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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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Issue # 162 - April 1, 2004. Published Every Thursday

Edited by Madhu Jhingan and Savita Jhingan

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To get BACK ISSUES, please see the end of this issue for details.

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JHINGANS JOTTINGS

Hi

Recently we received a copy in the mail of an article that appeared in the Gulf News, Dubai UAE, March 8, 2004 titled PUTTING A STAMP ON A 40-YEAR PASSION by Nilima Pathak.

The author had interviewed yours truly in Delhi so we knew that the article would appear soon. But what surprised us was a call from our cousin who lives in Dubai and who carried a copy of the newspaper thinking we may not have got a copy.

Any of our readers who would like to read it may log into [gulfnews.com](http://gulfnews.com) and they would be able to locate the article by doing a search by the title or by the author.

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

- M&SJ

Our thanks to the Contributors and Sources to this issue: Shyam Prasad Nhuchhe Pradhan, Prashant Pandya, Sanjay Kansal, and the Times of India.

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

SURENDRA GUPTA PASSES AWAY

We are saddened to learn about the untimely death of our friend and  
colleague, Surendra Gupta of Mumbai on March 25, 2004 after protracted  
illness.

Gupta was the Secretary of the Empire of India Philatelic Society and a  
Governing Council member of the Philatelic Congress of India. He had won  
several awards for his exhibits of India Pre and Post Independence, and  
Postal Stationery and GB.

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JOINT ISSUES ON SALE

India Post has put on sale the Joint Issue stamps from France and Korea
released in 2003 at select Philatelic Bureaus at Rs80 and Rs30 per set
respectively.

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FORTHCOMING STAMP ISSUES

April 1, 9<sup>th</sup> Battalion of Madras Regiment (Travancore), Rs5

April 14, V Lakshminarayana, Rs5

April 19, Jyoti Prasad Agarwala, Rs5

April 25, (1) IISWBM, (2) Tarangini

April 28, Peshwa Baji Rao I

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.

RESCHEDULED STAMP ISSUES

Aacharya Bhikshu, from March 30 to June 30, 2004

Walchand Hirachand, From April 8 to November 23, 2004

Great Trigonometrical Survey, From April 10 to June 28, 2004  
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NEW MEGHDOOT POST CARDS

Following two Meghdoot post cards sponsored by the Pondicherry
Industrial Promotion Development & Investment Corporation Limited were
released on March 1, 2004:

Ad in Tamil -

Ad in Tamil -

Visit the following link for illustrations:

<http://www.stampsofindia.com/News/2004/162a.htm>

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PCI COURT CASES UPDATE

In the suit filed by Rajesh Varma against Philatelic Congress of India and others that came up for hearing on November 25, 2003, the next date for hearing is May 13, 2004 and not March 13, 2004 as erroneously reported in Issue # 144 of November 27, 2003.

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ARMY POSTAL SERVICE

The Army Postal Service issued the following Special Covers with Special Postmarks in March 2004:

27, 104 Helicopter Squadron, Golden Jubilee

29, HQ 4 Corps, GAJRAJPHILEX

Visit the following link for illustrations:

<http://www.stampsofindia.com/News/2004/162b.htm>

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RECENT SPECIAL POSTMARKS & COVERS

January 14: Udupi, Paryaya Samaropa - Sri Palimaru Hrishikesha Matha & Shri Krishna Matha

January 18: Udupi, Paryaya Mahotsava - Sri Admar Matha

March 20: Jamnagar, Electroplaters WMC

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AUCTION ACTION

Indian Thematic Society indianthematicsociety@rediffmail.com is holding its postal auction #24. The 58-lot auction closes on April 27, 2004.

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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.

March 31- Apr 02, Gangtok, Sikkim

For a list of events held this year, please visit

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

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RECENT PERIODICAL PUBLICATIONS

G P A NEWS, Whole # 80 - March 2004, 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

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RAILWAYS COMMEMORATIVE COINS

India Government Mint, Kolkata has made arrangements for the sale of Proof & Un-circulated Commemorative Coins on '150 years of Railways in India' The booking will be open from April 1 to May 31, 2004.

Coins are in two denominations of Hundred Rupees and Two Rupees: Hundred Rupees Coin is Circular in shape (44 mm dia), weighs 35 gms and is made of Quaternary Alloy (50% silver, 40% copper, 5% Zinc, and 5% Nickel). Two Rupees Coin is of Cupro Nickel Alloy (75% copper and 25% Nickel), Eleven sided 26 mm size from flat to crest weighing 6 gms.

Proof Coins set are priced at Rs 850 whereas un-circulated coins available for Rs 450. In addition, a sales tax/surcharge of 11.5% is also payable. Postage, insurance, packing charges are Rs 130, 200, 250, 330, 400 for one, two, three, four and five sets respectively. Coins can be booked by submitting a Demand Draft drawn on Kolkata branch of any Nationalized Bank in favor of 'Reserve Bank of India - A/C India Government Mint, Kolkata'

Coin Sets will be delivered within 18 months after close of booking. The order form along with necessary details is also available on the website <http://www.igmint.org>

Visit the following link for illustrations:  
<http://www.stampsofindia.com/News/2004/162c.htm>

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FAKE STAMP SCAM UPDATES

Former Andhra Pradesh minister and an accused in the stamp scam, C Krishna Yadav, now in a jail in Pune, will contest the assembly polls as an independent from Hyderabad's Himayatnagar constituency that he had represented in the dissolved assembly. His wife Nalini and mother Kamalamma filed his nomination papers on March 31, 2004.

With the arrest of three persons, the Delhi's northwest district police on March 31, 2004 claimed to have seized fake stamp papers and bank drafts worth over Rs 5.5 million. The police said one of the accused, Hans Raj Vats, is a property dealer in Sultanpuri. "He was selling stamp papers at half the market price. We used a decoy customer to strike a deal with him and then arrested him," stated Deputy Commissioner of Police (northwest) Sanjay Singh. On interrogation, Vats reportedly broke down and revealed the involvement of his associates, Ashok Aggarwal and Ashok Goyal. Several fake demand drafts of Bank of India were also seized from the accused. "Vats is the kingpin of this racket. He also used these stamp papers for executing property deals," added Singh.

After questioning two senior officers of Delhi Police, the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on March 23, 2004 questioned inspector Krishan Kumar, station house officer (SHO) of Rohini area, in the multi-billion fake stamp scam. On March 19 and 22, 2004 DCP (legal department) R S Ghumman was also called by the CBI. Ghumman was the additional deputy commissioner of police of south district when the case against Telgi was registered.

After taking over all cases of fake stamps in the country on orders of the Supreme Court, the CBI has set up a special cell to initiate probe into the fake stamp paper scam. The cell is likely to operate from Mumbai and will be led by Joint Director (Economic Offences) Archana Ramsundaram. CBI director U K Mishra said the agency has constituted 48 special teams to probe into as many cases across India.

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NEPAL NEW ISSUE

March 25, 2004

Silver Jubilee of Nepal Netra Jyoti Sangh, Rs5

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FREE ADVERTISEMENTS

My name is Cristoph and I'm from Romania. I collect coins and banknotes. I'm interested to exchange used stamps for coins and banknotes from India. I have more then 3000 used stamps from more then 50 countries. If you are interested I'll send to you the list of countries from which I can send to you stamps. www.don-carlos-colection.go.ro

I have 1,200 different VFU USA commemoratives to exchange for 1,200 different India VFU commemoratives. Stephen Unger, PO Box 432725, S. Miami, Florida, 33243 USA. Contact first - azool@bellsouth.net

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.>

STAN DUDLEY

I have what appears to be a blue wrapper with two of the 1/2 anna stamps of 1854. The one at the right appears not to have a star in the top left corner. Has anyone come across this before and where is it described? I await any reply with interest.

Visit the following link for illustrations:

<http://www.stampsofindia.com/News/2004/162d.htm>

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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

KALPANA CHAWLA AUTOGRAPHED PHOTO FOR \$125,000

Regency-Superior will conduct a major Public Stamp and Space Auction on Saturday, April 17th at their galleries in Beverly Hills, California. Over 2,000 lots will be offered including USA, British & Worldwide singles, covers and country collections, as well as Space Collectibles and Space autographs.

This sale includes an incredible collection of crew signed items from the ill-fated STS-107 Columbia Shuttle that broke up in the earth's atmosphere on February 1, 2003. This lot contains seven separate items each signed by the complete crew. One item is a beautiful 8"x10" NASA color photo of the crew in pristine condition, and signed by each member.

At least seven such photos have appeared for sale on eBay, all of which have been shown to be autopens. Each of the seven items is guaranteed authentic. The remaining six signed items in this lot include a vehicle pass, a color flier produced by Boeing, a briefing booklet, an 8½"x11" cover sheet of their post-test briefing, a #6 envelope cancelled with the launch date (only known signed cover by this crew), and an 8"x10" glossy of the Mission Crew Patch Logo with emblem. Before the mission, the crew was not together as frequently as most crews because of the security concerns related to Payload Specialist Ilan Ramon's Israeli citizenship, so opportunities for the crewmembers to sign as a group were very limited.

The entire auction is available online for viewing and bidding, and includes full lot descriptions, estimates, color photographs and opening bids. To receive an auction catalog, please call Regency-Superior at (800) 782-0066; Fax (314) 361-5677; or write to Regency-Superior, PO Box 8277, St. Louis, MO 63156-8277. <http://www.regencystamps.com>

Following is the complete text of lot's description from the catalog that is estimated at \$125,000:

#### 2003 THE ULTIMATE SHUTTLE AUTOGRAPH COLLECTION

On January 13, 2003 at 10:39 AM Eastern Standard Time, the Shuttle Columbia was launched from the Cape with six American and one Israeli astronaut aboard. At 8:00 AM on February 1, 2003 communication was lost with the shuttle as it broke up in the earth's atmosphere over Texas and Louisiana. The crewmembers: Commander: Rick D. Husband; Pilot: William C. McCool; Mission Specialists: Michael P. Anderson, Kalpana Chawla, David Brown and Laurel Blair; Payload Specialist: Ilan Ramon were all lost in the tragic accident. Before the mission, the crew was not together as frequently as most crews because of security concerns related to Payload Specialist Ilan Ramon's Israeli citizenship, so opportunities for the crewmembers to sign as a group were very limited. Fewer crew signed items and no opportunity to sign after the flight itself make an item signed by the entire crew an extreme rarity. This lot contains SEVEN SEPARATE ITEMS, EACH SIGNED BY THE COMPLETE CREW! We have never before had the opportunity to offer a holding such as this. Each of the seven crew members have signed all seven of these items for a total of 49 signatures of the late crew. ITEM #1: An Official, color 8"x10" glossy of the Mission Crew Patch Logo with the "Microgravity" emblem in the center. A central focus of this mission was microgravity research. Each of the crew has signed next to his/her name surrounding the shuttle-shaped logo. ITEM #2: A standard #6 white envelope cancelled on the launch date of January 16, 2003 with the STS-107 mission logo used as the cachet. All seven crewmembers have signed next to the logo. This is the only cover we are aware of that was signed by the entire crew of STS-107. ITEM #3: An official 8"x10" NASA color photo (on Kodak Professional Paper). As noted above, very few of these photos exist. It has been noted that at least seven such photos have appeared "eBay" since the tragic events of February 1, 2003; all have been shown to be autopens and not genuine signatures. These are guaranteed genuine. A similar photo brought about \$14,000 in a November 2003 auction. That photo had some bends and creases; this one is pristine. ITEM #4: This item is a post-test briefing produced by 'United Space Alliance' with the 8.5"x11" cover sheet being a red, white & blue image of the Orbiter / SCA Mate - MDD (STS-107A-OV-102). All seven signatures are at the top, three in black, and four in blue ink. Probably unique. ITEM #5: An original 8.5"x11" vehicle pass in the standard neon orange color for the OV-102, Palmdale Plant 42, Site #1. This is pass No. 046 and has a printed shuttle logo at the right with a simulated signature of the CLS Security Mgr. at the lower right. An extremely eye-catching and impressive item. Another probably unique piece signed by all seven astronauts. ITEM #6: An original Boeing 8.5"x11" color flier welcoming the STS-107 astronaut crew to their Palmdale facility on February 16, 2001, almost two full years before their loss. All seven autographs are present, Ilan Ramon's is a bit smeared, but still clear due to the glossy finish of the piece. ITEM #7: STS-107 Flight 28, Flight Crew Briefing booklet signed at the right next to the printed names of each of the crew members. These briefings were not readily available to the public. Another item that is likely to be unique. As anyone can see, this is an extraordinary group, collected by an individual who worked closely with the crew and with the space program. The consignor wishes

the entire group to sell as a single unit; he feels it is a wonderful memorial to the seven brave astronauts who gave their lives in furthering the aspirations of mankind. As a further "bonus" the consignor indicates that he would be happy to discuss with the successful buyer the manner in which these items were acquired and signed in his presence. He will also take the successful bidder on a personal tour of the Cape (assuming you can get there) with the insights of a true insider to share. (Security clearance will be required).

Visit the following link for illustrations:

<http://www.stampsofindia.com/News/2004/162e.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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<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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