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----- STAMPS OF INDIA COLLECTORS COMPANION -----
The First & Only Weekly on Philately & Postal Services of India

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Edited by Madhukar and Savita Jhingan

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JHINGANS JOTTINGS

Hi

We wish you a happy, prosperous and peaceful New Year 2005!

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

- M&SJ

Our thanks to the Contributors and Sources to this issue:

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

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If you've found this newsletter useful, recommend it to a friend.
Better still, forward a copy of this issue. Also, please mention this
newsletter when contacting other philatelists.

Report the philatelic activities in your area for publication here. We
shall reimburse the costs incurred on images, 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

January 9: Dogs, set of 4 stamps and Miniature Sheet

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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SETHUPATHY STAMP RELEASED

India Post released a commemorative postage stamp in the denomination of Rs 5 on Bhaskara Sethupathy - the King of Ramanathapuram, on December 27, 2004.

Bhaskara Sethupathy, 1868 - 1903, took over as the Head of the Ramanathapuram state on April 3, 1889. He was a social reformer and patron of fine arts. He funded lots of religious, educational, and public welfare schemes. He was instrumental in Swami Vivekananda attending the World Religion Conference at Chicago in 1893.

'Sethupati', literally the 'Master of the Bridge' is a title carried by the rulers of the Ramanathapuram. It refers to the Kings as the protectors and caretakers of the bridge between India and Sri Lanka built in ancient times by Lord Rama.

India Security Press designed the stamp. Alka Sharma designed the First Day Cover and the pictorial first day postmark. Brochure containing write-up and technical data was issued on the occasion. The First Day Cover and the Brochure are priced at Rs 2 each. India Security Press printed the stamps by Photo Gravure in the quantity of 0.6 million.

This is the last stamp issued in 2004. A total of 54 stamps and 6 miniature sheets were issued in the year. The complete list is available at <http://www.stampsofindia.com/stamps/2004.htm>

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NEW MEGHDOOT CARDS

Following Meghdoot post cards with advertisement were recently released:  
Ad in Hindi - Post Office Small Savings Schemes, Bihar  
Ad in Hindi - State Bank of India's Kisan Credit Card  
Ad in Telugu - Civil Supplies

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RECENT & FORTHCOMING EVENTS

December 28-30, Mahesana, District Level

2005

January 8-9, Vardha, District Level

January 8-9, Vellore

February 23-27, Jaipur, Science Thematic

February, Jaipur, District Level, DATES TO BE ANNOUNCED

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SPEED POST NATIONAL ACCOUNTS

India Post introduced a scheme of National Accounts last year on an experimental basis. High volume corporate customers with a minimum business of Rs 20 million a year were offered special rates for Speed Post articles. State Bank of India was identified as one such account. This proved very successful and the Bank's Speed Post business volume was Rs 140 million.

Encouraged by this the scheme was extended on an all India basis during November 2004. Under this scheme, India Post offered a flat rate of Rs 29 per Speed Post article up to 50 grams weight anywhere in India irrespective of distance subject to a minimum business of Rs 20 million a year.

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ORISSA PIGEON POST

Orissa State Government maintains a pigeon post service with its main centre located at Cuttack, 40 kilometers from the State Capital, Bhubaneswar.

These birds fly hundreds of kilometers to deliver messages before returning to base and were an important means of communication during floods and cyclones in the state. However, with the service reduced today to a ceremonial presentation with the introduction of radio network and other communication means, the government is planning to retrench these pigeons.

The 400 pigeons will be handed over to the wildlife department to save about Rs 5.4 million per year. The pigeons are descendants of the Belgian Homer pigeons that were bought in 1946.

MONETARY MUSEUM AT MUMBAI

Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) monetary museum will open to the public from January 1, 2005.

The museum traces the evolution of money in India and has a representative collection of monetary curiosities, financial instruments, Indian coinage and paper currency.

The coins from various eras – ancient, medieval and the princely states and regional powers, Indo-European companies, British India coinage, and the regular and commemorative coins of the Republic of India – trace the tale of the rise and fall of empires, the evolution in art forms, the advances in minting technology, the transition from precious metals to tokens and so on.

There's an interesting colonial story on half note, a type of currency. In order to deter postal theft and ensure that the note is cashed by the recipient only, the note was cut in half and each half was sent separately. The recipient pasted the two halves together and tendered the note for payment at the treasury office or bank.

Issue of Indian paper money, in its modern sense, dates back to the late 18th century. The museum has on display 19th century notes issued by the private sector banks and the three presidency banks – the Bank of Bengal Bank, Bank of Bombay and Bank of Madras, which were later merged to form Imperial Bank of India, now known as State Bank of India.

Further, on view are notes issued by the Government of India under the monopoly power granted by the Paper Currency Act of 1861, followed by notes issued by the Reserve Bank, the sole issuer of bank notes under the RBI Act, 1934.

THE CALENDAR OF WORLDWIDE PHILATELIC AUCTIONS

The Calendar for January 2005 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.

INDIAN POSTAL GUIDE 1869

Stamps of India have launched its publication program with reprinting 'Indian Postal Guide Containing the Chief Public Regulations of the Post Office with Other Information April 1, 1869'.

This is first in the series of elusive but significant official publications that are primary resources for history of postal communications in India. This is the first issue of the official postal guide of India. A very brittle and moth eaten copy is rediscovered and rescued that is perhaps the only surviving example in the world.

Its content include: Chief Officers of the Department, Exclusive Privilege of Indian Post Office, Inland Post, Postage stamps, List of Indian Post Offices, District Post, Foreign Post, Official Correspondence, Registration, Time Tables of Mail steamers, Government Bullock Train, Passenger Service, Money Orders, and Telegraph Department.

The 236 page hardbound reprint is a facsimile enlarged from original octavo to A4 size. This limited edition is available at a special price for €50 post paid anywhere in the world or Rs 2750 post paid in India.

The remittance should be in favor of 'Stamps of India' and payable at New Delhi. Please send your orders to Stamps of India, 49-D, BG-5, Paschim Vihar, New Delhi 110063, India.

Overseas buyers can also send remittance in Australian Dollars, British pounds or U S Dollars equivalent to €50.

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FREE ADVERTISEMENTS

The Advertising Supplement to 'Stamps of India Collectors Companion' is available on-line <http://www.stampsofindia.com/newssite/ad/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/infobase/laws.htm>

Report Cyber Crime & Internet Fraud related to Indian Philately

<http://www.stampsofindia.com/infobase/cybercrime.htm>

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RESEARCH NOTES

By Madhukar Jhingan

PARCELS BY AIR

The Air mail parcel service from India to England was introduced with the flight from Karachi on June 11, 1931. Earlier the Air mail parcel service from England to India commenced from May 23, 1931.

Air mail parcels were accepted at any Post office in India for any post office in Great Britain and North Ireland.

The combined Air fee and postage was Rs 5 for a weight up to 1 pound, and Rs 4 for every additional pound or part.

Insurance was not available.

An airmail label and superscription 'Karachi - Croydon' was mandatory.

- Postal Notice of May 30, 1931, Office of the Director General of the Post Offices of India

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ALSO IN THE NEWS

#### ALPHABET STAMPS

Hong Kong Post is issuing a set of 26 stamps on January 4, 2005 reinventing the Alphabet. Twenty-six ordinary objects are turned into the letters of the alphabet through an ingenious combination of imagery and typography, making the Alphabet Stamps a celebration of the A-Z of our daily lives. The stamps are:

A Clothes Peg  
B Scissors  
C Desk Lamp  
D White Glue Bottle  
E Steaming Rack  
F Caliper  
G C-clamp  
H Bamboo Ladder  
I Torch  
J Cleaning Brush  
K Stapler  
L Sock  
M Set Square  
N Nail Clippers  
O Rubber Band  
P Scoop Colander  
Q Padlock  
R Sunglasses  
S Coat Hanger  
T Floor Brush  
U Flip-flops  
V Compasses  
W Wine Opener  
X Faucet Handle  
Y Barbecue Fork  
Z Paint Roller

These 26 items represent aspects of the daily lives of people in an endearingly familiar and functional fashion. It is hoped that this familiarity will spread the message that stamps are not just to be kept in an album for occasional viewing, but that stamps add color and joy to our daily lives.

Besides postage, the Alphabet Stamps can be used to personalize mail with a special message. For example, you could spell out "Happy Birthday" or "Thank You" on your envelope. Other uses abound, including commercial application by corporations looking for an eye-catching medium to convey promotional messages and recycling used stamps for use by children as 'language tools' for word games.

The stamps, all of which have a face value of \$1.40, are available in two formats - self-adhesive or gummed. The First Day Cover features three imaginative trial prototypes for the letters A, B and C, set against a background of lined paper of the type commonly used in schools.

The stamps are designed by Benny LAU and printed by Lithography by Cartor Security Printing, France.

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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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<http://www.stampsofindia.com/siteguide/w04.htm>

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