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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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Edited by Madhukar and Savita Jhingan

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Back issues of this newsletter are available for free download at
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We invite your inputs, please email to [stampsofindia@tatanova.com](mailto:stampsofindia@tatanova.com)

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I N T H I S I S S U E

Medicinal Plants Stamps Released
Recent & Forthcoming Events
New Special Postmarks
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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 lost all our recent email messages received up to April 6, 2003 due
to mishap during upgrading of our systems. Please do send your message
again if the same still requires an action or response from our side.

We also regret that we have not been able to update the web site for
nearly a month now and hope to resume the regular weekly updates soon.

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

- M&SJ

Our thanks to the Contributors and sources to this issue: Indian
Express, Deccan Herald, Belfast Telegraph, and United States Postal
Service.

Mention this newsletter when contacting other philatelists

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The Advertising Supplement to 'Stamps of India Collectors Companion' is now available on-line <http://www.stampsfindia.com/Content/Ads/ads.htm>  
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NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

MEDICINAL PLANTS STAMPS RELEASED

India Post released a set of 4 special stamps on Medicinal Plants on April 7, 2003. There was no publicity and no special release function held for this beautiful issue.

The stamps, all in the denomination of Rs. 5 - the inland letter rate, feature Guggulu, Brahmi, Amla, and Aswagandha.

Kamleshwar Singh designed the stamps, Sheetlet, Miniature sheet, and the First Day Cover (Priced at Rs. 2). Alka sharma designed the pictorial first day of issue postmark. Information Sheet containing write-up and technical data and priced at Rs. 2 was issued on the occasion.

Calcutta Security Printers Limited of Kanpur printed the stamps by photo Offset in four colors on Matt Chromo paper in the quantity of 3 million in sheetlets of 16 stamps. The Miniature sheet is printed in the quantity of 100,000.

The sheetlets of this issue are first 'mixed' sheetlets. As a further innovation these come in four different layouts: horizontal strips, vertical strips, blocks of 4, and mixed blocks of 4. All these varieties of sheetlets are produced in equal quantity and distributed evenly throughout India.

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#### RECENT & FORTHCOMING EVENTS

##### CHANDIGARH

A two-day Philatelic Exhibition was inaugurated on March 29, 2003 at Philatelic Bureau, General Post Office, Chandigarh by Manjula Prasher, postmaster general of Punjab circle.

The exhibition has been organised by the Chandigarh Postal Division in which 28 frames, covering diverse themes, have been set up for display. The exhibition marks the revival of the Chandigarh Philatelic Agenda of Chandigarh Postal Division.

A Special Cover was released on the occasion by Manjula Prasher. The outstanding feature of the cover is the Postmark that depicts the "Scinde Dawak" the first postage stamp in Asia. This paper stamp was brought out by Sir Bartle Frere, the Commissioner of Sind in token of pre-payment of postage in 1852.

For a list of exhibition held this year, please visit <http://www.stampsfindia.com/Content/Events/a300.htm>  
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NEW SPECIAL POSTMARKS

India Post recently provided the following special postmarks:

October 17, 2002, Chennai

50th Anniversary of Sivaji Ganesan's 1st movie - Parasakthi

March 7-9, 2003, Belgaum

70th All India Kannada Literature Conference, Set of 3 covers

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POSTAL AUCTION BY ROHINI ANDHARE

Rohini Andhare, [crandhare@yahoo.com](mailto:crandhare@yahoo.com), Post Box 21, Bilaspur 495001 is holding their 3<sup>rd</sup> postal auction closing on May 14, 2003. There are 2244 lots in this auction. Majority of the lots are thematic, other lots are India pre and post independence, India errors, India slogans, telegram forms, first flight covers, Indian states, fiscals, British India and foreign - Great Britain.

The auction catalogue for this sale is available free; ask for a copy through email providing your postal address.

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INDIA POST'S LIST OF STAMPS

India Post has just released the latest edition of their publication "Indian Postage Stamps 1947-2002". This is a listing of stamps and a few illustrations in color have been added for the first time.

We have two suggestions, for the next edition, change it to normal vertical format instead of current oblong one, and make it fully illustrated to make it really useful.

The 50 page list is priced at Rs. 40 and available at all philatelic bureaus in the country. An alphabetical list at the end enhances its utility for the collectors.

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PAKISTAN STUDY CIRCLE

We have just received issue # 4 of the Pakistan Study Circle (PSC) Newsletter. This is published three times a year. The 10 page issue covers a wide range of topics under news & views, new finds & discoveries, auction results, new issues, oddly enough, in retrospect and letters to the editor. There is an authoritative article by Dr. Kenneth Robbins on Bahawalpur.

PSC was formed about 18 months ago in the UK and now has 62 members worldwide. The annual membership fee is £10. For more information please contact George Rab, Secretary and Editor [rabit1@breathemail.com](mailto:rabit1@breathemail.com) or Martin Robinson, Treasurer and Membership Secretary [m-robinson@district-audit.gov.uk](mailto:m-robinson@district-audit.gov.uk)

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STAMP PAPERS PART OF HISTORY FROM APRIL 1st

The Stamps and Registration Department, which will effect major changes in its rules governing stamp duty and registration of properties from April 1, 2003, has come out with a special document sheet on which the citizens can get their documents endorsed and the documents can be validated at offices of sub-registrars or at the 200 designated branches of State Bank of Mysore and its subsidiaries across the state of Karnataka.

As announced by Chief Minister S M Krishna in the budget proposals for 2003-04, the government is discontinuing the use of stamp papers and stamps with effect from April 1. Both judicial and non-judicial documents can be drawn on a plain paper or special document sheet. The stamp duty must be paid either through cash or challan or Demand Draft. If the transaction is done at sub-registrar's office, then endorsement is done by using franking machine. Value of the property will be indicated on the document using a seal.

'Proper Officers' appointed as per the Karnataka Stamp Rules, are authorized to endorse the papers both at sub-registrar offices and banks.

While the offices of sub-registrars are going to follow the new norms from April 1, the banks will be equipped to handle the documents for the Stamps and Registration Department in about a week's time. The department has drawn up a list of 150 State Bank of Mysore branches, 25 branches each of State Bank of Hyderabad and State Bank of India for the new service. The department will have a computer terminal on which there will be centralized information regarding the cash remitted to banks towards stamps and registration.

D Satyamurthy, Inspector General of Registration & Commissioner of Stamps, who has pioneered radical changes in the department, said the documents should be handwritten or typed using only black ink. Initially there could be some hiccups but slowly people would understand the advantages of the new rules, he added.

He said, "people have psychological attachment to stamp papers. They may not feel confident of drawing an agreement on a plain paper. Hence, we are introducing the document sheet (A4 bond sheet) printed at the Government Press. But it is not mandatory to use the document sheet. The cost per sheet is Re 1 and it will be available at sub-registrar offices, district registrar offices and banks. We are confident that the new system would be citizen-friendly".

The department, as announced by Krishna already, will be validating all the stamp papers purchased by the public up to March 31, 2003. As per the rules, the department has to give a minimum of four months' time for the purchasers to get the document executed. The department has purchased special pens which can identify the authenticity of stamp papers.

If the light yellow mark of the pen on the paper turns colorless then the paper is genuine and if the mark turns grey, then it is fake.

The STAMPIT, which is investigating into the fake stamp paper racket, is already employing the pens to check the genuineness of the stamp papers which are in circulation. Each pen, costing Rs 240, can be used to detect even genuineness of currency notes.

The department is in the process of purchasing lamps which beam ultraviolet rays to check the authenticity of the stamp papers.

An inspection by the department has found that the stamp vendors are in possession of 6,149 stamp papers worth Rs 100 million and the government, by destroying the stamp papers in the treasury would be losing Rs 300 to 400 million, said Sathyamurthy.

The Commissioner said the stamp duty will come down from 14 to 9 per cent from tomorrow and this would result in a loss of Rs 2.5 billion to the exchequer.

However, this is made good by a uniform eight per cent registration fee on apartments and doing away with the system of giving exemption in stamps and registration to industrial houses.

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THEMATIC COLLECTORS!

I have at disposal several worldwide FLORA and FAUNA thematic stamps in mint sets and special cancellations, FDCs, Postal Stationery, Covers etc. for building displays for personal pleasure and exhibitions. Other themes on request. Dispatch by registered mail franked with pictorial Swiss stamps against prepayment in Indian Rupees. Want-Lists are welcome, with theme, name of country & date of issue. Also available Swiss stamps FDCs. Send enquiries with Indian mint stamps worth Rs. 15 for reply to:

Dr. Avinash B. Jagtap, [abjagtap@hotmail.com](mailto:abjagtap@hotmail.com)  
Weihermattstr. 2, CH-4102 BINNINGEN, SWITZERLAND

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FREE ADVERTISEMENTS

'Stamps of India Collectors Companion' is the most effective way to reach the highest targeted readerships for Indian Philately worldwide. The advertising is FREE for the subscribers. The ads are published online in an Advertising Supplement. Send in your ad, today. Click here to view the ads and for the Terms for submitting your ad <http://www.stampsofindia.com/Content/Ads/ads.htm>

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VIEWS & OPINIONS

PHILATELY IN TRANSITION IN INDIA, Part 52

There is an entire generation of philatelists in India at present who grew up seeing and believing in PCI. To them PCI is philately! PCI's way of promoting philately is the only and the right way of practicing philately.

Though the numbers for such persons is small yet they have been on the philatelic scene for more than a decade, they have not allowed collectors to grow at the grass roots because that is what they have seen PCI doing. These persons have risen in philately by means of payoffs and blind loyalty and that is what they expect of those who come in contact with them.

The efforts of the Department of Posts are laudable in view of the philatelic scene in India to hold district level exhibitions in India to promote philately at the grass roots. Sometimes as advisors to various exhibitions these same persons have put hurdles in promoting philately.

Till D N Jatia was alive PCI was run as his personal and private property. The other known names from India owe their very existence to Jatia as their primary qualification has been unwavering, unquestioning and blind loyalty to him and his personal agenda. Now that Jatia is gone, it is these very persons who claim to have inherited the mantle and control of philately in India.

There have been philatelists such as G B Pai, P Gupta, Brigadier Virk, and few others who rose to prominence in spite of Jatia on their own merits. While Jatia managed awards and honors in heaps, the nomination of any name, other than Jatia, for any honor or award was taboo. This is the reason that a person of Pai's stature is bereft of any suitable philatelic decorations. The chances of P Gupta, the first Indian to win the Grand Prize of Honor, who was all set to bag the nation's coveted civil honor 'Padma Shree' was successfully scuttled by Jatia. Brigadier Virk was nominated for the coveted RDP (Roll of Distinguished Philatelists) not by PCI but by the national philatelic federation of Norway!

There also have been philatelists such as Dhirubhai Mehta and few others who even after possessing merit and having global recognition unashamedly surrendered to Jatia for petty personal gains. Philatelists such as M A Rao, and O P Bhatnagar were simply ignored and were denied their rightful places.

To promote this hobby among the younger generation all concerned need to focus more on the hobby for fun, entertainment and education. The need is also to focus on thematic and newer forms of collections like frugal, social, picture post cards, and one-frame.

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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>

SUDIP DASGUPTA

I enjoy your issues and have noted collectors from all parts of the world write on various topics, regarding Indian stamps; hence, I thought I would ask this question whose answer has eluded me, for a long time.

I have a block of 4 stamps, 1947 Indian National Flag (SG 302), with a "scratch" mark next to the "15 Aug. 1947". I have seen this stamp being referred to as the "scratch variety". My question is: Is it a regular occurrence for this printing and if so what was the location in the sheet?

Keep up the good work and thank you very much.

EDITORS' RESPONSE:

Thank you for your kind words.

The variety you refer to is a recorded in most of the specialized catalogs being a constant one and its position on the sheet is Row 6 stamp 6. It is better known as 'comma over 7' variety.

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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

JUMBO JETS & FREE DELIVERY FOR MAILS TO IRAQ

The United States Postal Service (USPS) has chartered two 747 cargo jets to handle the increase in military mail volume to Kuwait which has jumped from nearly 21,000 pounds per week in October 2002 to more than 750,000 pounds per week in March 2003. One flies six days a week from the east coast; the other flies three days a week from the west coast.

"This is an extremely challenging, yet gratifying mission," Vice President Network Operations Management Paul Vogel said, "but customers have to understand, because the troops are constantly on the move, this is very much a 'moving mailbox' situation. Together the Postal Service and the Military are making every effort to see that the mail gets delivered."

On the other side of Atlantic Prime Minister Tony Blair announced in the Commons on April 2, 2003 that the relatives will soon be able to send parcels to their serving loved ones "entirely free of charge". At present, relatives can send air mail letters free and parcels up to 2kg are charged at a heavily subsidised rate of £6.89. Parcels over 2kg are not allowed.

The proposal was first suggested last week of March 2003 and the issue was raised again by Labor MP Irene Adams, who complained that, for many "hard-pressed" families, the cost of sending these to troops was "prohibitive". At question time, Tony Blair said the present operational situation was making it difficult to actually get packages through to the troops. But he added: "As soon as the operational situation allows, families will be able to send packages to their loved ones entirely free of charge." And he continued: "There is one qualification, which is that, given the constraints which exist on transport capacity, the packages will have to be sensible-sized."

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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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About STAMPS OF INDIA COLLECTORS COMPANION -- ADMINISTRIVIA

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