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

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

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Awards Received: Silver Medal with the 'Felicitations of the Jury' at  
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of this issue for details.  
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JHINGANS JOTTINGS

Hi

Greetings of the Season!

May the coming year bring Happiness, Joy, Peace & Prosperity for you and  
your loved ones.

This is the last and 51<sup>st</sup> issue without skipping a single week this year  
and we hope that we would be able to continue with this effort in the  
coming year as well.

The year has been full of hectic activity and travel and 2004 should  
bring more of the same.

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

- M&SJ

Our thanks to the Contributors and Sources to this issue: Ajay Agrawal and P G Bhargave

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We invite your inputs, please email to [feedback@stampsfindia.com](mailto:feedback@stampsfindia.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

NEW GREETING CARDS RELEASED

India Post issued a set of 9 greeting cards with matching stamped envelopes for the New Year. The set includes 3 medium and 6 small size cards priced at Rs17 and Rs15 respectively. The cards printed by Madras Security Printers are numbered from 247 to 255. The designs are miniature paintings from the National Museum, New Delhi.

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FORTHCOMING STAMP ISSUES

December 29

Folk Music: Lalan Fakir & Allah Jilai Bai, Set of 2, Rs5 each

December 31

Major Somnath Sharma PVC, Rs5

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

MUKUT BEHARI LAL BHARGAVA

The Vice President of India, Bhairon Singh Shekhawat released a commemorative stamp in the denomination of Rs5 on Mukut Behari Lal Bhargava in a special function at New Delhi on December 18, 2003.

A beacon at the confluence of the political, legal and nationalistic streams of India's life, Mukut Behari Lal Bhargava, began his legal practice at Beawar, Rajasthan in 1927 and went on to become the president of the Bar Association in Beawar and later the Chairman of the Rajasthan Bar Council. As a lawyer he also received recognition even in the Supreme Court. His legacy lives on in his private collection of legal literature and in the welfare fund he set up for lawyers.

Despite of losing his eyesight in the Quit India Movement in 1942, during detention, he continued with his resilient spirit. He was elected to the Central Legislative Assemble in 1945 and later to the Constituent Assembly, he was returned to Parliament three times from Ajmer, Rajasthan.

Bharati Meerchandani 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 Rs2 was issued on the occasion. The FDC is also priced at Rs2.

India Security Press of Nashik Road printed the stamps by photogravure in four colors on imported un-watermarked adhesive gravure coated stamp paper in the quantity of 0.4 million in the sheets of 35 stamps.

#### SWAMI SWAROOPANAND JI

India Post released a commemorative stamp in the denomination of Rs5 on Swami Swaroopanand Ji on December 20, 2003 to commemorate his birth centenary.

Swami Swaroopanand Ji, personified the virtues inculcated by the 'Bhagavad Geeta' these molded his personality and thinking, he combined devotion with detachment and knowledge. He had a keen interest in religious scriptures from childhood which was fostered by his teachers at the Aryan Education Society in Bombay.

He was greatly influenced by the nationalistic leaders Lokmanya Tilak and Mahatma Gandhi and offered his services to the nation rather than pursue higher studies. He set up a school and the education imparted there inculcated patriotism, independence and self sufficiency in tune with the spirit of the times. He was a regular participant in the freedom movement and was arrested in 1930 while participating in a nation-wide strike. His literary works focus on making the treasures of Marathi Literature accessible to the common people and helping them in their spiritual advancement.

Sudha Chowdhry designed the stamp. Mallika Das designed the First Day Cover. Alka Sharma designed the pictorial first day postmark. Information Sheet containing write-up and technical data and priced at Rs2 was issued on the occasion. The FDC is also priced at Rs2.

Eagle Press Private Limited of Chennai printed the stamp by Photo Offset in four colors on Imported Un-watermarked Stamp Paper in the quantity of 0.4 million in the sheets of 40 stamps.

#### SANGEET NATAK AKADEMI

Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee released a set of 3 stamps and a miniature sheet on the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Sangeet Natak Akademi in a special function at New Delhi on December 22, 2003. The stamps, in the denomination of Rs5, the inland letter rate, capture the vibrant spirits of the performing arts they portray. The miniature sheet is priced at Rs15.

Sangeet Natak Akademi is the apex body in the field of performing arts and has opened new vistas for art tradition, it has also fostered cultural contacts among the various region in India and between India and the world.

The academy was set up with the objective of providing an institutionalized system of support and patronage to the performing arts. It has also instituted the 'Academy Awards' that are conferred on practicing artists as hallmarks of meritorious service rendered by them in their respective fields. 'Akademi fellowships' are conferred as the highest recognition on living masters. The Akademi also functions as a storehouse of archives comprising audio/video tapes, photographs and films and a reference library.

Kamleshwar Singh designed the stamp, miniature sheet and the First Day Cover. Alka Sharma designed the pictorial first day postmark. Information Sheet containing write-up and technical data and priced at Rs2 was issued on the occasion. The FDC is also priced at Rs2.

Calcutta Security Printers Limited of Kanpur printed the stamps by Photo Offset in four colors on Matt Chromo paper in the quantity of 0.8 million each in a mixed sheet of 30 stamps. The miniature sheet is printed in the quantity of 100,000 only.

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BALLOON MAIL

Balloon Mail is being organized during MAHAPEX the state level philatelic exhibition to be held at Nagpur from January 9 to 12, 2004. About 1000-1500 covers are expected to be flown from Nagpur to nearby Kamptee which will bear the name of the person booking a cover with a care of address of the Post Master, Kamptee. The price has been kept Rs300 + 50 for insured postage. Booking can be made by sending a demand draft with name to Secretary, Mahapex 2004, Nagpur GPO, Nagpur 440001.

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MORE BOOKLETS AND CARDS

A booklet was issued during SURATPEX district level from December 22 and 23, 2003 at Surat. The booklet cover features Indian Stamps on Sardar Patel. The booklet is priced Rs35 and Rs70 containing 4 Children's Day 2003 stamps and 12 (3 sets) greeting stamps worth Rs54 respectively. Please send your orders to the Philatelic Counter, Surat Head Post Office 395003.

4 booklets are being issued during Kalimpong Stamp Show from December 24 to 31, 2003 at Kalimpong. The booklets are price at Rs50 each. The theme of the booklets is 'Joy of Communication' and the cover designs feature Season's Greetings, Flower, Letterbox, 100 years of Powered Flight. Also available are the two booklets issued featuring Darjeeling Himalayan Railway that is on UNESCO's world heritage list. These are also priced at Rs50 each. Please send your orders to the Philatelic Bureau, Siliguri Head Post Office 734401.

4 Stamp Cards are also being issued depicting the recently issued Greeting stamps. The set of 4 cards is available at Rs40 and with appropriate stamps affixed at Rs60. Please send your orders to the Philatelic Bureau, Siliguri Head Post Office 734401.

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RECENT & FORTHCOMING EVENTS

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.

December 2003

23-24, Raigarh, RAIGARHPEX, District Level

24-31, Kalimpong, Stamp Show

26-29, Dharwar, KARNAPEX, State Level

January 2004

9-12, Nagpur, MAHAPEX, State Level

February 2004

27-29, Tirupur, COIN-STAMPEX

For a list of events held this year, please visit

<http://www.stampsofindia.com/Content/Events/a300.htm>

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ANDHARE POST AUCTION

Rohini Andhare [crandhare@yahoo.com](mailto:crandhare@yahoo.com) Post box 21, Nehru Nagar, Bilaspur 495001 informs that unsold lots from their fourth auction sale are available at 80% of the estimate on first come first served basis till January 10, 2004. The lot numbers of unsold lots have been mailed to all regular bidders.

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ROYAL FELLOWSHIP

A M Mollah, well-known philatelic expert on Fiscal Philately of India and Indian Princely States, has been awarded the fellowship of the Royal Philatelic Society, London in November 2003.

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FAKE STAMP SCAM UPDATES

1

Maharashtra State's Deputy Chief Minister Chhagan Bhujabal had resigned on December 23, 2003 owing moral responsibility for the attack on a private television network's office by activists of his party. The Chief Minister had immediately forwarded the resignation to Maharashtra Governor Mohammed Fazal who has accepted the same. Bhujbal is so far the most powerful political victim of the Telgi scam.

2

Three persons were arrested on December 23, 2003 for selling fake stamp papers from a food stall on the fourth floor of the City Civil Court at Kolkata. Acting on a tip off, detective department personnel of the city police conducted a raid in the stall and seized huge amount of stamp papers and arrested the three. The exact amount of fake stamp paper seized was not known. The arrested persons were identified as Sushil Kumar De, owner of the stall, and his two employees Santosh Bar and Tarun Das. Investigations were on to ascertain whether they had any link with the Telgi racket.

3

Stamp paper racket kingpin Abdul Karim Telgi alias Kareem Lala was taken to Victoria Hospital, Bangalore, on December 22, 2003 for narco-analytical test and routine checkup amid high security. Narco-analysis involves injecting a person with a carefully regulated dose of anesthetic sodium pentothal, also known as truth serum. Under the influence of anesthetic, the person is lulled into a state of semi-stupor and, when questioned under this condition, usually reveals the truth.

4

Suspended general manager of India Security Press, Gangaprakash Chaudhari and its suspended works manager Mahendra Singh were on December 22, 2003 remanded to CBI custody till December 30, 2003. The two were produced before Additional Sessions and District Judge AK Gunjotikar by CBI officials. Singh, who was suspended by the Union Finance Ministry, was arrested on December 21, 2003.

Chaudhary was allegedly involved in selling of stamp printing machinery from ISP as scrap in 1997 to Abdul Karim Telgi, the main accused in the scam, and had also met Telgi in Mumbai in 1998 for his promotion as the General Manager. He was arrested by CBI at Hyderabad on December 19 and was brought to Nasik Road on December 21, 2003 for interrogation.

5

Former Maharashtra Director General of Police (DGP) Subhashchandra Malhotra was on December 11, 2003 questioned by the SIT in connection with the multi-crore stamp paper scam. Malhotra had given a clean chit to the then Mumbai police commissioner R S Sharma when SIT chief DIG Subodh Jaiswal had presented a report on the omissions and commissions of the Pune police in the investigation of the fake stamp paper scam.

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INDIA POST DEMATERIALIZE SAVINGS CERTIFICATES

India Post in association with National Securities Depository Limited (NSDL) has taken an initiative to demat the National Savings Certificates and Kisan Vikas Patras as a step towards investors' convenience, enhanced security and possibility of future tradability of these instruments.

In the beginning only 10 Post offices in Mumbai, Mumbai GPO, Dadar HO, Mumbai Central HO, Andheri HO, Nariman Point PO, Ghatkopar (West) PO, Rajawadi PO, Motilal Nagar PO, Wagle Industrial Estate PO, and Panvel HO will offer this facility.

Dematerialization of Savings Certificates entails the process of converting the paper certificates into an equivalent number of securities/units in electronic form and crediting them into the investors' DP Account with Depository Participant (DP).

The procedure in this regard is as follows. The investor will apply in an application form directly or through an agent to any of the above Post offices as at present. The investor will be mailed 'Statement of Transaction' having the details of units credited in his DP Account. The investors who are already having a DP Account can quote the same in the application form. NSDL will open a DP Account in respect of all those

investors who are not having a DP Account. The facility of transfer, nomination, premature encashment (in case of KVP), and pledge will be available to the investor in the 'demat mode'. The payment of interest will continue to be the same. No extra charge will be passed on to the investor for which he is not paying at present. The payment of redemption amount on the maturity of the certificates to the investor can either be to the investors' bank account or through cheque/ warrant.

The benefits to the customers are: Convenience arising from making a single/no visits to the Post office for the entire life cycle of investing in the instrument (including purchase and redemption), Consolidation of multiple holdings in a single account, Dispensation of the need to hold physical paper which is perishable as well as unsafe, Secure mode of retaining the savings as it is tamper-proof, Automatic redemption on due date, Future possibility of enhanced liquidity (NSC/KVP becoming tradable), Continuation of all the existing facilities to transfer and pledge, make nominations etc, and Full portability (No need for transfer of the instrument from one Post office to another).

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FREE ADVERTISEMENTS

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

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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.>

S C SUKHANI a well-known professional philatelist and a former member of the Philatelic Advisory Committee writes: The special first day of issue postmark is not available on the day of issue at Kolkata for most stamp issues this month such as India Korea Joint Issue, 200<sup>th</sup> session of Rajya Sabha, and Sangeet Natak Akademi. The philatelists may be facing such problem at several other bureaus too.

It will be best if India Post processes the first day covers at one central location and supplies the complete FDC directly to the standing order account holders.

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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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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://www.stampsonindia.com>

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

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ADMINISTRIVIA

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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)

STAMPS OF INDIA COLLECTORS COMPANION, Back Issues on CD

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

<http://www.stampsofindia.com/Content/Download/archives.htm>

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