retired Government employees of Central and State Governments and public sector undertakings for procurement of postal life insurance/rural post life insurance business in all districts of Kerala.

The applicant's age should not exceed 62 years as on January 1, 2003. Details about the scheme can be had from the PLI Section, Office of the Chief Postmaster General, Thiruvananthapuram-695033. Completed applications should reach the Office of the Chief PMG latest by December 15, 2002.

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MOBILE POSTMAN

The Department of Post (DOP) signed on December 3, 2002 a Memorandum of Understanding with Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) that would equip the village postman with a mobile phone that will act as a mobile public call office (PCO) and offer door-to-door telecom facility in villages across the country from December 25, 2002 that is also the birthday of India's Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee.

The mobile postman project, called the Grameen Sanchar Sewak scheme (GSS), will be implemented through the postal department's Grameen Dak Sewak delivery agents (GDSDA). The agents will work as BSNL franchisees in rural areas.

About 2,000 GSS in the select locations will serve about 7000 villages covering the entire country, except the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Haryana and Punjab telecom regions. It has been modelled on BSNL's existing public call office franchisee scheme, including tariff.

For each call of 100-200 km, the GSS will get Re 1 as service charge and Rs 2 on all calls beyond 200 km. The GSS can also earn Rs 5 for passing on the message to the villager concerned.

The DoP for collection of bills and rendering the services will keep 25 per cent of the revenue. Of this 20 per cent will go to the GSS. BSNL will also supply the mobile equipment to the GSS from whom Rs 20 per month will be charged as insurance premium for the equipment.

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IMMUNITY FOR POSTAL SERVICES

The consumer laws have covered almost all goods and services including some reluctant sectors like government departments, housing boards and doctors. Yet the negligence of the postal authorities/services stands in splendid isolation and is an outstanding exception.

The National Consumer Commission has stood by the letter of the law enshrined in the Post Office Act of 1898. It provides virtual immunity to the postal authorities from liability for articles lost or pilfered.

The commission recently decided a batch of cases referring to Speed Post, a service that was introduced 10 years ago to compete with private couriers. However, the experience of those who had suffered by the negligence of the postal authorities has not been very heartening. They have been sent away with pittance as compensation, if at all it was awarded.

In the first case, a person sent a draft of Rs 500,000 that did not reach the addressee. The consumer forum awarded Rs 20,000 as compensation to him with 18 per cent interest.

In the second case, a person sent his papers, required for the final Indian Administrative Service examination, to the authorities by Speed Post. It was not delivered and he could not appear for the examination. He moved the consumer forum and got a compensation of Rs 10,000.

In the third case, a person could not sit for the law graduate exam in the same circumstances. He was awarded a princely sum of Rs 30, being the charges he paid for the postal service.

The postal authorities invoked Section 6 of the Post Office Act, which exempts them from any liability for loss, wrong delivery, delay or damage of any postal article in course of transmission by post, except to such extent as the liability may be undertaken by the government in express terms. An officer of the post office is similarly exempted from any liability unless he has caused loss fraudulently or by a willful act or default.

Earlier, the National Commission had agreed with this argument of the postal authorities in some cases. But these judgments were distinguished from the previous Speed Post cases by the consumer forums to grant relief to the aggrieved parties. The point of view of the consumer forums that fixed responsibility on the postal authorities was that Speed Post is a new service that was not contemplated under the ancient law.

The National Commission delivered its common judgment against the complainants. In the first case, it stated, "we cannot go beyond the statutory provisions and grant compensation more than that what is statutorily fixed. A consumer forum is even bound by the terms of the contract, howsoever oppressive these may be unless those terms are against public policy, illegal or void."

In the next case, only the refund of the service charge was returned and no compensation. In the other cases also, compensation was set aside.

Since the judgment of the National Commission is binding on all consumer forums in the country, it is a blow to the consumers who utilize Speed Post service trusting the promise made by the Post Office that the articles would be delivered "within the specified delivery time", which is normally 24 hours to 72 hours within the country.

Perhaps the consumers could try their luck at the Monopolies and Restrictive Trade Practices Commission, which has held in the case of Informatics Computer Systems in 2000 that delay in delivering an article within the stipulated time is an "unfair trade practice".

Though the commission did not award damages, it passed a "cease and desist" order declaring the practice as unfair. These cases show the urgent need for amending the law to fix some accountability on the postal authorities.

Other service providers operating under the wings of the government, like the railways, telephone authorities and even municipalities have been made answerable to the consumers. The negligence of the postal authorities stands in splendid isolation.

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ADVOCATE HELD FOR SELLING FAKE STAMP PAPERS

Gopal Mandal, an advocate and Arup Kumar Das, his muhuri (clerk) were arrested in Baranagar, Bengal on November 27, 2002 on the charge of selling fake court stamp papers. The police seized a bunch of stamp papers and false rubber stamps from them. Both were remanded in police custody till December 2.

Soumen Mitra, Deputy Commissioner Of Police, Detective Department, said the arrest was made after receiving a complaint from the District Sub-Registrar's office at Cossipore. "Initially, the registrar's office lodged a complaint with Cossipore police station when they found that stamp papers valued at Rs 23,000 produced by a couple Somenath and Sashwati Biswas were fake. The local police failed to make any breakthrough, so we took up the case. First, we traced the couple's lawyer, Sandip Saha. Sandip had no idea that the stamp papers were forged. We tracked down Mandal, from whom Saha had collected the papers," added Mitra.

Acting on a tip-off, the sleuths raided Mandal's house and arrested him. "We found blank forged stamp papers kept in an almirah in Mandal's house. False rubber stamps, too, were found," said Mitra. After interrogating Mandal, the investigators came to know of his 42-year-old muhuri, Arup Kumar Das. "We then picked up Das. Another bunch of false stamp papers and rubber stamps were seized from him," said Mitra.

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VIEWS & OPINIONS

PHILATELY IN TRANSITION IN INDIA, Part 36

Lots of friends have called and emailed us soon after they received their copies of the July-September 2002 issue of Signet, the official journal of PCI. This matter is now sub-judiced and we will therefore refrain from commenting on its contents.

We are yet to receive our copies of this issue of Signet (must be a postal delay?) that other members of PCI have received over 15 days ago. Is this the way PCI works?

Our address change was communicated over 15 months ago to PCI but still the old address continues to appear on inside front cover under 'Governing Council of PCI 2000-2002' in all issues of Signet published since.

And on the same page the name of Vinod Dhamija as Deputy Director General (Philately) Department of Posts is carried. Is the Editor/Publisher not aware that Dhamija handed over his charge to Devika Kumar in February 2002 before proceeding on a long term UPU assignment outside India? Kumar has not consented to be a member of the Governing Council of PCI and Dhamija, we think, may be unaware that PCI is still continuing with his name.

This is not all; Director General of Army Postal Service is also mentioned on this very page. Believe it or not, there is no such designation in the Army Postal Service in India. The name of the currently serving Chief of Army Postal Service is also not known to PCI. The currently serving Chief is neither informed nor his/her consent obtained for becoming a member of the Governing Council of PCI.

PCI it seems does not want to keep itself apprised of the changes taking place around it. To mention just one example Brigadier Virk who retired as Director APS is described as Director General in the PCI's Memorandum of Association since 1976!

And last but not the least, K P Achar left Bangalore about 20 months ago but his Bangalore address is still carried on this same page.

We are aware that there were lots of difficulties/differences in the running of the PCI. Yet the more we delve into the past the more we are made aware that these stem right from the day one and the misdeeds keep getting unraveled endlessly to, we are sure, everyone's amazement.

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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>

SHARAD MOHAN FROM NEW DELHI

On Santidev Ghose Issue

"The reverse swastika signs are also found on certain Egyptian, Roman,

Byzantine graves in Asia Minor and suggests DEATH!!"

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FEATURES & RESOURCES

Indian Laws Relevant to Philately

<http://www.stampsofindia.com/Content/Guide/Misc/laws.htm>

Report Cyber Crime & Internet Fraud related to Indian Philately

<http://www.stampsofindia.com/Content/Guide/Misc/cybercrime.htm>

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ALSO IN THE NEWS

CALENDAR OF PHILATELIC EXHIBITIONS IN EUROPE 2003

February 21-March 1, JUVENIA 2003, National Youth, Benisa-Alicante, Spain

February 26-March 2, SPRING STAMPEX 2003, National, London, UK

February 28-March 2, BREMEN 2003, Bilateral Germany - France, Bremen, Germany

March 28-30, KESFILA 2003, National, Jyvaskyla, Finland

March 29-30, STUTGART-DERLOCH 2003, Portugal

April 8-13, EXFILNA 2003, National, Granada, Spain

April 24-27, OSTROPA 2003, Bilateral Czech Republic - Germany, Jihlava, Czech Republic

May 1-4, NAJUBRIA '03, National Youth, Oberhausen, Germany

May 22, 76<sup>th</sup> Stamp Day, National, Hungary

May 23-25, MARE-BALTICUM, 9 Baltic Sea Countries, Kiel, Germany

May 23-25, KIEL 03, National, Kiel, Germany

June 7-9, AEROSPACE 2003, Aero & Astrophilately, Salzburg, Austria

June 13-15, ALPOK, International, Adria, Hungary

June 18-22, TICINO 03, Switzerland with France & Italy, Locarno, Switzerland

August 22-September 6, KATOWICE 2003, National, Katowice, Poland

September 17-21, AUTUMN STAMPEX 2003, National, London, UK

September 25-28, JUGEND-PHILA, Youth, Graz, Austria (FEPA Congress)

October 16-19, NORDIA 2003, Nordic Countries, Reykjavik, Iceland

September/November, LUBRAPEX 2003, Portugal with Brazil & Spain, Portugal

November 8-14, St. Petersburg 300, European International, St.  
Petersburg, Russia

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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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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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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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WEB SITE UPDATES

STAMPSOFINDIA

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,

STAMPS ON INDIA <http://stampsonindia.netfirms.com>

The site devoted to the stamps from all over the world on Indian topics

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