



# SIPA

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**SOUTH INDIA PHILATELISTS' ASSOCIATION**  
(FOUNDED 1956)  
(AFFILIATED TO THE PHILATELIC CONGRESS OF INDIA)

### RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN POSTAL COMMUNICATION

By : Shri S.T. Bhaskarn, C.P.M.G

Talk given by Sri. S.T. Bhaskaran, Chief Post Master General Tamilnadu Circle, Chennai. at our Second Sunday Monthly meeting on 8-6-97 at Philatelic Bureau Anna Road, H.P.O. Chennai - 2. Sri. G. Madan Mohandas Patron, SIPA Presided, 58, Members attended. The Chief guest was introduced to the members. Mr. Roland Nelson proposed a vote of Thanks

Starting with 22,000 post offices at the time of independence, the number of post offices has now reached more than 1,50,000. China with twice the land size of India and much larger population has a network of only 57,000 post offices. Tamilnadu circle has its share of the phenomenal expansion of the postal network. Today there are more than 12,000 post offices in this circle as against just about 1,800 at the time of independence.

The volume of mail handled by the Dept. of Post is increasing year by year. Six metros alone account for 7 million domestic mail each day, which constitute 59 percent of the country's mail as a whole.

This staggering increase in workload apart, the innovations in high technology communication and the ever increasing consumerism emphasised the need for switching over some of the postal operations to mechanisation. The Universal Postal Union in the mid 80s advocated the member countries to evolve a specialised expedited mail service and there followed

the birth of EMS Speedpost service in India and in many other countries which provide a time bound delivery of mail.

Taking advantage of the large scale use of personal computers, the Dept. of Post has devised a software with the interface of weighing scale, a PC and a printer, where most of the types of postal transaction can be entertained at a single window. In this system the postage stamp is dispensed with. During the 8th plan DOP has set a target of installing 5000 such MPCMs in the country. So far more than 2000 MPCMs were installed in various post offices.

In view of the inherent limitations of manual sorting of mail and also to make use of the advancement in technology in the field of mail processing, DOP established the first Automated Mail Processing unit in Bombay in April 1993. The main stages of the mechanised process are :

- a) Bar coding of the address of the mail.
- b) Reading of Barcode by the Letter Sorting Machine
- c) Sorting of the mail into various programmed selections or bins in the LSM corresponding to the various destinations.

The LSMs installed at Bombay is capable of processing 1.2 million letters in a 24 hour work day. The second Automatic Mail Processing Centre was commissioned in Madras last year. The benefits of automatic mail centre will be fully realised if the mail format is standardised by users and PIN code is written in every letter.

### SIPA MEETINGS :

Second Sunday of every month Regular meeting at the Philatelic Bureau, Anna Road, Head Post Office, Madras - 600 002. (10.30 a.m. - 12.30 p.m.)  
First and third Sunday of every month - Auction meetings at our Library Hall at 6 Nanian Street, Madras - 3. (Timing 10.45 a.m. to 1.00 p.m.)  
SIPA Library Open Tuesday & Sunday, 6 Nannain Street, Madras - 3. (7.00 p.m. to 8.00 p.m.)

In order to reduce the physical handling and surface transmission of a mail delivery and money orders, the DOP has set up 77 Very Small Aperture Terminals (VSATs) as a part of the Remote Area Business Network of the DOT. Making use of the Satellite (INSAT II B) messages and money orders are transmitted between VSAT centres instantaneously and the delivery payment arranged on the same day or on the next day irrespective of the distance factor. These nodes in the VSAT centres are being connected to post offices within a radius of about 200 KM through dial-up-modem, using telephone facility, for transfer of funds (money orders) and messages. At present 344 ESMO stations are active. This will be increased to 1000. These post offices will act as Extended Satellite Money order stations. Making use of these facilities, DOP introduced three new services namely Hybrid Mail Service, Express Money Order Service and Corporate Money Order Service.

In Hybrid Mail, technology and human input is combined and the messages transmitted are delivered by postmen in hard copy or in a floppy. Money orders valued upto Rs.5000 are transmitted through VSAT as Express money order with no extra cost. The corporate MO Service is specially suited for business houses and money upto Rs.100 lakhs can be transferred under this service with nominal commission, which is more or less equal to bank charges. The advantage here is that the money is paid within 24-48 hours.

In addition to the above, DOP has used the technology in various operations such as

- Processing of Postal Life Insurance cases
- Pairing of money orders at the office of the Director of Postal Accounts.
- Computerisation of the Savings bank and SB control organisation work.
- Processing of complaint and providing after sales service at Customer Care Centres and Speed Post Business Office.
- Processing of Registered articles by computerising the Registration Sorting.
- Providing information on Pincodes and other postal matters by using computers.
- Computerising the operations of Postal Stores Depot.
- Introduction of full fledged Tracking and Tracing System (TATS) for Speed Post articles and interconnecting between metros.

The use of technology is vital for not only the well being of the organisation, but also for its very relevance in the days to come. DOP acting on the recommendations of the Excellence Committee identified the use of technology and make use of it in its operations, as the same is vital for the viable existence of the Post.

It is pertinent to conclude this with the observation made by the World Bank which in collaboration with the UPU

conducted a study in May 1996. In its study entitled "Redirecting the Post : International Postal Sector Reforms" it is mentioned as follows :

"Perhaps the most important policy message...is that unless the postal service integrates communication technology into its service provision, the economic and the changing market preferences may prevent the Post from providing a truly universal service.

## THE WORLD'S FIRST POSTCARD



In 1865, Heinrich von Stephan, later to become well known in connexion with the creation of the International Postal Union, suggested to German postal authorities that they should introduce a postal card. Nothing was done, either on that occasion or two years later at a Postal Conference at Karlsruhe when he repeated his suggestion.

In 1869 Dr. Emmanuel Hermann, a professor at the Wiener Neustadt Military Academy, proposed that a postal card should be introduced and that it should be transmitted through the post at a reduced rate.

Hermann's idea was accepted. On 1 October 1869 the world's first postcards were put on sale in Austria and Hungarian post offices, with the aim of encouraging more business. The cards were an overwhelming success, and soon the whole world followed suit.

The first cards measured 122 mm x 88 mm and were made of buff board. One side carried a printed deep yellow two Kreuzer 'Head of the Emperor' stamp, the title 'Correspondenz-Karte' and lines to guide the writing of the address. The other side was labelled as the space for the written communication.

Today, mint cards would probably fetch around 9500. A postally used, first day of issue card, clearly cancelled, is likely to command in excess of 9950, although the value has yet to be proved in auction.

**Tonie & Valmai Holt.**

## THE HISTORY OF CHEMISTRY ON STAMPS

Mr.R.A. AUSTIN, B.A.,

In its early days the practice of chemistry lay in the hands of craftsmen rather than scientists. Chemical phenomena were employed for their useful effects rather than as subjects for theoretical study and investigation.

Thus in the Stone Age chemical practice was based on the beneficial uses of fire-in cooking, pottery and metal making. During the succeeding Bronze and Iron Ages chemical transformations which separated metals from their waste ores were used by goldsmiths and jewellers. Such transformations were considered to be magical in nature and explain chemistry's close alliance with the priesthood at this time.

Although the ancient Greeks were primarily concerned with more theoretical and abstract studies, they did apply their minds to the subject of chemistry. Among several schools of thought which emerged during the period of Greek dominance, a few are particularly worthy of mention.

Leucippus and Democritus in the 5th century BC proposed the 'atomist' theory, with all changes in matter resulting from the motion of atoms in space. Democritus appears alongside an atomic symbol on S.G. No. 876 of Greece, one of a set of two issued in 1961, to commemorate the inauguration of the 'Democritus' nuclear research station.

Hippocrates of Cos, also of the 5th century BC, seen on S.G. No. 1487 of Greece, distinguished carefully between medical chemistry and pure superstition, and indeed established medical schools in Athens. He also undertook some practical chemical investigations, including attempting to determine the purity of water by its speed of boiling.



Aristotle (384-322 BC) suggested that all things were made of four elements - fire, air, water and earth with ether above the planetary surface. He furthermore proposed that all elements could be interchanged with one another, and from this proposal sprang the practice of alchemy. Alchemists spent the next thousand years studying ways of converting the base metals into gold and silver. Aristotle's 2300th death anniversary was celebrated in 1978 by S.G. Nos. 1451-2 of Mexico and S.G. No.572 of Cyprus.

Important though the Greek contributions were, the Arabs who became dominant in the 6th century, could perhaps be described as the true founders of chemistry. It was they who brought together the results of chemical studies in the Middle East, Europe, India and China.

In the field of chemical theory the Arabs extended Aristotle's 4-element world to include sulphur and mercury, representing 'dry' and 'moist' vapours. The alchemist Geber managed to obtain sulphuric acid by the distillation of alum and also embarked on a classification of materials into 'spirits', metals and mineral substances. Al Biruni, depicted on S.G. No.1796 of Iran, attempted a classification on the basis of specific gravity differences. Two other notable Arabs who indulged in chemical research and who have received philatelic recognition were Avicenna, whose 1000th birth anniversary was the subject of S.G. Nos. 772-3 issued by Mali in 1980, and Rhazes, whose 1100th birth anniversary was celebrated in 1964 by S.G. Nos. 1377-8 of Iran. Avicenna is also featured on S.G. No.236 of Pakistan and S.G. No. 781 of Poland. Complementing their theoretical work, the Arabs were also responsible for developing a thriving chemical industry, producing soda, alum and a variety of perfumes.

As Europe emerged from the Dark Ages in the 12th century, science was at last being recognised as a subject independent of theology. The subsequent development and growth of universities in the 13th century- at Bologna, Paris and Oxford for example - helped stimulate research into chemistry. One of the most famous researchers of the time was the German, Albertus Magnus (1193-1280) who used nitric acid to separate gold and silver. Magnus is depicted on S.G. No. B194 of West Berlin. On the industrial front, chemical knowledge both contributed to and benefited from metal smelting, alcohol production and the manufacture of gunpowder.

The Renaissance in Europe, not suprisingly, had a decisive effect on chemistry. Alchemy was replaced by medical science, led by the Swiss chemist Paracelsus (1493-1541), who was also responsible for adding the neutral 'salt' to the metals and non metals distinction of matter proposed earlier by the Arabs. Van Helmont (1577-1644), a follower of Paracelsus, suggested water to be the only primary element and was the first to name and study gases.

In 1643 the Italian Torricelli determined the weight of air, and his 350th birth anniversary was celebrated by S.G. No.979 of Italy.

The Irish scientist Robert Boyle (1627-1691) followed up Van Helmont's work with gases, designing the first successful air pump, which was built in 1659, and pronouncing his famous Gas Laws in 1662. Boyle was prominent in distinguishing chemistry from medicine and was indeed a pioneer of analytical chemistry. Turning away from Aristotle's theory of the continuity of matter Boyle favoured the Greek atomist school of thought, and he also made the crucial distinction between compounds and mixtures. To further indicate Boyle's range of interests in chemistry it was he who

first used vegetable/animal extracts for testing acidity. Boyle featured on S.G. No. 474 of Ireland, part of the Irish science and technology issue of 1981.

Although the 17th century saw chemistry moving forward rapidly, a lack of comprehensive data led to some theories failing to gain general acceptance, and certainly chemistry did not advance as far as physics, mechanics and astronomy. Isaac Newton's notions of atomic nuclei and electrons were not revitalised for nearly three centuries - Newton may be seen on S.G. No.349 of Niger and S.G. No.1130 of Poland

The 18th century saw the growth of the Industrial Revolution in Europe and the birth of many scientific societies. Chemistry benefited from each phenomenon, in the first case as a result of the skills required in the metallurgical and textile industries, in the second case as a result of the improved dissemination of knowledge.

Progress in theoretical chemistry was based on the study of combustion. Several eminent chemists contributed to the research including the Russian Lomonosov who laid down his principle of the conservation of matter in 1748, and Priestley (1733-1804) who discovered oxygen in 1774 and so did Scheele (1742-1786) of Sweden. The 250th birth anniversary of Lomonosov was commemorated in 1961 by S.G. Nos. 2646-8 of Russia, while the bicentenary of Scheele's birth was the subject of S.G. Nos. 262-3 of Sweden. Scheele was also responsible for founding organic chemistry as a discovering tungsten, molybdenum, manganese, barium and chlorine.

The Frenchman Lavoisier (1743-1794) collated the results of those around him and proclaimed his principle to the indestructibility of matter in 1789. From this he determined that oxygen was needed for combustion process, a great step forward in chemical understanding. Lavoisier, depicted



on S.G. No.785 of France, dissolving in acids, and divided all compounds into acids, bases and salts. Indeed, it can be said that he reorganised the whole of chemistry into a precise, quantitative science, based on well defined chemical equations which enabled the results of reactions to be predicted theoretically. Some twenty years later, Dalton's (1766-1844) atomic theory - proposing chemical elements to be composed of atoms which very qualitatively from element to element - linked chemistry into the mechanical scheme of the universe laid down by Newton. The Swede Berzselius (1779-1848), depicted on S.G. No. 1010 of Sweden, performed many experiments using Dalton's ideas and produced many accurate calculations of atomic weights.

In the 19th century chemistry was the dominant science, supporting the expanding science, supporting the expanding textile industry. Although at the start of the century research was centred in Britain, the emphasis switched later through France to Germany, with explosives, dyes and drugs becoming increasingly important.

In the field of inorganic chemistry men such as Lussac, featured on S.G. No.1115 of France and Thenard, depicted on S.G. No.1364 of France, were prominent, together with the Russian Mendeleev, Mendeleev drew up his famous Periodic Table of the Elements in 1869, an event commemorated one hundred years later by S.G. No.3696 of Russia.

Important research in organic chemistry was carried out by, among others, Pasteur and Kekule. Pasteur, whose 150th birth anniversary in 1972 was celebrated by several stamp issues including S.G. No.123 of the Comoro Islands and S.G. No.459 of Gabon, showed that molecules possessed a well defined three dimensional shape, a finding confirmed by Kekule who conceived the benzene ring structure in 1865. The centenary of Kekule's finding was marked by S.G. No.1975 of Belgium and S.G. No.1345 of West Germany.

Pasteur was also the founder of biochemistry, and was followed

in this field by Fischer and Lister. Fischer performed research into the structure of sugars and proteins, while Lister in 1865 discovered phenol's use as an antiseptic, an event commemorated by S.G. Nos. 667-8 of Great Britain. The 150th birth anniversary of Lister was the subject of S.G. Nos.665-6 of Great Britain issued in 1977. Also in the medical sphere, the 150th anniversary of the isolation of quinine, used in the treatment of malaria, by Pelletier and Caventou in 1820, was celebrated by S.G. No.1870 of France.

Theoretical studies made during the early decades of the current century led to a much fuller understanding of the basic composition of matter. Atomic structure was investigated by Rutherford (1871-1937) and Bohr (1885-1962). The birth centenary of Rutherford was commemorated by S.G. No.455-6 of Denmark issued in 1963.

Crystal structure was studied using X-rays by Sir William and Sir Lawrence Bragg, and their resulting Nobel Prize was marked by S.G. No.862 of Sweden and S.G. No.1032 of Great Britain, the latter stamp being part of a set of four issued in 1977 to celebrate the centenary of the Royal Institute of Chemistry.

Furthermore, quantum theory analysis by Einstein (depicted on many stamps worldwide) and Planck (S.G. No.989 of Sweden) explained how substances combined into crystalline forms. The Swedish chemist Arrhenius, whose birth centenary was commemorated by S.G. Nos.414-5 of Sweden issued in 1959, gained the Nobel Prize in 1903 for his theory of ionisation, the same year as the Curies were awarded their Prize for discovering radium (see S.G. No.617 of France).

Such important findings were of great value to industry for with greater knowledge came man's ability to produce synthetic materials for a variety of purposes. Plastics and rayon first appeared in the 1920s, followed by artificial rubber in the 1930s. The plastics industry in Finland was the subject of S.G. No.789 of that country, while S.G. No. 1573 of West Germany is devoted to chemical fibre research, depicting a molecular chain of terylene. A model of isoprene, the building block rubber, appears on S.G. No.51 of Malaysia. The 1930s also saw the production of petrol from crude oil and an interesting set in this connexion is S.G. Nos.461-463 of Netherlands Antilles. The set commemorates the 50th anniversary of the Curacao oil industry and features a catalytic cracking plant and a

fractionating plant.

Today, chemical products find application spanning across all economic activity, ranging from fertilisers used in agriculture to oil based products used in heavy industry - a large collection of stamps could be build up depicting aspects of chemical manufacture, but such stamps are outside the scope of the present article.

Chemistry is also playing a major role in medical care. Important contribution in the 20th century include the discoveries of insulin in 1921 (commemorated by S.G. NO.675 of Canada), and penicillin in 1928 (see S.G. No.753 of Great Britain). Vitamin C synthesis, which won the Nobel Prize for Haworth in 1937.(see S.G. No.1030 of Great Britain), protein studies (see S.G. No.1095 of Japan) and DNA research (see S.G. No.1978 of Spain) are further illustrations of chemistry's importance to our lives.

Sophisticated research tools used by modern chemists have not been ignored by stamp designers. Atomic absorption spectrophotometry is the subject of S.G. No.596 of Australia, and a neutron generator appears on S.G. No.967 of Yugoslavia.

With such a variety of stamps portraying chemistry's progress through the ages, a thematic collection of such issues suitably demonstrates man's desire to come to understand and ultimately control his environment.

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NORWEX'97 :@ OSLO 16, -21.4.1997.

Shri Dhirubhai Metha was the Indian Commissioner and FIP Juror for the Postal History and Aerophilately International Exhibition held at Oslo from 16-21 April, 1997, limited to POSTAL HISTORY and Aerophilately it was well attended. there were 246 exhibits from 46 countries in just over 1600 frames.

Mrs. Damayanthi Pittie, Bombay bagged the Gold Medal for her Postal History collection of India and Shri Ashok K. Kora, Bombay won a Silver Medal for his collection of Airmails. (Report incomplete) Shri Vispi S. Duster was the Apprentice Jury from India for FIP Exhibition - NORWEX -97.

## WHO ARE THESE STAMP COLLECTORS

BY : KENNETH R. LAKE

What research has been done into the habits of stamp collectors? It was a major wholesaler who asked me, and my immediate reaction was to ask 'Why do you want to know?'

From time to time magazines seek to discover just what kind of collector reads their pages; rarely does more than 1% bother to fill in the questionnaire\* so the answers are hardly typical of the total readership.

Several decades ago, a government survey published a neat little pamphlet, the conclusions of which could be summarised as 'we don't really know'.

Why all the secrecy? Basically it stems from two problems - first, just what a stamp collector is, and secondly, the fact that most collectors are themselves secretive about their hobby.

There are four monthly, one fortnightly and one weekly publication for stamp collectors, yet their total readership hardly exceeds 175,000. There are uncountable stamp clubs and study circles around the country, having an average of perhaps 50 members - yet the total of their membership cannot be more than 25,000.

Walk into an average office and you will usually find one man who tears all the stamps from the envelopes and hides them in a drawer: is he a collector?

Perhaps one in five of these actually bothers to soak the stamp off paper - though what happens to them after that is anyone's guess, and probably most of them are 'consumed to destruction' through careless handling. It does take a

certain amount of application to soak stamps, dry them, affix hinges and mount them into the sort of album which will not ruin them.

What happens to most of the stamps rescued in this way? I think they are given to children, who of course consume them to destruction with the greatest of pleasure, learning the skills which will later allow them to approach philately in a more mature way.

But what about those collectors who, while caring for the stamps they acquire free of charge, and perhaps queueing at the post office for a mint set and first day cover of each new G.B. issue, take the attitude that they will never buy stamps from a dealer? Are they collectors in any real sense?

What sort of a collection can you put together by chance alone? Less of a collection than an accumulation, I would say - and that explain who 'real' collectors refer to the hit-or-miss man as an 'accumulator'.

Can we, therefore, define a collector as one who not only gets things together but imposes some sort of order upon them with the aim of ultimately completing them? This means that a collection is something orderly, with a method which shows up gaps and allows the owner to fill them.

I am not suggesting the stamps have to be kept in stockbooks or special albums, so long as they form a coherent unity: I once knew a wealthy collector whose Great Britain mounted collection included a wealth of carefully researched Penny Blacks, yet whose dining room sideboard was filled to overflowing with thousands of mint sets, from virtually every country in the world, bought as new issues, labelled with the price and simply put away.

You might call that an accumulation - but he knew every set there was in the cupboard, he had ensured the collection was complete over the past ten years, and 'one day' he intended to arrange it and then probably sell it. I think we have to

accept that as a collection - but I confess that had the owner not possessed his other claims to philatelic expertise I would have been tempted to write him off as a simple accumulator.

So we have seen that there is no one pattern of collecting. Just because you use a printed album, or a pile of boxes, you are no less a collector than the man with a wealth of costly handwritten albums or cover containers. The aim is to bring order from chaos, to organise what you have into a meaningful form.

And that brings us back to the original question: how many collectors are there, what do they spend, what do they read, how do they enjoy the hobby?

Estimates of the number range from two million (by including all the accumulators) to a quarter of a million (by assuming that most collectors read a magazine); I would imagine the figure lies between these, for I know many 'lone collectors' who do not even buy Gibbons Stamp Monthly for the new issue news alone!

They miss a great deal, these solitary collectors, though many of them do have regular contact with a local dealer in a small provincial town. He may have good stocks of a few countries, but he certainly cannot match the total resources of all the advertisers\* in this magazine - which is why many a small dealer will refuse to sell copies in his shop, ignoring the fact that this would bring in customers regularly, widen their interests and enable him to expand the services he offers them to everyone's benefit.

How much does the average collector spend on stamps? One thing is certain - he lies to himself about it and probably hides the

facts from everyone else in the family. I heard a sad tale of a collector who made a habit of dividing his purchases by ten - if he bought 9 10 worth of stamps he would enter it meticulously in his records as 9 1, and so on.

He died unexpectedly, his uninformed widow took the collection back to the local dealer saying "I know how much he spent on it as it is all recorded in his book" - and the unscrupulous dealer paid her one-tenth of its cost price!

From experience I would say that most dealers find the bulk of their casual trade lies within the 9 1-9 10 range. Regular callers will spend 9 10-9 25 a time, say once a month, while advertisement may bring orders ranging from 9 2 to 9 200. Serious students may be able to devote upwards of 9 5,000 a year to their pursuit of rarities, while many a 'Junior collector' (and that includes people of all ages in the junior stages of the hobby - which many of them never leave) may never rise above 9 1 a week.

Perhaps one could average it all out and say that some 750,000 people spend an average of 9 3 a week on stamps? This could be an exaggeration, giving an annual turnover of 9 15 million a year - but the major auction houses alone turn over something like 9 10 million a year, so we cannot be far wrong.

What happens to all this money? Well, far too much of it goes into modern mint stamps and first day covers. Philately offers the collector 140 years of stamps, an earlier 300 years of European postal history, with so many sidelines that a mint stamp need never appear in a hundred albums of philatelic material.

Much philatelic money is spent on rarities - stamps or covers with a value at auction in excess of 9 500 are far more common than most collectors would imagine, and as it happens in most cases 'money makes money' in that the item the better is the chance of that price rising steeply over the years.

This often dispirits newer collectors. Having spent a couple of years building up what they believe to be nice collections, they see a specialist display at a society meeting which 'knocks theirs into a cocked hat'. You should not worry at all: if your collection has given you pleasure that is reward enough in itself; if you can afford to aspire to more rarefied levels of collecting, you must still serve your philatelic apprenticeship in the field of straightforward 'filling gaps'.

And that really is the clue to collecting: pleasure. Once you become hagridden by the need to beat everyone else, or once you fall for the lure of investment profits to the exclusion of pleasure, your hobby has become a monster. So whatever your approach, whatever your expenditure - enjoy yourself first!



A veteran national leader, a fearless freedom fighter, an eminent parliamentarian and a writer and thinker, Madhu Limaye was born on 1st May 1922 at Pune. While still at Fergusson College, he joined the Congress Socialist Party and became Secretary of the Pune CSP at the age of seventeen. He left college to devote full time to struggle for freedom and the socialist movement. Hereafter, freedom of the country and socialism became his ruling passions. He organized students and workers at Dhulia and in 1940 he was arrested and sentenced to one-year rigorous imprisonment for making anti-war speeches.

During the 1942 underground movement he toured extensively to organize the youth and awaken the masses. As a result of his active participation in the Quit India movement, he was arrested and he served his jail term in Worli, Yeravada and Visapur Jails till the end of the Second World War.

In 1947, the Socialist Party deputed Madhu Limaye to the International Socialist Conference at Antwerp. Later he toured Europe and wrote on the conditions prevailing there.

On return from Europe Madhu Limaye was entrusted with the work of preparing the constitution of the Socialist Party. He was also made convenor of its foreign department.

About that time he was appointed joint Secretary of the Socialist Party in 1953, he visited Rangoon as General Secretary of the Asian Socialist Bureau.

In 1955 he participated in the Goa Liberation Movement during which he had to suffer severe physical hardship at the hand of the Portuguese authorities. Not only that the Portuguese Military Tribunal sentenced him to a twelve-year imprisonment but true to the spirit of Gandhian Satyagraha he offered no defence during the trial. After his release from Portuguese prison he was elected Chariman of the Socialist Party. He also worked in the formation of labour unions among transport and municipal workers.

In 1964 he was elected to the Lok Sabha from Monghyr in Bihar. He tried to turn Parliament into an instrument for fighting for the cause of the downtrodden. His deep study and mastery over rules of parliamentary procedure made him a prominent parliamentarian. He was elected four times from Bihar to the Lok Sabha, where subsequently he became leader of the socialist group. He chose to live a life of simplicity and renunciation and for him service of the nation was the supreme goal. After 1980 owing to heart ailment in addition to asthma from which he had suffered for decades, he had to give up active politics, and he decided to devote himself to scholarly pursuits. Though not active in day-to-day politics he continued to influence its course through his books. He died on 8th January, 1995.

The Department of Posts is happy to issue a commemorative stamp in memory of his contribution to the nation.

The World Philatelic Exhibition, Indepex'97 is being organised at Delhi by the DEPARTMENT OF POSTS to coincide with the Golden Jubilee Celebration of India's Independence. The exhibition will be held from 15-22 December'97 in hall Nos.8-11, Pragati Maidan, New Delhi.

A Special Logo has been designed for Indepex '97 which depicts the caparisoned elephant, a symbol of traditional welcome in India. It signifies peace, prosperity and goodwill. A special postage stamp depicting the logo of Indepex'97 was released on 5th of Oct. '96.

This being a major International Exhibition which is held approximately once ever ten years, the Department of Posts is bringing out a series of stamps to herald Indepex'97 This is the first such set.

India is a country of great cultural heritage. This set of four stamps on Nalanda, Bodhgaya, Vaishali and Kushinagar depicts four cultural centres. Nalanda, Bodhgaya, and Vaishali are located in the State of Bihar and Kushinagar in Uttar Pradesh.

#### NALANDA

The first stamp in the series, depicts the ruins of Nalanda University, a monastic University which flourished here from 5th to 11th Century AD. It is believed to be the oldest university in the world. Lord Buddha himself is said to have preached at Nalanda.

#### BODHGAYA

The stamp on Bodhgaya depicts the gaint Bodhi Tree where Prince Siddharth gained enlightenment. Bodhgaya has also the famous Mahabohi Temple with soaring spire, Its walls are covered with scenes depicting various aspects of Buddhism. The temple is said to stand at the original site 3rd Century B.C. temple built by Emperor Ashoka.

#### VAISHALI

Vaishali, the ancient land of Mithila was the capital of the Lichchavis, one of the earliest Republics of the world. Emperor Ashoka erected a pillar here to mark the spot of the last prayer meeting of Lord Buddha. This pillar and the stupa of Vaishali are depicted in the stamp.

#### KUSHINAGAR

Kushinagar in Uttar Pradesh, completes the series: it was at this place that Lord Buddha breathed his last and attained Maha Parinirvana. The stamp depicts the stupa at Kushinagar.

The above centre which have a rich historical background located among two of the largest and most populous states of the country attract a large number of tourists from all over the world.





Pt. Omkarnath Thakur was born on 24th June, 1897 at Jhajgram in the old Baroda State, Gujarat. His father's name was Pt. Gauri Shankar Thakur and mother's name was Smt. Jhaverba. At the age of thirteen in 1910, he was enrolled as a student in Pt. Visnudigambra Paluskar's "Gandharva Mahavidyalaya Bombay. Pt. Omkarnath displayed his musical talent at a very young age and impressed by his qualities Pt. V.D. Paluskar appointed Pt. Omkarnath then only 19 years of age, as Principal of "Gandharva Mahavidyalaya" Lahore.

In 1923 Pt. Omkarnath founded an institution for the study of music, "Gandharva-niketan" in Broach. He later established another institution "Sri Sangita - Niketan" in Bombay in 1934. In 1946, Pt. Madan Mohan Malaviya, Dr. Radhakrishnan and other eminent personalities issued an appeal for the creation of a faculty of music in Banaras Hindu University and as a result the College of Music was established. In 1950 Pt. Omkarnath Thakur was appointed the first Principal and Dean of the College of Music in B.H.U. and he held the post till 1957.

Pt. Omkarnath Thakur can be counted amongst the great Indian Musicians of this century. Imbued with great sensibility to rhythm, and a creative mind of high order, a voice with exquisite tonal quality, he held audiences enthralled with his renditions for about 40 years in the country and abroad. He gave concerts at a number of places abroad, and in 1933, he attended the International Music Conference in Italy, where he received immense acclaim.

He made outstanding contribution as a music composer. His operas, "Kamayani" (1950) and "Kaamana" (1953) were staged in Banaras Hindu University and were widely acclaimed. He also conducted serious research in Sangitashastra and wrote many books and articles, important among these "Pranava-Bharati". Many awards and honours were conferred upon him, notable among them being the award of Sangeet Natak Akademi, Padmashri, Sangit Martand, Sangeet Samart, and D. Litt. from Banaras Hindu University.

Pt. Omkarnath Thakur passed away in December 1967. The Department of Post is issuing this commemorative postage stamp to mark the birth centenary celebrations of this great Indian musician.

## Obituary :

SRI MANSINGH NAHAR, Life Member of SIPA, a Doyen of Indian Native States and who was responsible for many of the Collectors getting high International Awards by getting scarce material and giving the know how of them and in assembling their collections is no more with us. He passed away after a prolonged illness in February. He will be missed by many and the Indian Philately has lost one of their doyens in Indian Native States. SIPA PAYS ITS TRIBUTE TO HIS MANY QUALITIES AND PRAY LORD TO REST HIS SOUL IN PEACE. A CONDOLENCE RESOLUTION WAS PASSED conveying the feelings of our members to the members of the bereaved family.

COL. L.G. SHENOI, aged 82 years old, the Doyen of Philately in Karnataka, a Postal History authority on India is no more with us. He passed away peacefully on 19th June, 1997 at Bangalore.

Born on 11th August, 1915 Col. L.G. Shenoi served in the Indian Army's Ordinance Corp and retired from the Defence Service as a full fledged Colonel. After retirement he devoted his life entirely to Philately, Postal History in particular, which was dear and near to his heart.

It was on his initiative, as the Secretary General that the First Asian International was held at Bangalore styled "Asiana77". Again he was mainly instrumental as the Founder Member and Secretary that the first ever Convention of the Philatelic Congress of India (PCI) was held in Bangalore in 1977. Due to his diligent and painstaking efforts, he was made the Vice-President of the PCI and he went on to become the President of Philatelic Congress of India. He was nominated as a Member of the Philatelic Advisory Committee of the Government of India, Postal Department for a number of terms. He started as Hon. Editor, IND DAK, a Monthly in 1977 which is still coming out on dot of time without a break. He has acted in many of the State, National and International Exhibitions.

His attention to youth philately was well reflected in his appointment as the CONVENER of the FIP Commission for Youth Philately, as Jury

The sad demise of Col. L.G. Shenoi has left a huge void for Indian Philately. It is hoped that publication of Ind Dak which he nurtured would continue without interruption in future. This would be the only fitting tribute to this great philatelist. We would be failing in our duty if we don't mention that it was he who was responsible for founding of Karnataka Philatelic Society in 1977. Let us pray that the Almighty may rest his soul in peace and give the strength to bear his loss to his wife, Mrs. Prathibha. A condolence Resolution was passed at the monthly Meeting of SIPA.