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----- STAMPS OF INDIA COLLECTORS COMPANION -----  
The News, Views, & Features on Philately & Postal Services of India  
Issue # 376 - January 15, 2009. Published Every Thursday  
Edited by Madhukar and Savita Jhingan

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JHINGANS JOTTINGS

Hi

We find very few philatelists from India travel to philatelic exhibitions abroad. At some World and Asian Internationals it is difficult to find couple of persons from India. And it is very rare to find an Indian at shows who is not a jury, commissioner, or exhibitor.

The surge in the number of philatelists in India in recent years should naturally result in more persons visiting shows overseas. Some fairs or exhibitions in Europe in particular are very popular amongst visitors from all over the world.

Our listings of philatelic events abroad have so far focused only on those where Indians can participate competitively. We will be expanding to cover details of other forthcoming events as well from now on and hope you will make good use of it. Of course we will welcome your suggestions to add events of interests from anywhere in the world.

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

- M&SJ

Our thanks to the Contributors and Sources to this issue: Vikas Singh, Jigar Desai, Mohammad Ilyas Choudhary, Pradip Jain,

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

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

STAMP POPULARITY POLL

Stamps of India now present the Stamp Poll 2008 to select the best stamp of 2008, best miniature sheet of 2008, and best sheetlet of 2008. The results shall be announced based on the most number of votes polled. You can send as many ballots as you wish.

Please select from the issues of 2008 as shown at <http://www.stampsofindia.com/lists/stamps/2008stamps.htm> and vote for the best stamp, miniature sheet, and sheetlet of 2008 in your opinion. Also write your name, City, email id, and philatelic interests on the ballot and email your ballots to: [stamppoll@stampsofindia.com](mailto:stamppoll@stampsofindia.com)

The last date to receive the ballots at Stamps of India is January 28, 2009. Incomplete ballots shall not be considered. The results will be announced in the Issue #378 of January 29, 2009.

Several attractive philatelic prizes will be given away. The winners will be decided by draw of lots. We welcome the sponsors for prizes, please contact [admin@stampsofindia.com](mailto:admin@stampsofindia.com) in this regard.

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FORTHCOMING STAMP ISSUES

Jan 21: Vaikom Muhammad Basheer, Rs 5

Jan 21: K K Birla, Rs 5

Jan 24: Spices of India, Set of 5 Stamps + Miniature Sheet, Black Pepper Rs 5, Cinnamon Rs 5, Clove Rs 5, Cardamom Rs 5, Turmeric Coriander & Chilly Rs 20

Jan 25: Saint Paul's Church, Rs 5

Jan 27: INTACH Heritage Centers, Set of 4 Stamps + Miniature Sheet, Jaisalmer Fort Rs 5, Qila Mubarak Patiala Rs 5, Manyu Monasteries Ladakh Rs 5, Saint Anne's Church Goa Rs 5

Jan 31: Bishnu Prasad Rabha, Rs 5

Mar 01: 10th Definitive Series - Builders of Modern India, 9 stamps, Re 0.50 - K Kamraj

Re 1 - Mahatma Gandhi,

Rs 2 - B R Ambedkar,

Rs 3 - Satyajit Ray,

Rs 4 - Homi Bhabha,

Rs 10 - Periyar E V Ramaswamy Naicker

Rs 15 - J R D Tata

Rs 20 - Mother Teresa

Rs 50 - Rukmini Devi Arundale

Now days, issues are scheduled and rescheduled for release at very short notice say couple of days! As you can see that the world is moving at very fast pace and we are still bringing out an issue only after 7 long days. Thus it is impossible to inform our readers thru this weekly publication about forthcoming stamp issues of India. We however do our best to publish this information on the home page of [www.stampsofindia.com](http://www.stampsofindia.com) as soon as it becomes available.

New issues along with the First Day Cover and the information sheet, at Rs 2 each, are put on sale on sale at nearly 1000 selected Post Offices including all Philatelic Bureaus and Philatelic Counters in India.

For an illustrated list of stamps in 2008, please visit <http://www.stampsofindia.com/lists/stamps/2009stamps.htm>

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NEW POSTAL STATIONERY

Following Meghdoot post cards with advertisement were recently released:

Distance Education, Tamil  
-----,Telugu  
Hero Honda Motorcycle Hindi  
Banking Ombudsman, Hindi

The grand total till date is now 728, with 193 added this year.

The complete illustrated listing of Meghdoot Post Card is available at: <http://www.stampsofindia.com/lists/meghdoot.htm>

For an illustrated list of all kinds of Postcards in 2009, visit <http://stampsofindia.com/lists/2009PC.htm>

For an illustrated list of Aerogramme & Inland Letter in 2009, visit <http://stampsofindia.com/lists/2009ILC.htm>

For an illustrated list of all kinds of Envelopes in 2009, visit <http://stampsofindia.com/lists/2009EN.htm>

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RECENT SPECIAL POSTMARKS & COVERS

Jan 07: Mumbai, International Inner Wheel Club District 314 Conference

For an illustrated list of Special Postmarks & Covers in 2009, visit <http://www.stampsofindia.com/lists/pmk/2009pm.htm>

For an illustrated list of Army Postal Service Issues in 2009, visit <http://stampsofindia.com/lists/pmk/aps/2009aps.htm>

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MAIL CARRIED ON KALKA SHIMLA RAILWAY

Kalka Shimla Railway is one of the 4 Mountain Railways of India that includes Darjeeling Himalayan, Ooty, and Matheran. A stamp was issued on November 9, 2003 on Kalka Shimla Railway Centenary. Mountain Railways of India are already a UNESCO World Heritage and it was extended to include Kalka Shimla Railway on July 7, 2008. A Special Postmark and Special Cover were issued to mark this new status on

November 9, 2008. About 50 special covers were carried on its 105<sup>th</sup> anniversary run from Shimla to Kathleeghat.

For illustrations list of carried covers, please visit  
<http://www.stampsofindia.com/lists/pmk/carried/carried.htm>

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NEW MAXCARDS

Six different designs of picture postcards Kalka Shimla Railway were utilized to create maxim cards by affixing its centenary commemorative stamp issued in 2003 and with special postmark issued to mark its new status UNESCO World Heritage on November 9, 2008.

For illustrated list of Maxcards in 2009, visit  
<http://www.stampsofindia.com/lists/2008mc.htm>

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HONG KONG 2009

The 23rd Asian International Stamp Exhibition will be held at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre, Wanchai, Hong Kong from May 14, to 17, 2009. Dhananjay Desai [dhananjay\\_47@yahoo.co.in](mailto:dhananjay_47@yahoo.co.in) is the national commissioner from India.

Application Form and the detailed Regulations of HONG KONG 2009 are also available at the following link  
<http://www.stampsofindia.com/infobase/2%20shows%20calendar.htm>

The exhibition will have the following classes: Traditional Philately, Postal History, Thematic Philately (A - Nature, B - Culture, C - Technology), Youth Philately, Philatelic Literature, and One Frame.

There is no participation fee for Youth Philately Class. The fee for Traditional Philately, Postal History, Thematic Philately Classes will be US\$30 per frame. The fee for participation in Literature Class is US\$30 per exhibit. The fee for participation in One-Frame Exhibit is US\$50 per exhibit.

The duly completed Entry Forms, along with first page of the exhibit containing the plan, should reach the undersigned on or before January 25, 2009.

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POSTAL STATIONARY OF BRITISH INDIA

"Postal Stationary of British India" a book by Pratisad Neurgaonkar from Pune was released on January 10, 2009 during inaugural function of COINEX-PUNE 2009. Parag Tripathi, Additional Solicitor General of India was the Chief Guest at the function.

The compilation covers List of British India Postal Stationary with illustrations of various items. It also contains the list of noted varieties & specimens. It has illustrations of different dies, envelope imprints, coat of arms & watermarks. It also contains the scarcity and price guide.

The book priced at Rs 190 is available from the author: Pratisad Neurgaonkar [pratisad@hotmail.com](mailto:pratisad@hotmail.com) mobile: 09766310553

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RECENT PERIODICAL PUBLICATIONS

RAINBOW STAMP NEWS, Whole #13, January 2009, Monthly

Editor: Jeevan Jyoti [j.jyoti9@gmail.com](mailto:j.jyoti9@gmail.com)  
Publisher: Jeevan Jyoti, Shimla  
Annual Subscription: Free  
Also available online at <http://rainbowstampnews.blogspot.com/>

For a list currently published Indian philatelic periodicals, please visit <http://www.stampsofindia.com/infobase/a602.htm>

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RECENT & FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Jan 24-26: Nagpur, Coins exhibition  
Organizers: Numismatic Research Institute  
Dealers Booth: Rs 5000 2 tables 3 chairs + tea & lunch for 2  
Contact: Avinash T Ramteke 0 98230 22662, Piyush Agrawal 0 93255 68570

Jan 30-Feb 1: Ahmedabad, Festival of Stamps  
Organizer: Gujarat Philatelists' Association  
Venue: Srimati Sushilaben Ratilal Hall, opposite Choice Restaurant, C G Road, near Swastik Crossroads, Ahmedabad 380009  
Dealers Booth: Ground Floor Rs 7000, First Floor Rs 4000, inclusive of lunch and tea for 2 persons for 3 days  
Contact: Anil Choksi, Treasurer GPA, 0 99257 03513 or 079 2656 4923

Feb 27-28: New Delhi, Coins, Numismatic Exhibition  
Organizer: Delhi Coin Society  
Venue: Bapu Samaj Seva Kendra, Panchkunjian Road,  
Contact: Goga Jain 0 93123 18401

For a list of exhibitions in 2008, please visit  
<http://www.stampsofindia.com/infobase/events2009.htm>

MEETINGS

The schedule of meetings of the philatelic organizations in India is available at <http://www.stampsofindia.com/infobase/clubmeet.htm>

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SOUTH ASIA NEW ISSUES

PAKISTAN 2008 - Complete List REVISED  
Apr 04: Zulfikar Ali Bhutto 29th Martyrdom Anniversary, Rs4, & Rs20 Souvenir sheet  
Jun 21: Benazir Bhutto 55th Birth Anniversary, 2 Stamps, Rs 4 & Rs 5 and Rs 20 Souvenir sheet  
Oct 08: Earthquake 3rd Anniversary, Rs 4  
Dec 10: United Nations Human Rights Award 2008 for Benazir Bhutto  
Dec 27: Benazir Bhutto 1st Martyrdom Anniversary, Rs 4 and Rs 20 Souvenir sheet

[http://www.stampsofindia.com/newssite/south\\_asia\\_new\\_issues.htm](http://www.stampsofindia.com/newssite/south_asia_new_issues.htm)

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STAMPS ON INDIA - MANMOHAN SINGH

Bhutan has issued a sheetlet of 4 stamps in the denomination of Nu 25 each on December 17, 2008 to mark the visit of the Prime Minister of India to Bhutan commemorating the India Bhutan Friendship & Coronation and Centenary Celebration 2008. This is the First stamp issued featuring Manmohan Singh, the Prime Minister of India.

For image, please visit

<http://www.stampsonindia.com/nir002.htm>

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ADVERTISEMENTS

Please visit <http://www.stampsofindia.com/other/siteguide/x16.htm> for tariff and terms

WANTED Hundis of Indian Princely States, preferably printed, Also interested in exchanging information on the same  
Shall be attending the Festival of Stamps at Ahmedabad on Jan 30-Feb 1  
ANIL SURI, [anilksuri@email.com](mailto:anilksuri@email.com), Mobile-09811176908

ITS COLLECTORS DIRECTORY, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition 2008 Edited by Suraj Jaitly, 80 pages listing contact details of stamp collectors, dealers, clubs, magazines, websites, from India & overseas. Plus lots of relevant information. Price Rs.250 or US \$8 or Euro 6 OR £4 [Post paid]  
Contact at [surajjaitly@hotmail.com](mailto:surajjaitly@hotmail.com) or [indianthematicsociety@gmail.com](mailto:indianthematicsociety@gmail.com)

WANTED India Stamp Booklets of King Edward VII, King George V & VI, Unexploded, exploded, and in all conditions,  
Contact MADHUKAR DEOGAWANKA [deogawanka@satyam.net.in](mailto:deogawanka@satyam.net.in)

STAMP QUIZZES by Anil Dhir, 224 pages, 2007 edition, contains over 1500 questions and answers. Comprehensive & detailed with quizzes on General Philately, India, Indian States, USA, Britain, Australia & New Zealand Must for all Philatelists & stamp clubs, Rs 300 post free in India. US\$20+ actual postage elsewhere, ANIL DHIR [anildhir2k5@hotmail.com](mailto:anildhir2k5@hotmail.com)

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VIEWS & OPINIONS

READERS FORUM

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

NAWAL KISHORE TATIWALA, Jaipur

Problem faced by Kasinath R, Madurai is frequent. Post offices do not accept registered letters etc with postage stamps. The problem should be brought to the notice of authorities by PCI.

RANJIT SINGH, Delhi

Keeping in view the horrible and detestable working and management of Philately department of India Post (which may now be called South India Post), where is the necessity of issuing unwanted and unnecessary stamps??

You publish list after list of 'forthcoming stamps' but the stamps are either not available or are postponed. Something is always missing, FDCs, Brochures or even stamps on the day of issue.

My foreign contacts simply do not believe this. Some have even stopped collecting India stamps.

The management of India Post philately department has proved itself as totally worthless and one wonders how these inept officers are still in their posts. It seems the minister and the departments of posts are interested only in flooding the markets and thrusting stamps on south Indian subjects and personalities only. Six stamps issued on 31st

December, 2008 related to south Indians only, Isn't India Post promoting regionalism in Philately?

Why couldn't they issue stamps on Gurta Gaddi divas of Guru Granth Sahib? Isn't it dishonour? Special coins are however being issued.

India Post is promoting 'black marketing' in stamps. Sometimes they sell same Miniature Sheet for Rs 20 and sometimes at Rs 15. Who pockets this extra money extracted from stamps collectors??

Do we have a philatelic policy worth the name?

It is sad to note that all these so called philatelic clubs seem to be mute spectators to the state of affairs. I presume their presidents or secretaries may be getting some sort of patronage or 'perks' from India Post. They should have the courage to speak up.

H P SINGH, Amritsar  
Amritsar philatelic bureau has not received Diwali stamp so far.

Human Rights First Day Cover has been received in two different shades.

A bumper supply has poured in of Aldabra Giant Tortoise stamps and Olympics miniature sheet.

The price of 2007 year has been reduced to Rs 485 from Rs500 and is without S D Burman stamp.

No reduction in the price of Commonwealth Games 2010 New Delhi and Alphonsa miniature sheets has made. Only Post Office miniature sheet is being sold at Rs 15.

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FEATURES & RESOURCES

HISTORY OF POSTAL COMMUNICATIONS IN INDIA  
By Sangeeta Deogawanka

Part 11 - POST MEDIEVAL INDIA (1500 to 1818 A.D.)  
Provincial Dynasties & Regimes

The Post Medieval period in India spanning three centuries from 1526 to 1818 A.D., witnessed an era of fragmented power centres throughout the country. This continued in spirit despite episodic annexations to the Mughal kingdom. The reign of Muhammad Tughlaq in particular, witnessed the break-out of rebellions leading to the establishment of independent states and dominions.

These states had well defined groups. The first group of the Hindu states of Rajasthan was led by Mewar. The second group was formed by the States of Gujarat and Malwa. The third in the south consisted of the Muslim Bahamanis and the Hindu empire of Vijayanagar, while the fourth comprised of the kingdoms of Gondavana, Orissa, Bengal and Jaunpur.

POSTAL SYSTEMS IN THE HINDU STATES OF RAJASTHAN

Traditionally, Rajputana is the upshot of the valiant efforts of tribes like the Gujjars, Naths, Meenas, Jats, Bhils and Ahirs. As for the

Rajputs, a royal warrior dynasty, they resisted Muslim incursions initially. Eventually however, many of the Rajput kingdoms became subservient to the Delhi Sultanate and the Mughal Empire during the latter's expansive ventures.

While the State of Mewar defied Muslim rule, there were others like Amber who were the trusted allies of the Mughals. On the verge of asserting independence from the Mughals in the 18th century, Rajputana came under the assault of the Marathas and Pindaris. Centuries of political turmoil and consequent emptying of the royal coffers, saw the Rajput Kings of these Western States accept British sovereignty against the assurance of local autonomy. Treaties were thus concluded with the British in early 19th century.

The postal history of Rajputana would be incomplete without the mention of the various private postal systems in operation. Most importantly, the Brahmini Dak and Mirdha Dak, both of which existed much prior to the State Posts and the Imperial Post.

The Postal System in the state of Marwar was handled by the family of Mirdhas of Jodhpur. "The historic association of the family of Mirdhas of Rajasthan with development and maintenance of Postal services in different parts of Mughal Empire has been traced to the halcyon days of Akbar the Great."<sup>1</sup> The earliest mention is found in 1584 A.D. when Raja Uday Singh of Jodhpur, under the orders of Akbar, marched to Gujarat and defeated Sultan Muzzafar in battle.

The Mirdhas, a Jat community, were accorded royal sanction for carriage of mail, with the grant of a silver rod, attached with small bells. The routine mail was carried by the Sargara community delivered to the village officials while other sects were employed for missives of the common people. When horse couriers were used, they were known as Qasids (during the Mughal period). A post-house or dak chowki operated at a distance of every 10 kos. These mail carriers and post-houses were supervised by the head messenger who reported to a Mirdha.

The horse couriers could cover distances of 50 to 70 miles a day during times of emergency. The Mirdhas were also conferred the title of 'Ghoda Qasids', 'Ghoda' meaning horse.

The routes serviced by the Mirdha Dak stretched in the West to Lahore, Peshawar and Kabul. Jodhpur was well networked with Bikaner and Delhi in the North and Bundi in the East. Godwar or Chandravati kingdom was connected through Sirohi and Mt. Abu. The routes traversed through the city of Sojat close to Jodhpur, to connect Ahmedabad and other parts of Gujarat and Burhanpur to the South.

The Mirdha Dak system was well organized by the middle of 18th century, during the rule of Raja Bakht at Jodhpur. For Nagaur and other places, mail was often delivered through carrier-pigeons. Priority mail was handled by the Avval Mirdhas Dak<sup>2</sup>.

With the decline of the Mughal empire, Nadir Shah's invasion and the emergence of Maratha power, there followed a period of uncertainty amongst the power centres. There was total disruption of postal communication. Private mail runners were slain and dak looted by



freebooters. Need was felt to use a safe conduit for communication. This is where the indigenous Brahmini Dak stepped in.

The Brahmins, who occupied the upper echelons of the Hindu social structure, were held in high esteem by Hindus, who are inherently God-fearing and pious. It was perceived that fear of invoking the wrath of the Gods, would hold in bay any pernicious intention towards them. Moreover, Brahmins frequently traveled to holy places and had universal access. The Marathas and local tribes too held the Brahmins in great regard. They were thus considered safe carriers of messages.

The practice of using Brahmins as postal carriers was first initiated by Keshoram Sharma, a Gour Brahmin of Khetri sometime in the 18th century. The Brahmins traveled from village to village on foot, camel and horses. Unlike the Mirdha dak system, where the Mirdhas essentially occupied the supervisory or managerial status, the Brahmins herein were themselves the postal messengers.

During this period there also existed several other private dak systems, operating simultaneously in the States of Rajputana, stretching beyond these precincts to entire North and North-Western India. They were sometimes referred to as Nawabi services or Dak , operating from time to time, directly or vide subsidiaries under special arrangement. There were also the Dak systems named after their founders, like the Seth Ram Dak and the Mungee Ram Dak which operated from Ajmer to Kotah, via Kekri, Sawar, Jahajpur and Bundi. .Also the Humaram Dak, which served the routes through Pali to Bhawani via Jodhpur, Ajmer and Shekhawati. The Buldeo dak operated from Ajmer to Jaipur.

The banyas or local businessmen had a random system wherein messengers brought them news of business trends and prices. In Shekhawati kingdom, banyas devised a system of flashing messages about prices across hills, which was referred to as the chilka ka dak. A mirror was used during the day and flashes of gunpowder at night. This evolved as the Chilka dak in early 1700s, stamped often with hand-drawn symbols.

The business classes also maintained an organised dak system called the Mahajani dak, patronised by the well-established individuals and merchants called mahajans.

The Maharajas of Mhow and Jhansi also had their private dak, carrying both the State correspondence and the private mail of people. The Chaturbhuj Vyas's Brahmini Dak, which serviced the postal lines between Jodhpur and Jaisalmer, finds special mention as the mail was carried only on camel. This developed as the camel post.

However, no markings were used on the mail carried by these private postal operators, during this period. In 1818, the British gained control over Marwar through a treaty they signed with King Chatar Singh. Yet, even after this the various Dak systems continued to operate as before.

Notes:

1. From the article "Historical Background of Marwar Postal System" by V S Saksena, November 1986.
2. Avval means 'First Class'

References:

<http://www.mirdhadak.com/home.htm>

Twilight of the Sultanate - Kishori Saran Lal

Brahmini Dak: History of Postal Communications in Mewar - Radha Krishna Sarawgi & Madhukar Deogawanka

Article by Jawed Naqbi in The Dawn

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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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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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ADMINISTRIVIA

'Stamps of India Collectors Companion' is published by Madhukar Jhingan [mjhingan@yahoo.com](mailto:mjhingan@yahoo.com) for 'Stamps of India', 49-D, BG-5, Paschim Vihar, New Delhi 110063. Phone: +91-11-25281578, Mobile: +91-9350537037  
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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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The Hub Site of Indian Philately

PRINCELY STATES REPORT <http://www.princelystates.com>

Journal of Indian States History, Philately & Numismatics

STAMPS ON INDIA <http://www.stampsonindia.com>

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

INDIAN POSTAL GUIDE 1869

The first issue of the official postal guide, reprinted by Stamps of India 2004, 236 pages, hardbound, enlarged from original octavo to A4 size, limited edition, Special price - Rs 2750, Credit cards & PayPal accepted, visit <http://www.stampsofindia.com/shop/bookshop.htm>

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