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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  
'BELGICA 2001' World Philatelic Exhibition, Brussels, June 9-17, 2001  
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BACK ISSUES are available Online, in Print and on CD, please see the end  
of this issue for details.  
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JHINGANS JOTTINGS

Hi

The New Year has brought a lot of hectic activity and we have a large  
backlog of pending mails. Here is a request to all our readers, if you  
have sent a query or suggestions etc. please don't lose heart if you  
haven't heard from us, we will eventually get around to replying all our  
mails at the earliest.

In the meantime, do keep writing to us as it provides us with the  
courage to go on.

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

- M&SJ

Our thanks to the Contributors and Sources to this issue: The Hindu, The Times of India, The Economic Times, IndianTelevision.Com, and The Indian Express.

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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

SPECIAL PACK OF GANDHI STAMPS

India Post released on January 8, 2004 a special pack of Mahatma Gandhi stamps se-tenant pair that was issued on October 2, 2001. The pack is priced at Rs. 40 and is available at select philatelic bureaus only.

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FORTHCOMING STAMP ISSUES

January 16  
Nani A Palkivala, Rs5

The issue 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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C D DESHMUKH STAMP RELEASED

India Post released a stamp on January 14, 2004 to commemorate C D Deshmukh, the man responsible for the nationalization of banking and insurance and the first Chairman of University Grants Commission as well as the first Indian Governor of the Reserve Bank of India.

The achievements of Deshmukh are equaled only by his method of achievement. The secret of his success was that he had no personal ambition beyond a passionate commitment to do his job well. He had an eye for detail and a passion for correctness and for excellence whether as the Finance Minister, member of planning commission, Governor for India on the Executive Boards of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund or as Revenue Secretary. As a Civil Servant he remains a model that the Indian Administrative Services try to emulate even to this day.

Sankha Samanta 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.

Madras Security Printers 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.

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NEW MEGHDOOT POST CARD

A Meghdoot post card was recently issued:  
Ad in Tamil - Use Toilets

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ARMY POSTAL SERVICE NEW ISSUES

The Army Postal Service issued the following Special Covers with Special Postmarks in 2003, further to the report in issue # 150 of January 8, 2004:

Oct 28, 5 Bn The Mechanized Infantry Regiment (14 Kumaon), 150 years of  
Dec 1, 69 Armoured Regiment, Presentation of Standard  
Dec 1, 86 Armoured Regiment, Presentation of Standard

The complete listing of 22 Army Postal Service Special Covers & Postmarks issued during 2003 is now uploaded:

<http://www.stampsofindia.com/Content/Issues/APS/a204-2003.htm>

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RECENT & FORTHCOMING EVENTS

MAHAPEX 2004

India Post successfully organized the 10<sup>th</sup> zonal philatelic exhibition for the states of Maharashtra and Goa from January 9 to 12, 2004 at Nagpur.

173 exhibits were displayed in 371 frames. In addition several internationally acclaimed exhibits were displayed in the Invitee class in 36 frames.

The Jury was chaired by Chief Post Master General of Maharashtra, K Noorjehan and consisted of Kusum Mehta, Manohar Lal, and P N Ranjit Kumar with Shibu M Job as Apprentice.

Mohammed Fazal, the Governor of Maharashtra gave away the awards. There were 6 Gold, 20 Silver, and 59 bronze and 56 Diplomas awarded.

Kishore S Chandak won the Grand Prize in the Championship Class for 'Hand-struck Postage Stamps of India'; Rajan Jayakar won the Best Exhibit Award for 'Small Causes Court 1869-1875', and Praful Lokesh Chaudhary won the Best Exhibit in Youth Class Award for 'Hindi Literature through Indian Stamps'. The Chief Post Master General Rolling Trophy for the best exhibit in the School Collections Class was won by the St. Xavier's High School, Nagpur.

Four special covers with special postmarks, one for each day, were released. The covers featured Sant Gadge Baba, Lonar - the site of the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest meteorite impact crater on earth, Pench National Park & Tiger Reserve, Terracotta figurine of Mother goddess of 2<sup>nd</sup> Century AD

recovered from excavation at Adam. A souvenir was also released on the occasion.

The highlight of the show was the Balloon Mail Flight from Nagpur to Kamptee on January 10, 2004. We understand that less than 350 covers were flown. The majority of covers were booked and paid for in advance at Rs. 300 each and were addressed. In addition about 100 un-addressed covers, with signature of the Post Master General for authenticity, were also flown. All covers were signed by the pilot, Captain Wasan.

A Philatelic Seminar was organized during the show.

#### STAMP EXHIBITION IN CHENNAI

India Post in association with South India Philatelists' Association (SIPA) has organized a philatelic exhibition in Chennai on the theme of tourism. The valuable exhibits from SIPA members are being displayed in the exclusive Philatelic Exhibition Hall at Anna Road, Head Post Office on consecutive Saturdays from January 10 till 24, 2004. Entry is free for all visitors and they have the opportunity to buy stamps and other philatelic items from the Philatelic Bureau where the exhibition is being held.

#### CALENDAR OF 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.

##### January

23-25, Bangalore, COINEX  
24-26, Shimoga, District Level  
27-28, Panchguni, Satara District Level  
28-29, Berhampore, Murshidabad District Level

##### February

19-20, South Delhi District Level  
27-29, Tirupur, COIN-STAMPEX

For a list of events held this year, please visit

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

#### PRAVASI BHARTIYA DIVAS

Vinod Khanna, Minister of State for External Affairs inaugurated the 'India: Beyond the Boundaries' - Exhibition of Stamps on India issued by Countries across the Globe. The exhibition was organized by the International Council of Cultural Relations (ICCR) from January 9 - 11, 2004 at New Delhi during the 2<sup>nd</sup> 'Pravasi Bhartiya Divas' (day of Non-resident Indians and Persons of Indian Origin). The significance of designating January 9 as PBD is that Mahatma Gandhi returned to India on this day in 1915.

The exhibition was mounted in 10 standard frames of 16 sheets each and showed stamps related to India and Indian subjects. Mahatma Gandhi and Budhha were represented in 10 sheets each and the focus was on stamps on

other Indian persons, events, and subjects as these individually can be developed as large exhibits on their own.

The display was well received by all visitors and was widely covered by electronic and print media and generated lots of positive publicity for stamp collecting. The exhibit belongs to yours truly.

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PHILATELIC ROAD SHOW

The Delhi Circle of India Post is holding Philatelic Road Shows in nearly 40 locations in Delhi from January 15 to February 7, 2004 to promote philately and to generate interest in collecting stamps. These shows are being organized in conjunction with the Western Union Money Transfer Services Road Shows in association with India Post.

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JOINT ISSUE WITH IRAN

India Post is to release a joint issue with Iran depicting the portraits of Iranian Poet Hafiz and India's Poet Saint Kabir in 2004.

Dr. Richard Zimmermann, President of the International Philatelic Society of Joint Stamp Issues Collectors, and Editor of 'Joint Stamp Issues' says "India has not participated in many joint issues so far" and lists the following 10 joint issues for India:

1977 Apr 1: Bangladesh (Sep 29), Indonesia (Apr 11), Philippines, & Thailand, - Postal Union Asia Oceania, Parallel issue (different stamps)

1984 Apr 3: USSR - Intercosmos, Parallel issue

1985 Dec 8: Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, & Sri Lanka, - SAARC, Parallel issue

1987 Jul 3: USSR - Culture festival, Parallel issue

1990 Aug 15: USSR - Children drawings, Twin issue (identical stamps)

1995 Oct 2: South Africa - 125th birthday of Gandhi, Twin issue

1998 Mar 27: Pakistan - Centenary of the death of Syed Ahmad Khan, Parallel issue, Accidental joint issue!

2002 Apr 26: Japan (12 Apr) - Relationship, Parallel issue

2003 Nov 29: France - Relationship, Twin issue

2003 Dec 10: South Korea - Relationship, Twin issue

A great deal of useful information on joint issues is available on the society's web site: <http://perso.club-internet.fr/rzimmerm/>

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AUCTION ACTION

ITS POSTAL AUCTION

Indian Thematic Society [indianthematicsociety@rediffmail.com](mailto:indianthematicsociety@rediffmail.com) is holding its postal auction #23. The 52-lot auction closes on January 31, 2004.

THE CALENDAR OF WORLDWIDE PHILATELIC AUCTIONS

The Calendar for January 2004 has been updated and is now available at <http://www.stampsofindia.com/Content/Auctions/a702.htm>

This information is provided by special arrangement with Charles E. Cwiakala and updates to this information are available at their comprehensive Website [www.cwiakala.com](http://www.cwiakala.com).

INTERNATIONAL PROJECTS OF INDIA POST

India Post will provide technical assistance to Afghanistan Post to the tune of Rs.8 million covering the cost of equipment, training of officials and computerization of the post offices at Kabul, Kandahar, Herat, Mazar-e-Sharif, and Jalalabad. India Post also deputed senior officers to visit Afghanistan to advice on mailroom operations.

India Post is also undertaking computerization projects in Bangladesh, Myanmar, and Nepal. Earlier it has taken up similar projects in Uzbekistan and Maldives.

SPICE TELECOM TIE-UP WITH INDIA POST

Karnataka's Spice Telecom announced its tie up with the Department of Posts to market Spice Uth prepaid cards and recharge coupons through the network of post offices across Karnataka on 13 January, 2004. This is the first time in Karnataka that a cellular operator has tied-up with the postal department.

Through this facility, a customer could buy Spice Uth cards and recharge coupons in all denominations from post office counters across the state. The facility will be introduced in Bangalore and Mysore and will soon be extended to all other districts in Karnataka. As of now, 62 post offices in Bangalore and 15 in Mysore have been identified in the first phase to sell these cards which would be later extended to more post offices depending upon the needs of the customers.

Announcing this development, Spice Telecom, Karnataka Circle MD Sean Dexter says, "By using the extensive network of post offices, the company is enhancing its services to subscribers in the state. This tie-up increases Spice's distribution reach and is another step towards bringing mobile services closer to the people of Karnataka."

FAKE STAMP SCAM UPDATES

CBI has arrested four more Railway Protection Force (RPF) officials on January 8, 2004 from Nashik in the multi-billion fake stamp papers case for allegedly conspiring with scamster Abdul Karim Telgi in stealing Rs 2.3 billion worth stamps from India Security Press. Inspector V R Joshi, Sub-Inspector P S Dhake, Constable B S More and retired Head Constable B R Virk, with the arrest of these four, the number of RPF officials nabbed in this case has gone up to seven. Earlier, a senior Commandant of RPF R P Pawar along with Inspector B K Tiwari and Constable Sarvar Khan were arrested by the CBI on December 20 after the agency had registered a case on December 16, 2003. The CBI, in its FIR had accused Pawar, Tiwari and Khan of entering into a criminal conspiracy with Telgi between 1997 and 2000 to pilfer government stamps, stamp papers

dispatched by India Security Press to various state governments and treasuries. The interrogation of the earlier arrested RPF men had led to the nabbing of another four personnel who were also allegedly involved in opening of boxes inside a railway wagon and stealing stamps. The original stamps and stamp papers were later handed over to Telgi for illegal gratification.

Deputy Commissioner of Police who led a group of units which gunned down close to 300 gangsters over the past three years, Pradip Sawant, was arrested under MCOCA (the Maharashtra Control of Organized Crime Act) on January 7, 2004 for not taking action against his subordinate Dilip Kamath in the Telgi stamp racket and has been remanded in police custody till January 12, 2004. The Anti-corruption Bureau and the SIT jointly conducted raids simultaneously at his residence and office on January 8, 2004.

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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.>

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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

ROYAL MAIL LAUNCHES ONLINE PERSONALIZED ELECTRONIC DIGITAL STAMPS

Royal Mail on January 14, 2004 launched the UK's first digital stamp with a new online postage purchasing system called "SmartStamp." Customers can create SmartStamps on their desktop computer, buy them over the Internet and print them directly onto envelopes from a normal printer at any time of the day or night. SmartStamps can be printed for most UK and international mail and can be posted directly into post boxes or taken to a Post Office branch in the usual way.

Small businesses can add their own logo designs and print them directly onto an envelope or label in the office. The ability to personalize the logo gives small businesses the opportunity to differentiate themselves from competitors and achieve a professional brand appearance more commonly associated with larger companies.

When the user is ready to pay they connect to the Internet and by submitting their order the cost of the stamps printed is deducted from

their pre-paid user account. Customers can credit their pre-paid account with a credit card or direct debit at any time. The SmartStamp service gives businesses clear visibility of their spending on postage. The online account provides a centralized record of all money spent on postage by the business.

Entrepreneur Wayne Hemingway, whose company has been testing out the new system, said: "Hemingway design is the first design company to be able to trial SmartStamp and the concept of being able to produce stamps that can target customers, publicize projects and visualize our ethos is going down well. We will be using them to do more than just put our logo on the front of letters. Our first stamp designs have included an image of our collection of straw donkeys, another a photoshop disturbingly distorted image of the design team, another is a prototype design of a digital radio we've been working on."

SmartStamp is designed to suit a broad range of small business customers. Product testing conducted by Royal Mail found that financial advisers and accountants, lawyers, doctors, and estate agents all favorably received SmartStamp, believing that it would be a useful business tool.

"SmartStamp will suit anyone working within a small or home office," said Alison White, Royal Mail's Head of Small Business and Consumer. "If you send out a few items per day or more then we recommend that you seriously consider using SmartStamp."

"Royal Mail is dedicated to providing customers with a wide range of products that not only suit their postage needs, but also help them to operate more effectively as a business. SmartStamp is another example of a service that combines operational efficiency, quality of service and business enhancement services in one valuable package," added White.

The SmartStamp software is free, and is available to customers nationwide. Each business only needs to buy one copy of the software, which can then be installed on multiple computers. Customers then pay a monthly subscription of £4.99, or an annual subscription of £49.99 to use the SmartStamp service. For further information visit [www.royalmail.com/smartstamp](http://www.royalmail.com/smartstamp)

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NEWSSCAN

TINY PIECES OF HISTORY AND CULTURE by Ehtasham Khan  
Rediff.com, January 12, 2004  
<http://www.rediff.com/news/2004/jan/12pbd1.htm>

<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.stampsfindia.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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<http://www.stampsofindia.com/Content/Guide/w04.htm>

STAMPS OF INDIA COLLECTORS COMPANION, Back issues in Print

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)

Vol.5 2003, Part 2, Issue #123-148, July-December) Coming Soon

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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