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----- STAMPS OF INDIA COLLECTORS COMPANION -----  
The First, Free & 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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Issue # 103 - February 13, 2003. Published Every Thursday  
Edited by Madhukar and Savita Jhingan

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

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

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I N T H I S I S S U E

Ghantasala Stamp Released  
India Post's Next Stamp Issue  
India Study Circle President Resigns  
Recent & Forthcoming Exhibitions  
New Special Postmarks  
Sukhani Europhil's Auction  
Periodicals Received: GPA NEWS, Philanews  
Philatelic Market Research & Survey  
Philately in Transition in India, Part 44  
Readers Forum - Shakil Ahmed on so-called INPEX 02  
Also in the News - The Biggest Theft In Stamp-Collecting History Solved

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

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JHINGANS JOTTINGS

Hi

We apologize to everyone who may have been trying to email us his or  
her inputs and were not succeeding. The email address given was  
incorrect as it was short of 'a' resulting in incorrect TATnova in  
place of TATANova.com. The correction has now been carried out and we  
look forward to receiving your inputs.

We thank Max Smith for pointing out this mistake to us.

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

- M&SJ

Our thanks to the Contributors and sources to this issue:  
San Francisco Chronicle of USA,

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Mention this newsletter when contacting other philatelists

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NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

GHANTASALA STAMP RELEASED

The Minister of State for Communications & IT, S Thirunavukkarasar released a commemorative stamp at Hyderabad on February 11, 2003 on the noted playback singer and music director in Indian film industry, Ghantasala Venkateswara Rao.

Sankha Samanta designed the stamp and the First Day Cover, priced at Rs. 2. 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.

India Security Press of Nashik printed the stamps by photogravure in two colors on Imported un-watermarked adhesive gravure coated stamp paper in the quantity of 0.4 million in sheets of 42 Stamps.

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INDIA POST NEXT STAMP ISSUE

India Post's next commemorative stamp issue in the denomination of Rs. 5 on the noted industrialist S L Kirolskar is scheduled for release on February 26, 2003.

The 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.

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INDIA STUDY CIRCLE PRESIDENT RESIGNS

Well-known author and research scholar, Max Smith has resigned as the President of the India Study Circle for philately in UK, the premier organization of the philatelists devoted to Indian philately, just five months into his three-year term. This is an unprecedented step as no President has taken such an action ever before.

Smith's reasons for resigning were that he did not want to continue to preside over a society that has seen fit to admit to its membership the people who have been intimately connected with the marketing of forgeries in the international market over recent years.

Smith, earlier as an editor of India Study Circle's quarterly publication 'India Post', had also taken up this issue of forgeries and had resigned from the Committee.

Smith's principled stand and resignation focuses on the great need to have an all out campaign against the philatelic forgeries especially of Indian items.

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RECENT & FORTHCOMING EXHIBITIONS

February 15 & 16, 2003 - Ludhiana  
February 19 - 21, 2003 - Jaipur

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NEW SPECIAL POSTMARKS

India Post provided a special postmark and released a special cover on October 11, 2002 at Patna to mark the United Nations salute to Jai Prakash Narayan by releasing a commemorative silver medal on October 16, 1979.

SUKHANI EUROPHIL'S AUCTION

Sukhani Europhil of Kolkata is holding their 65<sup>th</sup> public auction of about 2600 lots on Sunday, March 9, 2003.

There are individual rare classics and postal history of India with important pre-adhesive covers, original essays, color trials, die proofs, "Specimen" and "cancelled" overprints on East India, Queen Victoria, King Edward VII to King George VI, Specialized section of postal stationery including unusual destinations, Rocket mails, very useful & powerful Cochin with varieties, Travancore and Travancore-Cochin with early covers, strong Nepal with early issues, large blocks with study and research, India used in Nepal, etc. There are over 15 lots of philatelic literature as well.

The sale will be held at the main auditorium on the ground floor of Rotary Sadan, 94/2 Chowringhee Road, near Nehru Children's Museum, Calcutta 700020.

The sale will be conducted from 10 am to 1.30 pm for Lot no. 1 to 1101 and after Complimentary lunch, from 2.15 pm for lot no. 1102 onwards. Tea and snacks will also be served.

Sukhani Europhil's email is [raj.sukhani@gems.vsnl.net.in](mailto:raj.sukhani@gems.vsnl.net.in)

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PERIODICALS RECEIVED

G P A NEWS, Whole # 63 - October 2002, Monthly

Editor: H C Mehta

Publisher: Gujarat Philatelists Association

Address: 1/M National Chamber, Ashram Road, Ahmedabad -380009

Annual Subscription including membership: Rs. 100, Entrance Fee Rs. 100

Mode of Remittance: By bank draft in favor of the publisher

PHILANEWS, #6, November-December 2002, Bi-monthly

Editor: Rajesh Paharia, [pahariarajesh@msn.com](mailto:pahariarajesh@msn.com)

Publisher: Philatelic Society of Rajasthan

Address: A S Mittal, President, Dhamani Market, Chaura Rasta, Jaipur -3

Annual Subscription: Rs. 50 in India

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PHILATELIC MARKET RESEARCH & SURVEY

India Post invited sealed tenders for conducting a nationwide Market Research and Survey on Philately, by February 14, 2003. The parameters for this purpose are to ascertain the market size, customer profile, product acceptance, best information vehicles, customer opinion and feedback and also to gauge the response for Philatelic Deposit Account.

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VIEWS & OPINIONS

PHILATELY IN TRANSITION IN INDIA, Part 44

The Philatelic Congress of India (PCI) that claims to represent the interests of Indian philately and is a member of Asian Philatelic Federation (FIAP) and International Philatelic Federation (FIP) has not yet sent the minutes of its last meeting held on August 25, 2002 at Mumbai to its members till date.

Dilip Shah who was the Secretary General in the Governing Council till August 25, 2002 continues to act as one even today and presents himself

in this capacity to the Courts, while simultaneously he also presents himself as the President of the PCI to its members as well as to the FIP and FIAP due to which the image and reputation of Indian Philately is being adversely affected.

We appeal to all institutional and individual members of PCI to find out the facts about this misrepresentation of a few persons on their behalf and in their name. In our considered opinion this is the time to take action for correcting the situation

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READERS FORUM

<Dear Reader, Your feedback is important to us as it helps evolve the newsletter. We strive hard to bring you comprehensive coverage of the latest on Indian philately and improve with every issue. Please do let us have your thoughts and suggestions. We also would like to learn how our newsletter impacts your collecting and the value you feel it provides to you. Do send in your comments, views, reports, articles and other features for publication>

SHAKIL AHMED ON SO-CALLED INPEX 02

Government of India, Ministry of Communication & I.T, Department of Post in the letter No.3-7/2001.Phil, Dated 13<sup>th</sup> December 2002 addressed to Shri Sahadeva Sahoo regarding INPEX-2002 asked him to withdraw misleading information and also to express regret by an un-ambiguously worded apology for circulating the misleading information.

It seems that Shri Sahadeva Sahoo has not yet acted as per directions of this letter and as such his response is not available on the website of INPEX 2002. On the other hand it appears Shri B.K.Sinha, Organising Secretary of the so-called INPEX-2002 has answered to the letter in the manner as if he acted for and on behalf of Shri Sahadeva Sahoo.

Primarily it was no business of Shri Sinha to give a reply to letter of Government of India addressed to Shri Sahadeva Sahoo as the same is very much the prerogative of Shri Sahoo and non else. Besides Shri Sinha cannot designate himself as Secretary of PCI as the term stands expired at the PCI meeting at Mumbai held on 25th August, 2002, the unfairly held elections and their results is subjudice and there is no office bearers of PCI.

I have following comments on Sinha's letter;

1. Pigeon flight covers always carry a postage stamp duly postmarked without which it has no philatelic value. Hence postal department permission is always necessary.
2. Shri Depok Dey has amply clarified the logo of so-called INPEX-2002 in his letter transmitted through Newsletter No.101 and the same is endorsed.
3. Shri Sahadeva Sahoo, the Coordinator of so-called INPEX-2002 has been charged by Government of India that publicizing pictures of fake postage stamps, miniature sheet, etc is a criminal offense and it is up to Shri Sahoo to write to Government of India explaining his conduct or his duly authorized representative. I am not aware if Shri Sinha holds any General or Specific Power of Attorney for Shri Sahoo.

Following are my comments on the News Letter No.3 of INPEX 2002:

In item 2.1 there is mention that Orissa Philatelic Association is organizing INPEX-2002 with the patronage of PCI. The facts are that the PCI accorded the patronage to the INPEX 2002 purportedly during INPEX-EMPIREPEX 2001 at Nashik and that decision also was challenged by its past president, Dhirubhai Mehta after the publication of its minutes of that meeting.

Subsequently the Ministry of Tourism of the Government of Orissa, and the Department of Post of the Government of India withdrew support and the Eastern India Philatelists Association (EIPA) withdrew as the organizer of the INPEX 2002. Thereafter Orissa Philatelic Association illegally assumed the organization of this show. As PCI has been dysfunctional and without Governing Council since August 25, 2002 the patronage claimed by the INPEX 2002 organized by Orissa Philatelic Association is a fraud and is invalid.

Whether the participants will get due recognition of national standard when there is no valid patronage?

Regarding item No.2.3 newsletter says that so-called INPEX-2002 will be held from 25<sup>th</sup> February 25, 2003 to March 3, 2002. When the year 2002 has already passed by, no sane man having an iota of commonsense could continue to use the word 2002 in the exhibition to be held on 2003.

Regarding item No.9.3 and 9.4 displaying part of exhibits of 400 frames in 1st three days and second part of 400 frames will be on the next three days is simply wishful thinking of the organizers as they never had the required manpower and all large exhibitions in India have always been mounted by postal staff.

This also raises certain amusing questions.

Whether another inauguration ceremony will take place in the next phase of exhibition?

Whether the participants shall get their proportionate amount of entry fee refunded in the event of display of their collection only for 3 days instead of 5 days?

Whether on the concluding day the prizewinner's items will again be displayed?

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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

THE BIGGEST THEFT IN STAMP-COLLECTING HISTORY SOLVED  
The biggest theft in stamp-collecting history appears on the verge of being solved. And the Oakland stamp dealer who was its victim couldn't be happier.

Four years ago, a thief swiped a \$2 million collection of rare 19th century stamps from Stanley Piller's rental car in Florida. This weekend, Piller learned the FBI had arrested two men who tried to sell part of the collection to a New York gallery.

Piller hasn't been told how much of the collection has been recovered or when he might get the stamps back.

But Piller said he has always suspected the collection -- which includes New York State 5-cent stamps issued in 1845 and Confederate State rarities valued at \$400,000 -- would turn up when the thief tried to cash in.

"These stamps are like fingerprints. No two were alike," Piller said yesterday at the Grand Avenue shop he has run since 1978. "This type of material is almost impossible to sell."

Ulysses Cheda and Jose Palmer were charged Friday in U.S. District Court with transporting stolen goods. They were arrested Thursday by FBI agents after they sold some stamps to a Manhattan gallery owner for \$50,000, federal agents said.

"A good portion of the stolen stamps were recovered," said Joe Valiquette, a spokesman for the FBI's New York field office.

Authorities were tipped off to Cheda and Palmer about a month ago, said federal prosecutors in Manhattan, when they tried to sell \$100,000 worth of stamps to a gallery owner who recognized them as part of Piller's stolen collection.

The gallery owner told authorities, and a special squad of FBI agents who investigate cases of stolen art, antiquities and other artifacts of high value took over the case, Valiquette said.

Piller, 60, said yesterday that he has not yet been contacted by authorities, and learned of the men's arrests only when a New York reporter phoned him Friday evening.

"I was surprised. I was overjoyed," he said. "What more can I say?"

Piller said he did not know the suspects and could not talk about the details of the FBI investigation, which dates back to Feb. 7, 1999.

It was on that day that Piller left a national stamp exhibition in Sarasota, Fla. He was driving toward a hotel in Tampa when he got lost and stopped to ask for directions.

Minutes later, he returned to discover that someone had popped the trunk and taken the black case containing his best stock, which he kept in a bank vault and took out only for shows. Two other bags containing stamps of lesser value were untouched.

At the time, Piller speculated that someone had watched him pack up the collection at the show and then followed him, according to articles in Linns Stamp News.

The caper -- once featured on the Fox television show "Million Dollar Mysteries" -- made headlines in the normally staid world of stamp collecting.

"This was a major story," said Michael DuBasso, director of the American Philatelic Foundation, a nonprofit based in Los Angeles, on Saturday. "He is one of the biggest dealers of classic stamps, and a reputable one."

The crime was the biggest stamp theft since 1998, when San Jose lawyer Jeffrey Forster had a million-dollar collection of stamps and envelopes from 1869 snatched on a New York street.

Forster's collection -- insured by the same company that insured Piller's collection, the Hugh Wood Agency -- was recovered in 2000.

If the Hugh Wood Agency already had compensated Piller for the total value of the collection, DuBasso said, the insurer would take possession of the recovered stamps, and it would be up to Piller to negotiate with the company if he wants the stamps back. Piller declined to discuss any settlement with Hugh Wood.

A dealer who travels internationally, Piller is considered an expert in stamps and postal history, especially in "classic" U.S. stamps printed before 1870.

He kept on the Internet a detailed list of the stolen stamps, nearly all of which had been photographed and documented for their authenticity.

"They were rare. They were in demand. I hate to use the word unique, but some of them, that's what they are," he said. "Most items were from \$600 on up.

Some were in the tens of thousands."

Yesterday, Piller flipped open one book to show a block of 45 U.S. stamps, 30 cents each, from 1860, featuring Benjamin Franklin. They were part of the stolen collection, he said, and were valued at about \$80,000 to \$100,000.

The first stamps in the world were produced in Great Britain in 1840, Piller said. While "semiofficial" stamps were produced in the United States as early as 1842, he said, the U.S. Postal Service didn't officially begin to issue stamps until 1847.

Piller learned the stamp-dealing business from his cousin, who had a shop in New York, and began dealing when he was 13. He graduated from Cooper Union in New York with a degree in engineering and got a master's in chemical engineering from the University of Southern California.

After working for several years as an engineer at Bechtel Corp. -- while continuing to collect and deal stamps as a side business -- Piller took the plunge into full-time dealing in 1976.

His shop on Grand Avenue is teeming with albums, old postcards and envelopes, along with baskets of coins, buttons and other collectibles.

Piller, a Raiders season-ticket holder and die-hard fan, also has adorned one upper wall with classic Raider memorabilia.

"That," he said emphatically, "is not for sale."

As for the plight of the two men now behind bars, Piller said that whoever took the rare collection made a fatal mistake by not choosing the two bags containing more common stamps. While those stamps were less valuable, they probably could have been resold without attracting attention.

"If they would have taken the other bags, (the stamps) may never have been recovered," he said.

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ASK US

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

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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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CONTRIBUTORS INVITED

We require regular correspondents everywhere in India to cover the philatelic activities in their area. We shall reimburse the costs of photos, covers, publications, courier and other charges. All contributions shall be acknowledged.

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WEB SITE UPDATES

STAMPSOFINDIA

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.

Updated Segments This Week: News, Articles,

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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Apartment 49-D, Block BG-5, Paschim Vihar, New Delhi 110 063 India  
Phone: + 91-11-25281578 Mobiles: 98681 40089 (MJ), 98111 60884 (SJ)  
Web Site: [www.stampsofindia.com](http://www.stampsofindia.com)

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