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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

Diwali or Deepavali, the festival of lights, is much more than a religious festival. It is the biggest festival in India and for the persons of Indian origins all over the world. Diwali was celebrated in The White House for the first time in 2004 and US President George W Bush sent personal greetings and felicitations to the community. Earlier British Prime Ministers and members of royal family, including Prince Charles has participated in Diwali functions in UK.

Several Stamps on Diwali has been issued in Fiji, Guyana, and Singapore. Singapore has also issued postal stationery on Diwali. Special postmarks on Diwali have been issued in UK and USA.

The persons of Indian origin in USA have been collecting signatures for the issue of Diwali special stamp by the US Postal Service that already has issued stamps on Christmas, Id, and other Jewish and African festivals on several occasions. The message from Prakash Mody from Canada was published in an issue in 2003 when this signature campaign was launched.

Recently our regular contributor, Dr Avinash B Jagtap wrote in saying that the campaign has collected "only" 97000 signatures so far while the goal is to collect more than 500'000!

We take this opportunity to remind all our readers to sign the petition online and also to spread the word about this petition to relatives, friends, and associates, all over the world.

Please click on the link below to sign the petition  
[http://www.petitiononline.com/mod\\_perl/signed.cgi?diwali03](http://www.petitiononline.com/mod_perl/signed.cgi?diwali03)

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

- M&SJ

Our thanks to the Contributors and Sources to this issue: P R Krishnan, Commodore K K Chandra, Manohar Lal, Xinhua News Agency, and the Press Information Bureau Government 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 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

INDIA POST AT THE REPUBLIC DAY PARADE

India Post participated with a tableau in the Republic Day Parade for the first time this year on January 26, 2004.

The design of the tableau indicated the vast outreach and the multi-faceted activities of both in terms of time and space from the old and traditional forms of the postal service to the new age e-based services. The early postman in red costume of his time holding a bunch of letters and carrying a bag, a village letter box hanging from a tree on which a symbolic pigeon is also sitting, the grandeur of Calcutta GPO, counters equipped with state of the art computers, providing multiple services to a variety of customers. A dramatic depiction of this journey through time was shown by a rotating cuboid carrying the set of 4 stamps released to commemorate 150 years of India Post. The last part had a hand, holding a scanner, which reads the barcode on the letter. The tableau was decorated with postage stamps on both sides. Walking along side the tableau were the carriers and deliverers of mail through the ages from the mail runner (harkara) to the postman in his newest uniform.

A special cover depicting this tableau was also brought out to commemorate the event. There are two different special postmarks, featuring Harkara (period postman) and Kolkata GPO, used to service 500 covers each. The 500 covers with Kolkata GPO postmark were carried on the tableau and were signed by all the 10 postal workers aboard. The other 500 covers were carried by two Harkaras walking ahead of the tableau. Each Harkara carried 250 covers that were also signed by him. Thus there are 3 collectible covers- 1. Kolkata GPO (500 covers), 2. Harkara - 1 (250 covers), and 3. Harkara - 2 (250 covers).

The covers are available at Rs 250 each cover only on mail order by registered post or speed post from Senior Postmaster, Sansad Marg Head Post Office, New Delhi 110001. The remittance by money order or postal order must accompany the order. The last date for orders to reach is February 15, 2005.

In case the mail orders received are in excess of the covers available, the quantities ordered shall be reduced on pro-rata basis (the fractions being ignored) and the surplus funds shall be refunded through service money order within 15 days of the allotment. The deliveries shall be made by registered with acknowledgement due post.

The decision of the Senior Postmaster, Sansad Marg Head Post Office shall be final. India Post reserves the right to reject any order, change the conditions of this offer, and revise the price at any time without assigning any reason.

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FORTHCOMING STAMP ISSUES

February 3: Padampat Singhania, Rs 5

This 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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POSTAL STATIONERY NEW ISSUES

The following postal stationery with advertisement was scheduled for release in February 2005.

The information in the listing is presented in following format:  
Date, Printer, Language, Message, Quantity in million, Remarks  
'M' denotes multicolor printing.

Postcard

15, SSP, Oriya, AIDS, 1  
15, SPP, Hindi, Human Rights, 1, M

Inland

15, SSP, Oriya, AIDS, 1  
15, ISP, Hindi, Human Rights, 1, M

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POSTAL STATIONERY UPDATE

New Arrivals:

December 3, 2004: Postcard with advertisement, in Tamil, Child Labor, 1 million, Security Printing Press, Hyderabad, Multicolor

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MEGHDOOT UPDATE

India Post introduced Meghdoot Post Card on September 2, 2002. Meghdoot is priced at 25 paise that is half the cost of the regular post card. The writing space available on the address side of the regular post card is made available for advertising in multicolor in case of Meghdoot. The rate of the advertisement is Rs.2 per card and the minimum order for print is 100,000 cards. Meghdoot is printed by Security Printing Press at Hyderabad in sheets of 8 cards, although some have been supplied to post offices by the press in sheets of 4 and pairs of 2 cards.

Being a postal stationery article with an advertisement, its area of distribution is determined by the advertiser, as its design and copy. In addition to the post offices in the area of its distribution the

Meghdoot is also made available in limited quantity of 2000 cards at select 8 philatelic bureaus that handle postal stationery, namely Ahmedabad, Bangalore, Chennai, Delhi, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Lucknow, and Mumbai.

Meghdoot literally means the cloud-messenger and is title of a play in Sanskrit penned by Kalidasa a few millenniums earlier. Meghdoot is also the name of an award that India Post presents for meritorious services to its employees annually.

The printing of Meghdoot were decentralized to Circle level on October 15, 2003 enabling India Post's 23 postal circles to directly place their order on the press. However all other postal stationery articles with advertisements such as regular Post Card, Inland Letter Card, Aerogramme, and Envelopes continue to be printed by the order of the national Postal Directorate, New Delhi. The decentralization has added to the difficulties in procuring the necessary information on these cards even very basic data such as date of issue.

Currently by our reckoning, arrived after painstaking pursuit, there are 110 Meghdoots till December 31, 2004. However only 100 have so far been issued and 10 that were scheduled for release during November and December 2004 are yet to be issued. India Post is not very strict in adhering to the date of issue in case of postal stationery and items are printed and issued at times months and believe it or not years after the scheduled date of issue. The philatelic bureaus however stick to the scheduled date of release in listing and applying the first day issue of postmark on postal stationery. This situation creates items of postal stationery with postmark date that is earlier then it was actually printed. When we had begun in 2000 we made an attempt to list the actual dates when a postal stationery item was available but had to give it up and now follow official dates of issue to make life simple for everyone.

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

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RECENT SPECIAL POSTMARKS & COVERS

INS Shivaji, Lonavla, Alma Mater of Marine Engineering Branch of the Indian Navy, is celebrating her 60th Anniversary on February 15, 2005. To commemorate the Diamond Jubilee of INS Shivaji, a special cover and cancellation will be issued by the ship.

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RECENT & FORTHCOMING EVENTS

EXHIBITIONS

January 28-29, Chandannagar, District Level,  
February 3-4, Sangrur, District Level,  
February 4-6, Coimbatore, COIN-STAMPEX  
February 9-13, Mysore, COINEX  
February 11-12, Birbhoom, District Level,  
February 12-14, Howrah, South Bengal Regional  
February 23-27, Jaipur, Science Thematic  
February, Jaipur, District Level, DATES TO BE ANNOUNCED  
March 1-3, Gangtok, Sikkim

August 11-15, Coimbatore, South Zone  
Contact: The Philatelists Coimbatore, 5 Eleventh Street, Tatabad,  
Coimbatore 641 012

MEETINGS - Guests are welcome

February 13: 11 AM to 1 PM, Delhi Coin Society  
23 Bhai Vir Singh Marg, WRC Building, Gole Market, New Delhi 110001  
Contact: Goga Jain 93123-18401

February 7: 2 to 4 PM, Delhi Philatelists  
2214-15, Hardhiyan Singh Road, 2nd Floor, Chanana Complex, Karol Bagh,  
New Delhi 110005  
Contact: Madhukar Jhingan 93505-37037

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FAKE STAMP SCAM UPDATES

Delhi Police have recovered fake stamp papers worth Rs 54,600 from the residence of Som Dutt Sharma at Pul Mithai in north Delhi on January 19, 2005. Sharma, a former advocate's assistant, allegedly supplied stamp papers to a man named Devanand Sharma who sold them.

A Special MCOCA court at Pune granted extension of 30 days to CBI on January 20, 2005 to file the charge sheet in the stamp paper scam case registered at Nasik. The CBI had requested for extension of 72 days on grounds that the investigation of the case, in which some of the officers of Nasik-based India Security Press (ISP) are allegedly involved, was complicated. Rejecting the CBI request to grant it 72-day extension to file the charge sheet, Judge S M Shembole asked the investigating agency to file charges on or before February 21, 2005.

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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>

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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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.>

VIVEK CHOPRA, Hyderabad

I have been also facing similar problems of not getting miniature sheets from the GPO here. The philatelic counter here only sells miniatures on the first day of issue and after that there is a standard reply that there is no stock. Are the counters selling them directly to dealers or they have not been supplied with enough quantity. The INS Tarangini scarcity may be attributed to the less quantity printed 50,000 to be precise but after that the other has been printed more than a lakh (100,000). Still there is problem. I don't know what will happen in the future I feel that stamp collecting as a hobby is beyond reach of the common man after the publication of the phila india catalogue and it has become a business. The charm in the hobby is lost and people are only collecting for money.

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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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AN INTERESTING ITEM - M S SUBBULAKSHMI

Welcome to a new feature where we will record an interesting item from the world of Indian philately. Share your favorite items with fellow philatelists here, contact editors@stampsofindia.com

Zahid Islam from Dammam, Saudi Arabia has contributed the first item. Islam had acquired this very attractive cover from a collector in Chicago, USA who was selling part of his collection in a club auction in 1992. It is a registered VP envelope from the Gramophone Company Limited of Dum Dum (Calcutta) with a multi-colored label of the singer M S Subbulakshmi, dated May 6, 1940.

Madurai Shanmukhavadiyu Subbulakshmi (popularly known as M S or M SS) (September 16, 1916 - December 11, 2004) was a renowned Carnatic vocalist. M S started learning Carnatic music from a very early age and cut her first disc at the age of 10. At 17, the child prodigy made her debut at the Madras Music Academy. Since then, she performed countless musical forms in different languages such as Hindi, Bengali, Gujarati, Tamil, Malayalam, Telugu, Sanskrit and Kannada. M S also became famous as a film actress. Her most memorable role was Bhaktha Meera in Meera (1945). Following the success of the film she quit films and turned wholly to concert music.

M S traveled to London, New York, Canada, the Far East, and other places as India's cultural ambassador and performed at concerts at Carnegie Hall, New York; the UN General Assembly on UN day in 1966; the Royal Albert Hall, London in 1982; and at the Festival of India in Moscow in 1987.

She was widely honored, praised and awarded. Some of them more popular ones include Padma Bhushan in 1954, Sangeetha Kalanidhi in 1968 (literally, Treasure Chest of Music. She was the first woman recipient of the title), Ramon Magsaysay award in 1974, the Padma Vibhushan in 1975, the Kalidasa Samman in 1988, the Indira Gandhi Award for National

Integration in 1990, and the highest civilian award - Bharat Ratna in 1998. She was also honored as the court-singer of Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams.

The illustration is available at:

<http://www.stampsofindia.com/infobase/star-001.htm>

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GREAT MEN GREAT PHILATELISTS  
THEY SAID IT.....

COMPILED BY JEEVAN JYOTI, BHUBANESHWAR

The stamps of the world are powerful object lessons in the eternal hunger of men for knowledge and news about their fellowmen. They are pictorial history of all arts and sciences and human progress, since the earliest civilization

-Dwight Eisenhower (34<sup>th</sup> President of the USA, 1953-1961)

The endless panorama of world events and scenes which is opened up to the owner of a stamp collection is perhaps why stamp collecting fascinates so many millions of people from youth to old age. The more stamp collecting is pursued, the more enjoyable it becomes and few who have said "Let's collect stamps" have turned to another hobby and gained as much pleasure from it as they did with their stamp collection.

-Arthur D Stansfield (Founder Editor of the Philatelic Exporter)

So many compensations reward the stamp collector that it is difficult to decide which is the greatest benefit to accrue from its avocation. After all, the sheer delight which it affords justifies our interest and brings ample returns to our effort.

-Franklin D Roosevelt (32<sup>nd</sup> President of the USA, 1933-1945)

Someone has said that the wisest man is the one who has learned just how limited his knowledge really is. The stamp collector who takes his avocation seriously discovers early just how true this is, for the more he studies his stamps the more clearly he realizes just how much more there is to learn.

-William Wylie

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ALSO IN THE NEWS

MORE TSUNAMI STAMPS

China has issued 2 special postage stamps on January 21, 2005 to showcase Chinese people's efforts to help the tsunami victims in South and Southeast Asian nations where Beijing launched its biggest-ever relief and aid operation.

The stamps in the denomination of 80 each are produced in a sheetlet of 8 stamps.

At the release ceremony, the head of State Post Bureau donated \$ 240,964 to the Chinese Red Cross Association for tsunami victims on behalf of the postal staff across the country.

China Post has decided to forego the postage for tsunami donations since January 1, 2005. The total donation through mail has passed five million yuan (602,410 US dollars).

The Chinese Government pledged USD 2.6 million of supplies and immediate relief to these areas and made an additional donation of USD 60 million a few days later. Red Cross China had collected more than USD 18.1

million in private donations for the tsunami victims. Chinese rescuers and medical workers were also rushed to countries like Indonesia, Thailand and Sri Lanka. PTI

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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.

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

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ADMINISTRIVIA

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