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

The First & Only Weekly on Philately & Postal Services of India

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(see the end of this issue for details)
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JHINGANS JOTTINGS

Hi

Everyday during last week the multibillion rupees counterfeit stamp and stamp paper racket continued to hog the screens of various television channels and the front pages of newspapers in India. In addition to multiple news stories in each paper and news bulletin it was also written up in editorials and articles and discussed in talk shows. It was also being covered by international media.

We sincerely hope it comes to an end soon. Once this case is over, someone should take up the challenge to write a treatise on fake postage and fiscal stamps of last 14 years from a philatelic point of view. We reckon that the forgeries of the high value issues of the current and the previous definitive series must have been printed on numerous occasions on during such a long period of operation and that will naturally vary in printing process, paper and number of stamps per sheet. It may be possible that there may be hundreds if not thousands of different forgeries of a particular stamp and precisely for this reason

and for the reason of unavailability it may be impossible to collect these.

Look out for commercially used forgeries on cover while one can still find these.

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

- M&SJ

Our thanks to the Contributors and Sources to this issue: Shyam P Nhuchhe Pradhan from Kathmandu (Nepal), The Hindustan Times, The Times of India, The Indian Express, and The Herald (UK).

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We invite your inputs, please email to stampsofindia@tatanova.com

Please mention this newsletter when contacting other philatelists.

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

Report the philatelic activities in your area for publication here. We shall reimburse the costs incurred on photos, philatelic items issued, publications, courier and other agreed charges.

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

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NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

FORTHCOMING STAMP ISSUES

- November 14 - \*Children's Day, Rs.5,
  - November 22 - \*225 years of 2 Guards (1 Grenadiers), Rs.5
  - November 27 - Harvansh Rai Bachchan,
  - November 29 - \*India France Joint Issue, Set of 2, Rs22 each & M/S Rs 44
- \* = in Sheetlet of 16

These issues along with the First Day Cover and the information sheet, at Rs.2 each, shall be available on sale at nearly 1000 selected Post Offices including all Philatelic Bureaus and Counters in the country.

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NEW STAMPS RELEASED

BENGAL SAPPERS

India Post released a commemorative stamp on Bengal Sappers Bicentenary in the denomination of Rs.5, the inland letter rate, on November 7, 2003.

Raised at Allahabad in 1803 as the Corps of Bengal Engineers it was renamed Bengal Sappers & Miners in 1819. Headquartered at Roorkee in Uttaranchal they are popularly known as 'Roorkee Safar Maina' and 'God's Own'. Their core job is to mobility to our own forces while denying the same to the enemy.

Monica Khanna Gulati designed the stamp. Alka Sharma designed the First Day Cover and the pictorial first day postmark. Information Sheet containing write-up and technical data and priced at Rs.2 was issued on the occasion. The FDC is also priced at Rs 2.

India Security Press of Nashik Road printed the stamps by photogravure in multicolor on imported un-watermarked adhesive gravure coated stamp paper in the quantity of 0.8 million in the sheets of 35 stamps.

KALKA SIMLA RAILWAY

India Post released a commemorative stamp on 100 years of Kalka Simla Railway Centenary in the denomination of Rs.5, the inland letter rate, on November 9, 2003.

The Kalka-Simla Railway was built to connect the then summer capital of India at an altitude of 2076 metres. On 9th November, 1903, a 96 kilometers railway line was launched in the limestone and shale rocks of the Shivalik Hills after three years of dedicated labor. Laid on sharp curves, the line passes over 864 bridges and through 102 tunnels using a narrow gauge of two feet and six inches in deference to hill formation and gradient. Apart from the toy train Rail Motor Cars dating from 1920s that carry 18 passengers ply regularly.

Kamleshwar Singh designed the stamp and the First Day Cover. Alka Sharma designed the pictorial first day postmark. Information Sheet containing write-up and technical data and priced at Rs.2 was issued on the occasion. The FDC is also priced at Rs 2.

Eagle Press Private Limited of Chennai printed the stamps by Photo Offset in four colors on imported unwatermarked stamp paper in the quantity of 3 million in the sheets of 50 stamps.

SNAKES

India Post released a set of 4 special stamps and a miniature sheet on Snakes on November 12, 2003. The stamps depict Python, Bamboo Pit Viper, King Cobra, and Gliding Snake each in the denomination of Rs 5, the inland letter rate. The miniature sheet containing one each of the four stamps is priced at Rs 20. Its release coincides with the publication of the 100th volume of the Journal of the Bombay Natural History Society.

Sankha Samanta designed the stamp. Bombay Natural History Society designed the First Day Cover. Alka Sharma designed the pictorial first day postmark. Information Sheet containing write-up and technical data and priced at Rs.2 was issued on the occasion. The FDC is also priced at Rs 2.

Madras Security Printers Limited of Chennai printed the stamps by Photo Offset in four colors on imported unwatermarked adhesive stamp paper in the quantity of 0.8 million in the sheets of 40 stamps. The miniature sheet is printed in the quantity of 50,000 only.

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NEW POSTAL STATIONERY

The 13th issue of the customized envelope for Bank of Maharashtra was released on October 24, 2003.

The 'postage pre-paid for Rs.5' is inscribed below the imprinted stamp. The envelope is in the size of 220 x 110 mm and is printed in the quantity of 50,000.

This issue, like other customized stationery, is NOT available to public or philatelists through the Post Office.

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NEW SPECIAL POSTMARKS

India Post will provide a special postmark on November 15, 2003 at New Delhi to mark the New-born Week.

For availability and charges, please contact the Philatelic Bureau, Sansad Marg Head Post Office, New Delhi 100 001.

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RECENT & FORTHCOMING EXHIBITIONS

The following list of events scheduled for next few months is subject to change. We update it in every issue with the information received during the week. The organizers may be contacted for further details.

November

- 14, Faridabad, District Level
- 14, Satara, District Level
- 14-15, Ludhiana, The club finally decided in favor of holding the show
- 14-16, Gwalior, Coins Show
- 15-16, Bharuch, District Level
- 27-30, Thrissur, KERAPEX, State Level

December

- 19-21, Kolkata, National Stamp Fair
- 26-29, Dharwad, KARNAPEX, State Level

January 2004

- 9-11, Tirupur, Coin-Stampex
- 9-12, Nagpur, MAHAPEX, State Level

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

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STAMP ON BAJIRAO

The 17th Century Maratha General Peshwa Bajirao I has won another battle. India Post's Deputy Director-General (Philately) Devika Kumar in a recent letter to the Marathi Rajya Smriti Pratishthan confirmed that a stamp will be issued on Bajiroa in 2004.

It may be recalled that in the month of June last year, the India Post had written to the Pratishthan, stating that it did not think it worthy of issuing a stamp on Peshwa Bajirao I. The letter had stated that a stamp on the Peshwa did not satisfy the Philatelic Advisory Committee guidelines, which stipulate that, 'the personalities on whom commemorative stamps may be issued should be of national or international importance.'

The Pratishthan had been pushing for a stamp or a coin dedicated to this stalwart Maratha General for the last six years to coincide with the general's 300th birth anniversary which fell in August 2000. The Pratishthan has now suggested that the proposed stamp should show the only available authentic painting of Bajirao from the collection of Pilajirao Jadhav.

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FAKE STAMP SCAM UPDATES

1

The report tabled by the Special Investigating Team probing the multi-billion fake stamp scam before the Mumbai High Court on November 12, 2003 mentioned nine acts of omissions and commissions by the Mumbai Police Commissioner R S Sharma. This was disclosed by Advocate General Goolam Vahanvati before Chief Justice C K Thakker and Justice Abhay Oka while submitting SIT report on the alleged role of Sharma in allegedly shielding prime accused Abdul Karim Telgi.

The report was presented to the court in a sealed cover captioned 'involvement of Shri R S Sharma'. The court has ordered the SIT to hand over the report to Chief Minister Sushilkumar Shinde for taking necessary action in the matter. On a plea made by the Advocate General, the report has been classified and not made public. Vahanvati urged the court not to make the report public in view of the ongoing probe.

Earlier the SIT questioned Sharma on November 8 & 9, 2003. As the Pune Police Commissioner, Sharma had headed the investigations in 2002 and allegedly granted favors to Telgi. Sharma faced more than 300 questions over 11-and-a-half hours spread across three sessions.

Sharma allegedly went out of his way to protect the investigating officer of the case, Assistant Commissioner of Police Mohammad Mulani. Mulani along with Inspector P R Deshmukh reportedly blackmailed Telgi for not arresting his wife, four-year-old daughter and his ailing brother. He demanded Rs30 million and accepted Rs1.5 million as the first installment. This, sources said, had the tacit support of Sharma. While the investigations were on, Mulani was transferred after his role came under a cloud. But he got it stayed by the Maharashtra Administrative Tribunal and immediately Sharma got him back into the Telgi investigation team. Mumbai High Court on November 12, 2003 directed the SIT to probe the allegations against these two officers and arrest them if there was evidence against them.

2

Karnataka Special Investigation Team (SIT) handed over 56 tapes to Maharashtra SIT on November 10, 2003 on the direction given by a bench headed by Mumbai High Court's Chief Justice C K Thakker on the basis of a public interest litigation filed by activist Anna Hazare and others. The tapes contain phone about 1300 conversations between fake stamp scam mastermind Abdul Karim Telgi and others, including politicians and policemen.

3

Maharashtra SIT questioned Assistant Commissioner of Police Ramakant Padwal and Senior Inspector Anil Deshmukh on November 10, 2003 on their alleged role in shielding Telgi.

Padwal was under the command of Joint Commissioner of Police Sridhar Vagal who has been arrested on November 7, 2003. Investigators believe that Vagal and Padwal allowed Telgi to stay at his Cuffe Parade apartment when he should have been in a police lock-up. Telgi was also taken to Hyderabad, Goa and Bangalore on business trips using government funds while in custody

Inspector Anil Deshmukh is attached to the Narpule police station in Bhiwandi town of nearby Thane district. He was understood to have been questioned in connection with the seizure of fake stamp papers worth Rs 8.5 billion in Bhiwandi on January 16, 2003. According to SIT sources, the seizure was 'stage-managed' and it was done allegedly at the instance of Telgi. The records showed that the seizure was made on a tip-off given by a Telgi aide.

4

Maharashtra SIT on November 9, 2003 arrested two more policemen for their alleged involvement in the scam. Prosecution Sub-Inspectors Jangle of Thane police and Nemade of Nasik police were arrested at their respective headquarters.

5

Bihar police have busted an inter-state gang engaged in producing and selling fake stamps and stamp papers and recovered material worth Rs 2 million on November 9, 2003 at Patna. Police arrested 8 criminals of the gang also seized huge cache of firearms, foreign currencies, and the machines used in printing fake stamps. Police raid was conducted on the basis of the clue given by a criminal arrested earlier near Beur Central jail.

6

Maharashtra SIT arrested Mumbai's Joint Commissioner of Police (Intelligence), Sridhar Vagal, on November 7, 2003 at Mumbai the basis of evidence gathered against him for his alleged role in shielding prime accused, Abdul Karim Telgi. Vagal, is the 59<sup>th</sup> person and the 6<sup>th</sup> police officer to be arrested in this case. Vagal, who holds the rank of Inspector General of Police, is the first Indian Police Service officer to be booked under the Maharashtra Control of Organized Crime Act.

Vagal was summoned to the SIT office in Worli and questioned for three hours before he was arrested. He was later taken to Pune where he was produced on November 8, 2003 before a Special Court where Judicial Magistrate, First Class, A A A Shaikh remanded him to police custody till November 13, 2003.

Earlier, Vagal was questioned by the SIT on November 4 and 5 on the probe carried out by the police under his supervision. Vagal is facing the allegation of developing a nexus with Telgi through subordinate officers and allegedly shielding him by hushing up investigations.

Following the arrest SIT raided four premises of the accused in Mumbai and Pune, police said here. The raids started immediately after Wagal's arrest and Anti Corruption Bureau (ACB) staff assisted SIT in the searches. SIT seized a large quantity of documents after thoroughly searching Wagal's office located at Maharashtra Police Headquarters in Colaba. It follows the seizure of large number of incriminating material from the official's car on the day of his arrest.

7

Mumbai police have cancelled the licence of Alankar Lodge in the Grant Road area owned by Telgi. The lodge was recently listed among 22 properties in Mumbai that have been sealed by the SIT. The SIT has already begun the process of attaching five properties owned by Telgi. The remaining 17 are rented premises. The SIT also asked a special court in Pune to freeze 38 accounts held by Telgi in various banks in the state. The matter will come up for hearing on November 29.

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NEPAL STAMP PROGRAM 2004

March

50th Anniversary of the Social Services of United Mission, Rs5

Silver Jubilee of Neapal Netrajyoti Sangh, Rs5

April

Visit Nepal Series, Set of 2, Gadhi Mai Bara, Rs12, & Maya Devi Temple Lumbini, Rs25

May

Centenary of FIFA, Rs25

July

58th Birthday of the His Majesty King Gyanendra, Rs5

August

Personality Series, Set of 2, Yogi NarhariNath & NayaRaj Panta, Rs5 each

October

Bio-diversity Series, Set of 4, Giant Atlas Moth, Rufous Piculet Woodpecker, Jumli Marsi Dhan, Stellera Decumbens, Rs10 each

Mountain Series, Set of 8, Everest, Kanchenjunga, Lhotse, Makalu, Cho Oyu, Dhaulagiri, Manaslu, Annapurna 1st

December

Golden Jubilee of Madan Puruskar (prize), Rs5

Sculpture Series, Set of 4, Jayarama, Umamaheshwar Pashupati, Vishworupa Changu, Banshagopal Makawanpurgadhi Makawanpur, Rs10 each

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FREE ADVERTISEMENTS

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

## VIEWS & OPINIONS

### READERS FORUM

<Dear Reader, Your feedback is important to us as it helps evolve the newsletter. Please do let us have your thoughts and suggestions.>

### PRAKASH MODY

I sincerely thank you for this free public educational service in the interest of the business as well as an encouragement of the hobby. I congratulate your efforts and care you both take in providing timely and relevant info. Official announcements or information may or may not reach but through this e-newsletter we are getting free up-to-date news & views of the subject. I appreciate your social service activity. Please continue the topics covered including Fakes & Scams info. It is good that you give email addresses of the contacts. Links and other websites can be more helpful too.

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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

#### STAMPS OF SANDA ISLAND

The owners of the little island of Sanda have won a 10-year battle to have their postal service restored. To celebrate their 'David and Goliath' victory against Royal Mail, Meg Gannon and her husband Dick are to restore an old tradition by printing their own stamps.

Stamps were produced by the Russell family on Sanda, which sits at the convergence of the Irish Sea and the Firth of Clyde, in the 1960s with the help of Malcolm Kelly, a printer in Girvan. The final stamps - featuring the Apollo moon landing in 1969 - were printed in 1970 for Jack Bruce of Cream, the pop group, who owned the island. They are now collectors' items and are traded on the internet.

Gannon said they hoped to re-introduce Sanda stamps for the reopening of the Byron Darnton in spring next year. "We will probably produce a set to commemorate the pub, lighthouse, birds, chapel and Scotland's fourth bird observatory on the island."

Earlier this year, the Gannons opened the Byron Darnton, one of the most remote and inaccessible pubs in Scotland, after overcoming a series of setbacks - including a lightning strike, a lost boat and mooring, and foot-and-mouth. However, restoring the post proved to be a 10-year-battle.

The island lies 25 miles west of Girvan and two miles off the south tip of the Mull of Kintyre.



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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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WEB SITE UPDATES

STAMPS OF INDIA <http://www.stampsofindia.com>

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.

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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ADMINISTRIVIA

Published by Madhu Jhingan [mjhingan@yahoo.com](mailto:mjhingan@yahoo.com) for 'Stamps of India',  
Apartment 49-D, Block BG-5, Paschim Vihar, New Delhi 110063. India  
Phone: +91-11-25281578 Mobile: +91-9868140089(MJ), +91-9811160884(SJ)

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Vol.1 2000, Issue #1-19, Rs.500

Vol.2 2001, Issue #20-52, Rs.950

Vol.3 2002, Issue #53-97, Rs.1250

Vol.4 2003, Part 1, Issue #98-122, (January-June) Rs.650

Complete Set, as above, postpaid: Rs.3500 (inland) or US\$95 (overseas)

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Issue # 1 - latest issue, Rs.500 or US\$ 10 postpaid

STAMPS OF INDIA COLLECTORS COMPANION, Back Issues on the Web Site

Issue # 1 - latest issue, No Charge

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