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FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK:

India's First Philatelic Advisory Committee was constituted in 1950 to advise on matters relating to Stamps. Later it was expanded to include, under the Chairmanship of the Minister of Communications, representatives of Parliament, philatelists and artists besides concerned government Departments. The Government has followed a consistent policy of using new postage stamps as an attractive and effective media to portray our heritage, habitat, history, arts, literature and culture, to commemorate our saints, martyrs, national leaders and other great men of India and the world and to mark events and anniversaries of National and International importance. By and large, the Department has succeeded admirably in this regard.

The growth of philately and the increasing awareness among our people has naturally given rise to demands from various quarters for stamps on diverse themes, personalities and institutions. The Department issues a number of stamps every year. We are all aware that those interested in collecting stamps including the serious philatelists want fewer but better designed and more appealing issues.

The art of designing stamps is one of fine art and the process from designing to printing needs aesthetic sense, dedication and utmost care. It is a time consuming process and I would like those concerned with it to be given adequate time so that better designed and better printed stamps are produced. The themes for the stamps should be carefully chosen so that they are not only attractive but also reflect the glories of our Past, achievements of our present and our aspirations for the future.

The purpose of issuing a stamp is defeated if it is not adequately published so that it reaches the farthest corners of this globe as our ambassador. In order to do so, the programme of issue should be finalised and published well in advance. The Department will do well to educate the sponsors and promoters of stamps about the intricacies of various aspects of stamp design and printing and Philately.

Exhibitions are the life blood of philately. They enthuse and invigorate the participants; attract new adherents; provide opportunities for learning new techniques and acquiring wanted materials. The Department should hold District Level, State Level and Rural level Exhibitions and put the organisers and stamp sellers on their mettle. Exhibitions promote friendship and generate goodwill between like-minded philatelists.

PHILATELY is good for children. It helps sharpen their curiosity, add to their knowledge, widen their mental horizons and rouse their latent creativity. As a hobby it is not expensive and does not require elaborate paraphernalia. But I am sorry to point out that we seem to have lagged behind in enlisting the parents and teachers for initiating their young charges into the fun, joy and benefits of systematic stamp collecting. I am reminded that in the United States there is Ben Franklin Stamp Club in most of the schools, why can't we have Nehru Chacha Stamp Club in our schools as part of their extra-curricular activities? I commend this thought to the Department of Youth Affairs, Department of Posts and Philatelic Congress of India. I am hopeful the joint endeavour in this regard will bring joy to many of our children and the youth. I would urge all those connected with education and welfare of children to take more positive and effective steps in promoting this healthy hobby among the children.

We have been producing our own stamps and stationery with and or without advertisements at the Nashik Security Press for the last 70 years. The Press has been modernised from time to time. But with many calls on our national resources, we have not been able to invest more money in a completely new plant with the state-of-art technology. I do hope that our long cherished dream of having most modern printing press is added by the Department of Posts and the Finance Department before long. Till then the stamp designers and the printers will pick up the brains from distinguished people for new ideas on producing attractive, imaginative, expressive and popular stamps, envelopes and letter sheets. WISH YOU ALL A HAPPY, PROSPEROUS AND HEALTHY NEW YEAR.

Our Second Sunday Meetings were held regularly where 35 members attended with President Shri. Balakrishna Das presiding. Shri Mr. G. Madan MohanDas, Spoke on "Exhibitions". New members introduced themselves. Talks by members with display, News/Views appreciated.

STAMP NEWS

CHILDREN'S DAY

14.11.99

300

0.7 million



The Department of Posts marks Children's Day: 14th November every year, with issue of a special stamp, to emphasize the country's social and moral responsibility towards the needs and rights of its children. India's commitment to the cause and well being of its children is enshrined

in its constitutional provisions. A planned approach to child welfare began with formulation of the first Five Year Plan and developed into the National Policy for Children (1974) which lays down the guiding principles for child welfare. The stamps issued to mark Children's Day, over the years, highlight themes of relevance with special messages for the growth and well being of children: nutrition, shelter, educational and recreational facilities, children's literature, children's paintings, empowerment of the girl child etc.

The design chosen for this year's stamp is based on a painting by Rishikesh Gohain which won an award (junior category) at a nationwide Stamp Design Competition. A selection of themes was given and this award-winning entry shows a 9-year old child's concept of the theme, "India 2000: Vision of the Future." It was chosen for this Millennium Issue, which focuses on the global concern for preservation of the planet, as seen from the eyes of a child. The child with his message, 'let us live tomorrow', comes across, teaching the message of global peace and harmony, and preservation of the ecosystems. The theme chosen for this Millennium Issue, calls for introspection, to build a better environment for the future generations, including those yet to be born. Let all species live together in perfect harmony as all life-forms are interdependent, and depletion of one form of life threatens all other forms. The message has been put simply and most profoundly through the wisdom of a child, but then the simplest way of stating a profound truth, is often the best. The concept of the borderless world, being one family is something enshrined in our ancient scriptures: - the whole world is one family.

Ultimately the theme of the stamp focuses on the moral duty of every individual to assure the children of this country, indeed of the world at large, their right to a harmonious co-existence. While the government efforts provide the impetus to all round development, there is need for coordinated and sustained effort from national

institutions, voluntary agencies, local bodies and other formal and informal associations and most important, the people themselves. Theme : Children, Painting

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SRI SATHYA SAI WATER SUPPLY PROJECT

23.11.99

300

1.4 million



The importance of providing safe drinking water to the poor of free India, particularly in the rural areas, was recognised by the planners and policy makers very early. A

national water supply and sanitation programme was introduced in social welfare sector in the year 1954.

That the magnitude of the problem is daunting becomes evident when we consider the fact that despite attaching priority to water supply projects, the country is yet to achieve the prescribed norm of providing 40 litres of safe drinking water per capita per day (lpcd) for human beings and in the Desert Development Programme areas, an additional 30 lpcd for cattle. Out of the total 13 lakh habitats in the country, four lakh do not have access to safe drinking water. One positive development in the country's efforts to provide drinking water to all her citizens has been the entry of voluntary agencies into this area. It is in this context that Sri Sathya Sai Drinking Water Supply Project (SSSDWSP) was undertaken by Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust in one of the most chronically drought prone regions, namely, Anantapur District of Andhra Pradesh with high fluoride content in ground water resources. The project was directed, funded and executed by the Trust under the guidance of Sri Sathya Sai Baba in a record time of less than 18 months costing about Rs.250 crores and benefiting 32 lakh people. In fact the first phase had become operational in just six months from the start covering 125 villages out of the total number of 731 finally covered. This precious gift of treated potable drinking water at the turn of tap, was given to the people of Anantapur district of Andhra Pradesh by the Trust on the 70th birthday of Sri Sathya Sai Baba. The Water Supply Project was inaugurated by the then President of India. Hon'ble Shri Shankar Dayal Sharma.

The SSSDWSP consists of four schemes:

1. Comprehensive Protected Water Supply (CPWS) Schemes involving infiltration wells, collection wells and

associated pumping behind the Chitravati Balancing Reservoir.

2. Direct pumping from Penna Ahobilam Balancing Reservoir (PABR) and treatment through rapid sand filtration system.

3. The Comprehensive Protected Water Supply (CPWS) schemes through seven summer storage tanks ranging upto 100 acres by tapping water from Tungbhadra High level Canal.

4. The Protected Water Supply (PWS) covers 279 villages.

This project covers an area of 19.25 Sq.Km, involving 2500 Km pipe lines of various diameters, 268 overhead services reservoirs (OHSR), 124 ground level service reservoirs (GLSR), 21 ground level balancing reservoirs (GLBR), 40 booster stations, 7 summer storage tanks, 13 infiltration wells and 280 borewells.

Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust is now undertaking similar water projects in the Mahabudnagar and Medak districts of Andhra Pradesh, covering about 300 villages. The Trust has also been rendering philanthropic services in the fields of education and health, through the educational institutions and hospitals managed by it.

Theme : Water, Social Service.

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SUPREME COURT OF INDIA: GOLDEN JUBILEE

26.11.99

300

0.7 million



After independence, when the new Constitution of India came into force, Article 124 provided for the establishment of the Supreme Court of India as the highest Court of the land. On 28th

January, 1950, the Supreme Court of India was inaugurated in the Court House, New Delhi. Today the sanctioned strength of the Supreme Court is 26 judges, with the seniormost Judge as the Chief Justice.

The Supreme Court of India enjoys various types of jurisdictions, and is considered one of the most powerful courts in the world. The Supreme Court, as the highest constitutional court of the land, is entrusted with the power of judicial review. It can examine legislation by Parliament or by other State Legislatures as well as executive action to ensure that the legislation is within the legislative

competence of the concerned legislature and to ensure that the principles of natural justice are not violated by the executive while arriving at its decisions and that a decision which is challenged, is not arrived at mala fide or in an arbitrary manner.

It is the highest Appellate Court of the land. An appeal lies to the Supreme Court from any judgement, decree or final order of a High Court, whether in a civil, criminal or other proceeding, if the High Court certifies that the case involves a substantial question of law as the interpretation of the Constitution. In addition, the Supreme Court also has, under Article 136 the right to grant special leave to appeal from any judgement, decree, determination, sentence or order in any case or matter by any court or tribunal in the territory of India. The Supreme Court also has Original Jurisdiction in disputes between the Government of India and any one or more States. The Supreme Court has Advisory Jurisdiction under Article 143 of the Constitution. The Supreme Court also has the power to review its own judgements and orders.

The most important power of the Supreme Court, however, is the power to issue writs in the nature of habeas corpus, mandamus, prohibition, quo warranto and certiorari for the enforcement of the fundamental rights granted under Part III of the constitution. The right to move the Supreme Court for the enforcement of fundamental rights is itself a fundamental right.

The Supreme Court has also opened new avenues of access to justice for those who were not earlier in a position to move the Court because they suffered from various handicaps such as poverty, lack of adequate knowledge of the law and its procedures, and other disabilities. The Court has now evolved what has come to be known as "public interest litigation". In the exercise of such jurisdiction issues of national importance like environmental protection and human rights violations have come before the Supreme Court.

Altogether, a heavy responsibility has been placed upon the Supreme Court under the Constitution. It receives annually about 35,000 cases for consideration. Yet today, the Supreme Court has only 20600 (approx) pending cases.

A proper functioning of the Supreme Court is of vital public importance. The Rule of Law, fundamental rights of the people and a proper functioning of the various constitutional authorities depend on it. The completion of fifty years of the Supreme Court is thus a special occasion for the citizens of this constitutional democracy.

Theme : Judiciary, Cities - Delhi.

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A. VAIDYANATHA IYER, INDULAL KANAIYALAL YAGNIK, DR. PUNJABRAO DESHMUKH AND P. KAKKAN: FREEDOM FIGHTERS AND SOCIAL REFORMERS

09.12.99

300 each

0.7 million



A. Vaidyanatha Iyer, Indulal Kannaiyalal Yagnik, Dr. Punjabrao Deshmukh and P. Kakkan, who apart from played prominent roles in the Freedom Struggle and also made significant contribution through their reformist efforts towards building of the nation in the post independence years in crucial socio-economic and political spheres.

A. Vaidyanatha Iyer (1890-1955) threw himself into the Freedom Struggle in 1922, influenced by Gandhiji, Playing active part in the Vedaranyam Salt Satyagraha of 1930, Quit India Movement of 1942, he had to spend many years in jail. He tirelessly campaigned for the development of Khadi and Village industries, prohibition, women's welfare and removal of untouchability. In 1939, he led a group of representatives of the depressed classes who were traditionally denied entry inside temples into the famous Meenakshi temple of Madurai for offering prayers. This was an epoch making event which triggered immediate legislation for the temple-entry of Harijans. Gandhiji wrote in the "Harijan" in July, 1939 "..... a great event in the campaign against untouchability..... Shri Vaidyanatha Iyer and his co-workers deserve all praise for the ceaseless effort they have put forth in educating the public".

Indulal Kanaiyalal Yagnik (1892-1972), freedom fighter and social reformer, worked assiduously to organise and spread the message of Swadeshi and non-cooperation movement. During the Kaira satyagraha he played an active role, and along with Vallabhnbhai Patel prepared a famine report of Gujarat. In 1919, he organised famine relief work and joined the campaign to oppose Rowlatt Act. He was a votary of the concept of a separate state of Gujarat, which later on become a reality. Since 1957, he

continued to represent the Ahmedabad constituency in the Lok Sabha till his death in 1972.

Dr. Punjabrao Deshmukh (1898-1965) contributed immensely to the emancipation of rural India, through pioneering reform in education, agriculture and social work. Dr. Deshmukh served as Minister for Agriculture, in the Union Government for ten years. One of the most imaginative steps taken by him was the foundation of the "Bharat Krishak Samaj", to champion the cause of farmers. "Shri Shivaji Education Society", which Dr. Deshmukh founded, has brought within the reach of poor students, the benefits of higher education. This year is being celebrated as the birth centenary year of "Bhausaheb", as Dr. Punjabrao Deshmukh was affectionately known.

P. Kakkan (1909-1981) was drawn during his schooldays to the freedom movement, inspired by Gandhiji. For his participation in the Quit-India movement he underwent imprisonment at Alipur jail. He spearheaded the movement for temple entry of Harijans at Madurai in 1939 along with A. Vaidyanatha Iyer. He served the Indian National Congress in various capacities at the Taluk, District, State and National levels, For nearly 15 years he served as a minister in the State of Tamilnadu, holding different portfolios. His major contributions include construction of the Mettur and Vaigai reservoirs and establishment of two Agricultural Universities.

Theme : Personalities, Freedom Fighters, Social Reformers.

THERMAL POWER CENTENARY

14.12.99

300

0.7 million



Thermal Power generation, the major contributor to power availability in India, started with the commissioning of a 1MW Thermal Power plant at Calcutta in 1899 which

was owned by the Calcutta Electric Supply Corporation. Over the one hundred years, the total thermal power generation capacity of the country has witnessed tremendous growth and is today about 67,000 MW.

With the commencement of national Five Year Plan in 1951, the State Electricity Boards under the provisions of the Electricity Supply Act, 1948 took up power development programmes. Apart from this, joint venture projects like the Damodar Valley Corporation and non-government utilities also joined the task of building a

national power base. The Government of India's decision to utilise low grade coal for power generation ushered in the commencement of thermal generation through use of pulverised coal. The seventies saw thermal power development with generating capacities being added under different aid programmes of friendly countries. The individual units were of 50 to 80 MW sizes. Nationalisation of coal industry, indigenous manufacture of generating units and entry of Central Sector directly into power generation brought about a significant change in thermal generation scenario when generating units of higher capacities upto 500 MW were inducted in the power generating system.

With the increase in thermal generation, the concern for environmental safeguards is inevitable. Stringent environmental regulations have been introduced by the Central Pollution Control Board as well as the State Units for the protection of the environment from the emissions of the thermal power stations. Liberalisation of government control on power development programmes making it open to the non-government/private sectors has been another significant development.

Thermal power generation is expected to dominate the power generation scenario of the country in the coming years also. The anticipated requirement of capacity addition during the next two decades is 10-12,000 MW every year. Nearly 75% of this may have to be through the thermal route.

Theme : Energy, Power, Electricity, Industry.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES (1924 - 99)

16.12.99

1500

1 million



The Hindustan Times, one of the premier newspapers of the country, was started as an evening daily in Delhi in 1924. The first issue inaugurated by Mahatma Gandhi and carrying articles by Motilal

Nehru, Muhammed Ali Jinnah and Jawaharlal Nehru was launched on September 24, 1924. In 1925, ownership of the newspaper passed on to Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya.

Because of its patriotic leaning, the newspaper, many times came close to incurring the imperialist wrath of the British. In 1930, publication was closed in protest against the draconian anti-press law in the wake of the Salt Satyagraha. The following year, when the authorities ordered the press to blackout some of the fiery speeches

of Jawaharlal Nehru, The Hindustan Times set up a make shift press and got a collection of these speeches printed and arranged the despatch of thousands of copies to all parts of the country. A confrontation with the British establishment ensued and the newspaper was forced to furnish huge securities to rein in its nationalist zeal.

Just when bankruptcy appeared imminent, G.D. Birla, pioneer and visionary stepped in. He went on to nurture the newspaper into a great institution attracting the finest editorial and managerial talent. In an era when long editorials and text-of-speech reporting were in vogue, The Hindustan Times ventures into short editorials, reporting a wide range of events and carried news on the front page with bold headlines.

The efforts of a succession of brilliant editors made it impossible for the British rulers and the educated elite to ignore it.

After independence, the newspaper extended fullfledged support for nation building and the government's efforts for growth and development. Standing for democracy, free enterprise and liberal values, The Hindustan Times acquired a reputation for fairness among the readers. In the early seventies The Hindustan Times introduced a unique social experiment titled "our village Chhatera". The project took over development activities of a village, such as the setting up of school, health clinic and income-generating activities.

Over the years, The Hindustan Times has adapted itself to the technological changes in the mass media. It has acquired modern printing equipment and achieved total computerisation of the process of printing and news gathering. With attractive colour pull-outs and informative feature pages embellishing the main paper, the Hindustan Times has succeeded in catering to the changing tastes of its readers.

Theme : Journalism

FAMILY PLANNING ASSOCIATION OF INDIA (1949 - 1999)

18.12.99

300

1 million



India is the largest functioning democracy in the world with the second largest population. On 2.4 percent of the world's land area she supports 16 percent of its population. The population is increasing by about 17 million every year. Recognising that the planning of families would

enhance individual health and welfare, the Government of India was the first in the world to initiate a comprehensive Family Planning Programme in 1951.

At the time of India's Independence, there were but few health facilities serving the rural poor. The past five decades have witnessed significant investments in developing a network of health centres all over India. Through this vast infrastructure of sub-centres, primary health centres and community health centres, the government has been playing the role of a facilitator by providing family planning services for the people to plan their families.

The FPAI as it is popularly known, has 39 Branches, 20 Projects and 3 Area Projects spread across the length and breadth of the country.

In 1952, it organised the Third International Conference of Planned Parenthood in India at Mumbai. At this conference, the International Planned Parenthood Federation took shape with Hong Kong, Singapore, West Germany, UK., USA, Sweden, Holland and India as the founder members.

The Mumbai conference was a landmark in stressing the need to regulate the rapid growth of population for promoting national well-being and progress through voluntary Family Planning.

As a leading national family planning NGO supporting the Government programme, FPAI has over the years created awareness of Population, Reproduction, the Sexual Health, Youth concerns, and Women's Empowerment so as to widen its support and strengthen its base within the country. Recently, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has introduced a new Reproductive and Child Health Programme, following on its Child Survival and Safe Motherhood programme and the target-free approach, and the paradigm shift generated by the International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo in 1994. FPAI too has responded enthusiastically to Reproductive Health needs providing the entire gamut of health services required in individual's life cycle. It maintains high Quality of Service Delivery to make it more user-responsive.

Theme : Population, Birth Control, Family Planning

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Gwalior Stamps & Coins Club is organising State Level Numismatic & Philatelic Exhibition at Gwalior from 5 - 8 May 2000. Four special covers with Theme Gandhiji and Rotary International are being brought out.

YESU KRIST JAYANTI 2000

25.12.99

300

3 million



The teachings of Jesus Christ are summarised in the Sermon on the Mount:

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be

comforted,

Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God".

(Mathew : 5,3 - 10)

Jesus Christ proclaimed as the Messiah was born in Bethlehem, presently in Palestine. Although the exact date of his birth is not clear, it is commonly accepted that present Christian calendar, which is universally followed, started with the birth of Jesus Christ. Through his teachings Jesus proclaimed the Kingdom of God. His preferred company was the poor, children, women and the disinherited.

Jesus ran up against the jealous suspicion of the religious leaders, the political astuteness of Herod Antipas, unyielding conflict with the Sadduceean and Pharisaic authorities. He was arrested, and the Perfect Pilate, judged him to be an agitator who had disturbed public order by claiming to be the king of the Jews, condemning him to be crucified. Jesus died on the cross and was buried. When the Sabbath was over the disciples discovered his tomb was empty and went forth proclaiming that Jesus had risen and had appeared to them. Then, the history of Jesus gave way to the history of the Christian Church.

During the course of last 2000 years, Christianity has spread to all the continents. In the spirit of the Christ's message of love, the Church has taken upon herself to put into practice the teachings of Jesus by serving humanity in the fields of health and education. Christianity spread far and wide through the disciples of Jesus. It is believed that one of the twelve disciples St. Thomas came to South India in 52 AD and spread Christianity in India.

The Roman Catholic, Orthodox and Protestant Churches are preparing for the global celebration of 2000 years jubilee of Christ's birth, of which 'Yesu Krist Jayanti 2000' forms part. The stamp design portrays the theme 'Towards a New Society'. The outer Circle with the rays in pink symbolizes the rising sun. The year 2000 brings a new dawn. The globe in green stands for the world which is filled with a new hope. The theme of universal peace, is symbolized by the hand of Christ in Upadesa Mudra posture.

Theme : Religion, Christianity.

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**MILLENNIUM ISSUE: UNITY IN DIVERSITY,
RESPECT FOR ALL RELIGIONS**

31.12.99

500, 1000

0.7 million



India is an ancient land with a civilization and culture. Indian culture has always had a deep-rooted respect for the diverse cultural and religious identities. The concept of Indian nationhood is based on the existence in diversity of multiplicity of religion, languages, customs and beliefs—a composite culture.

India has always welcomed people from all religions and all religions of the world have flourished in India. This se-tenant of two stamps symbolizes, the Indian tradition of unity in diversity and the concept of One people - One world - integral to Indian civilization. The se-tenant depicts the Tabo Monastery situated in the picturesque Labul and Spiti District of Himachal Pradesh. This monastery is more than 1000 years old. This monastery has nine halls where besides stucco images of The Buddha, there are wall paintings depicting Buddha's life and stories from the Jataka Tales. The first stamp depicts the monastery as it stands in Spiti over-shadowed by snow-clad mountains while the second is reconstruction of a painting from the southern wall of the main hall which forms part of the continuous painted frieze. The frieze consists of complex narrative units structured by the steps taken by the hero, Sudhana, on the path towards his goal of ultimate realization, and mostly relates Sudhana's visits to various spiritual friends (Kalyanamitra) in the pursuit of his quest. These units combine both paintings, some of which are identified by small insets, and adjacent frame inscriptional panels which contain the appropriate portions of the sutra

text. In the painting depicted on the second part of the se-tenant, the hero of the story Sudhana stands before a lady in white who refers him to the brahmin Sivaragra seated on the elaborate seat in the centre of the painting. There Sudhana kneels before Sivaragra seeking his guidance. The paintings use various pictorial techniques in order to depict the movement which is an essential feature of the narrative: division of paintings into separate scenes, multiplying the hero, etc.

The first day cover depicts the famous Baha'i temple rising to the sky in the form of a giant marble lotus, at New Delhi. The Millennium Issue pays tribute to the unity in diversity of Indian culture and civilization, with its respect for all religions. Theme : Unity.

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INDIA'S MAILS

How They are Carried and Delivered

By Sir Gurunath Bewoor, C.I.E., I.C.S., Director-General of Posts and Telegraphs, India.

(ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED IN THE B.B. & C.I. RAILWAY ANNUAL, 1940)

The Sub-Continent which we call "India" covers an area of over one-and-a-half million square miles stretching from the Himalayas in the north to the Indian Ocean in the south and from the Persian Gulf and Arabian Sea in the west to the Bay of Bengal and the hills of Burma and China in the east. The area is covered in many parts by extensive mountainous tracts, thick forests and sandy deserts. According to the census of 1931, India had a population over 338 million souls, which is probably now nearer 350 million, twice that of the United States of America. This population lives mostly in about 650 thousand villages, and only about eleven per cent is found in towns or cities has proceeded apace in recent years the number of large cities is still limited and these are separated by long distances. To the immensity of area and population must be added the complications of languages and scripts. The census enumerates more than 200 Indian languages but without going into details. It is enough to say that the principal languages in use in India, exclusive of English, are over a dozen, with scripts peculiar to each from the primitive footpath over hills and through forests to the most modern ones of railways, motors and aeroplanes. Literacy is extremely low; the literate population is estimated at only seven per cent, of the total population. The people are still essentially conservative in character and large numbers rarely leave their native districts.

Through the length and breadth of this vast country and under the circumstances described above, it is the

function of the Indian Post Office to provide and maintain an efficient system of regular Postal Communication. The means of communications available vary from primitive runner to the modern aeroplane. The primary function of the Post Office is to convey communications from the sender to the addressee with speed and safety. Since the postal system was established, therefore, there has always been on the part of the Post Office a continuous search for and adoption of faster and faster means of conveying mails.

The system of conveying communications by post is a very ancient one. Obviously, the earliest mode was by means of runners, but the speed and capacity of the human being is necessarily very limited. Xenophon, the Greek historian, tells us that Cyrus, King of Persia in the 6th century B.C., set up a postal system operated by horsemen during the Scythian War. We read that Cyrus "caused it to be tried how far a horse could go in a day without eating, and at that distance appointed stages and men whose business was to have horses always in readiness". This, according to historians of the post, is the first recorded of a mounted post. A postal service similar to that of Cyrus is reported to have existed in China from a very early date, as we know from Marco Polo, the Venecian adventurer who travelled there in the 14th century. According to Marco Polo there were 100 thousand postal stations at 25-mile intervals along the road to China. In Europe, Charlemagne instituted a postal service in the early years of the 9th century. Four centuries later the first regular letter post was established by the Hanseatic merchants in Northern Europe. The next was that established by the princely house of Thurn and Taxis between Austria and Lombardy in the reign of the Emperor Maximilian. In the 15th century the French King Louis XI revived Charlemagne's postal system by establishing a corps of long-distance messengers. A similar corps of official couriers existed in England as early as King John's reign. But the first English Postmaster of Pounds 66 in the early years of the 16th century. The postal system of India, along with that of all other countries, had its origin in the need for maintaining communication throughout the various parts of a great Empire in order that the Emperor might be kept continuously informed of what was taking place. When Ibn-i-Batuta was travelling in India in the middle of the 14th century, he found an organised system of couriers established throughout the kingdom then governed by the great Mohammed Din Tughlak. In Mysore, Raja Chik Dev Raj established a regular post throughout his dominions in 1672. The Mogul Emperors kept up a regular system of daks and Ferishta tells us that Shershah during his short reign of five years 1541 to 1545 was the first who ever

employed a mounted post in India. The British do not appear to have found any established system of communication when they began to extend their dominion in India, and in the beginning of the 18th century it was a matter of no small difficulty to send a letter a distance of more than 100 miles. A regular postal system was first introduced by Lord Clive in 1766. Under the administration of Warren Hastings the Post Office of India was placed on a better footing, and steps were taken to make the posts which were established for official purposes more generally available for private communications. As the conquest of the British over India proceeded, the need for establishing a properly organised postal system was felt more and more; but it was not till 1837 that an Act was passed under which a public post was established, and that Government assumed the exclusive right to convey letters for payment in the territories of the East India Company. The postage charged, however, was at that time based upon distance, and elaborate polymetrical tables were supplied to every Post Office. The result was that postage varied both according to weight as well as distance; the charges were known as district posts, run by the District Officers under the Local Government. In 1850 a Commission was appointed by Government to enquire into the methods for working the Post Office more efficiently and making it more conducive to public convenience than it had been hitherto. This Commission recommended the introduction of a uniform rate of postage irrespective of distance, prepayment of postage by means of adhesive postage stamps, the fixation of a low initial rate of postage and the formation of the Post Office as an Imperial Department under a Director General. These recommendations were accepted by Government and put into force.

Thus the present Post Office in India with its vast organisation and its elaborate system has grown up in the course of the last eighty-five years. Prior to 1854 the Post Office was a medley of services in different provinces, each having separate rules and different rates of postage. Regular mails were conveyed over a very few lines between important towns. There were no postage stamps and no fixed rates, the rates varying according to weight and distance. District Collectors were responsible for the management of their own local post offices. There was in addition no organisation for the exchange of mails with all the countries of the world.

To-day we have in the whole country over 24 thousand post offices and over 52 thousand letter-boxes. These would, however, be useless without speedy lines of communication for the conveyance of mails. They are maintained to-day over 160 thousand miles of such communications excluding the air routes. Over these and

the air routes were conveyed, in the year 1938, nearly 12 hundred million postal articles, utilising modes of conveyance varying from the primitive runner to the modern aeroplane, so aptly depicted in the pictorial stamps issued by the Indian Post Office.

The principal means of conveying mails is par excellence the railway, but apart from the railways, there are motor lines and tonga services, such as that sung by Kipling, between Kalka and Simla, but now a thing of the past. The romance of the Indian Post Office, however, must always lie in the mail runner or "Harkara" as he is called in the old books of India. The number of tigers sated with his flesh is past count, the Himalayan snows have overwhelmed him, flooded rivers have carried him off and oozy swamps sucked him down. But in the face of all dangers, has the runner ever failed to do his duty? According to the stories, never, and in real life perhaps not more than once or twice.

"Is the torrent in spate? He must ford it or swim. Has the rain wrecked the road?

He must climb the cliff.

The service admits not a 'but', nor an 'if'.

While the breadth's in his mouth, he must bear without fail,

In the name of the Emperor - the "Overland mail!"

Kipling

"Postal runners are largely drawn from the less civilised races of India, many of whom are animists by religion. They will face wild beasts and wandering criminals but will go miles to avoid an evil spirit in a tree. With them the mailbag is a kind of fetish which must be protected and got to its destination at all costs. Dishonesty among them almost unknown and they are wonderfully true to their salt."

In spite of the great development in recent years of communications such as roads and railways, the postal runner is still found by the Indian Post Office to be indispensable on account of the absence of suitable roads or paths for wheeled traffic in many parts of the country. Of the 24 thousand post offices and 52 thousand letter-boxes in India, almost 20 thousand post offices and 35 thousand letter-boxes are in rural areas and the Department to-day still employs over ten thousand runners to convey the mails to a large number of these out-of-the-way post offices. The ordinary individual living in populous cities or towns or villages in the plains cannot imagine the difficulties encountered in conveying mails to places

situated in the heart of forests or across snowy mountains. It would, perhaps, be of interest to describe only two of many such lines worked by the Indian Post Office.

Holy Badrinath, situated near the source of the great and sacred river Ganges, is served every year regularly by post during the pilgrim season. The mails travel by railway via Bareilly junction to Kathgodam, the terminus of the Rohikhand and Kumaon Railway and the railhead for Naini Tal, Ranikhet, a place over 5,000 ft. high and 51 miles from Kathgodam. From here they are conveyed on two pack mules up to Chamoli, a distance of 80 miles via Karnprayag, which is covered in 6 stages. In reaching Karnprayag the mules have to climb down 2,000 ft., cross three unbridged streams and climb a ridge of 6,000 ft, which, during the winter months, is covered with heavy snow; the road passes in many parts through dense forests containing bear, panther and tiger. From Karnprayag, the road continues along the valley of the Alaknanda following on its left bank the contour of the hillsides and is very narrow in parts. At Chamoli the mule service terminates and the mails are taken over by runners who travel in sets of three men and cover the distance to Joshimath in five stages. The path is very dangerous in parts and is always slipping, especially during the heavy rains. From Chamoli, the Alaknanda is crossed by a long suspension bridge which looks most impressive as high cliffs tower over the river on its right bank. The road rises gradually to Joshimath, 6,000 ft. high, the winter headquarters of the high priest of Badrinath. From Joshimath the mails travel with two runners in four stages to Badrinath which is 18 miles distant. The road is very dangerous after crossing the suspension bridge 2 miles below, at the junction of Vishnuganga and Alaknanda rivers, and crosses to either bank three or four times before reaching Badrinath which lies on a slope below the Chaukamba mountain (22,000 ft. high) at an altitude of 10,000 ft. Over this difficult and dangerous road, mails are conveyed and brought back daily during the season by the hardy race of runners who are rarely stopped by difficulties, and thus the devout pilgrims receive their money and their letters while in the heart of the Himalayan mountains.

Another interesting and difficult road is that to the frontier of India at Gilgit and at Leh on the borders of Chinese Turkestan. The mails leave the railhead at Rawalpindi and travel daily a distance of 198 miles to Srinagar by motor. This is a first-class road. In reaching Srinagar the road passes Murree, a height of 7,500 ft., then drops to a height of 2,000 ft. at the Kohala bridge where the Jhelum is crossed into Kashmir State. From here the road runs along the left bank of the Jhelum river

until it reaches Srinagar. The lorry drivers who convey mails on this road are a very hardy and devoted set of men. They do not allow accumulation of snow or landslips to stop lorries. They cut their way through or transmit the mails to other lorries and try to reach their destination with the least possible delay. From Srinagar up to Gilgit is a distance of over 200 miles. Mails leave Bara Mula about 30 miles from Srinagar (which is covered by motor) by tonga up to Sopor 10 miles away and from Sopor right up to Gilgit. A marvellous system of mail runners working in short stages operates daily. The road is just a path cut along the hillside, the means of travelling are confined to hill ponies or just walking. The traveller normally takes about a fortnight to complete the journey to Gilgit by stages, but the mail runner travels day and night by short stages and delivers the mails at Gilgit from Sopor, a distance of over 200 miles, in eight days. From here the mails from Kashgar are taken over by the political authorities who send them on by political levies. The mails for Leh travel from Srinagar to Ganderbal by tonga and from there onwards by runners. There are many stories of the difficulties experienced by runners over this road in the depth of winter, when snow covers the whole countryside and there is no sign of the footpaths. On the roads to Leh and Gilgit, there are passes about 13,000 ft. high to be crossed, but the mail runner, with an inherent and uncanny knowledge of impending danger, is able to foretell exactly when it is safe to cross these passes and to avoid snowstorms. They find their way by instinct, and when travelling at night they light their way by the use of lighted resinous twigs bound together.

THE SUBMARINE MAIL

- By B.B. Paymaster

The first Submarine Post was started 30 years ago, during the Spanish Civil War. By the Beginning of 1938, the Republicans were in desperate position for want of financial resources.

It was decided that one way of earning foreign currency to pay for imports was to set up an official Philatelic Agency and on 11th August, 1938, the Agency issued a set of six stamps showing various views of submarines, bearing the unique inscription "Correo Submarino" with values from 1 peseta to 15p. At the same time, a miniature sheet was issued containing the firm in photogravure. It was intended to use the stamps for the sea and air surrounding mainland as Spain was, with the help of Hitler and Mussolini, controlled by the Nationalists by August, 1938.

On 12th August, 1938 a submarine called simply "C 4" slipped out of Barcelona Harbour and arrived in Mahon,

Minorca, the next day. It left Mahon on 17th August and arrived in Barcelona on the 18th. It carried from Barcelona to Minorca 400 special covers and 100 maxim cards and a small quantity of mint stamps. The submarine stamps are scarce and a special cover bearing the complete set would cost several hundred pounds, particularly one bearing the full set, of which only 25 were printed. The total printing was 75,000 sets and 12,000 miniature sheets.

Until 1960 the few surviving stamps were regarded almost as Cinderella items, and were ignored by most major catalogues. However, since about 1960, due mainly to the evidence of people who actually took part in the voyage, the validity of the issue has been recognised, and most important catalogues now list them. There was probably at least one other submarine postal voyage along the Spanish Mediterranean coast towards the end of Civil War, but the details of stamps carried are not known.

HELICOPTER MAIL SERVICES

Inter-Islands Helicopter Mail Service was inaugurated on 27th January '88 by Pawan Hans Ltd., in the Andaman & Nicobar islands. To mark this occasion, a special cancellation was provided. The detailed schedule of Helicopter service between Inter-Islands Northern Routes: (All Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays):

Arrival	Place	Departure Time (Hrs)
	Port Blair	0730
0755	Rangat	0805
0820	Mayabunder	0830
0840	Diglipur	0850
0900	Mayabunder	0910
0925	Rangat	0935
1000	Port Blair	0935

Southern Routes : (All Tuesdays and Saturdays)

	Port Blair	0730
0800	Hutbay	0810
0850	Carnicobar	0920
1000	Hutbay	1010
1040	Port Blair	-

Southern Routes (B) - (All Thursdays)

	Port Blair	0730
0800	Hutbay	0810
0850	Carnicobar	0810
0955	Kamorta	1005
1040	Campbell Bay	1050
1125	Kamorta	1135
1210	Carnicobar	1240
1320	Hutbay	1330
1400	Port Blair	-

Courtesy : The Philatelic Journal of India

Calcutta "The City of Many Firsts"

Calcutta, the capital of West Bengal state of India is "the city of many firsts". The first Indian Newspaper Hickey's Gazette (1779) was published in Calcutta. In 1865, Bankim Chandra Chatterjee wrote "Durgesh Nandi" the first full length Indian Novel. He also wrote the first Indian National song 'vande mataram'. It was in Calcutta session of the congress in 1928 that the resolution of "complete Independence" was moved by Netaji Subash Chandra Bose. Atul Chandra was the first Indian to get the first rank in the Indian Civil Service entrance examinations held in London.



The first Indian Nobel prize winner Rabindranath Tagore belonged to Calcutta. Sir Jagadish Chandra Bose was the first Indian botanist to earn international fame.

India - Posts have honoured all these people with Commemorative issues.

(Courtesy - Wisdom)

JUNIOR SECTION

GETTING STARTED

By this time you're thinking, "Fine, but how do I get started?" The first step is to decide what you want to collect. The most obvious and natural course is to select a topic in which you are already interested. The worst reasons for selecting a topic are because someone else is doing it, or because a friend suggests it, or because it is fashionable. Avoid the temptation to flirt from one topic to another. This is costly and unnecessarily time-consuming.

Selecting a topic is the single most important decision you make. Your decision should take into account several factors. One important consideration is how broad or how narrow the topic is. You may lose

interest quickly in a topic which only includes a few stamps. But if you select a topic that includes thousands of stamps, its very size could become frustrating when it becomes obvious that completion is nearly impossible with a limited budget.

One solution to this problem is to start with a topic which appeals to your special interests and when you discover it is too large, reduce the scope. For example, your larger topic may be animals, but you are especially interested in the cat family. You then concentrate on lions, tigers, and other members of the cat family. As you accumulate other animal stamps, keep them after you have exhausted the cat family you may want to try another group of animals, or you can use the accumulation of other animal stamps for trading.

Margaret Morris (a noted British topicalist) likens the choice of selecting a topic to the way you would select a pet. If you live on a farm, you might select a horse; but if you live in an apartment, you might select goldfish and enjoy them just as much as the owner of a horse at a much lower expenditure of money and time. Still another analogy of choosing a pet. Consider the person who buys a "cute puppy" only later to discover that there was a Great Dane somewhere in its remote ancestry; soon there is no room for the dog, and it is eating the owner out of house and home. On the other hand, unlike a pet, you can establish your own criteria as to how complete you wish to make your topical stamp collection. You need not, indeed, perhaps should not, plan to acquire every postage stamp or other philatelic item relating to your topic.

You may choose to select several topical collections which are completely different in character and size. One might be a mini-topic which would provide you with a "fun" display of just enough pages to show at a local stamp club. A second collection might fill a single album which would be on a subject that your family and non-philatelic friends would find an interesting coffee-table conversation piece. The third would be a broad theme capable of filling many albums and of filling your collection interests for a lifetime.

Always remember that you are collecting for fun, not to get rich. Set your own bounds accordingly as you explore the Adventures in Topical / Thematic Stamp Collecting

(COURTESY - HAND BOOK PUBLISHED BY American Topical Association, U.S.A.)

POLICY FOR ISSUING POSTAGE STAMPS

S.B. Bhattacharya, Chief Postmaster General,
Bhubaneswar.

A postage stamp is a small artistic and historic document which expresses the life, history of a nation as well as its activities - past and present. The subject matter of postage stamps today is intimately connected with innumerable facets of human life and the inventor of adhesive postage stamp could never have dreamt of the tremendous impact his invention will make on future generations.

Before we examine in detail the policy of issuing stamps and also trace out the history behind it, it would be worthwhile to refer to relevant provisions of conventions of Universal Postal Union (an U.N. Body representing Postal administration of different countries). In article 9 of UPU convention it is mentioned that postage stamp for denoting payment of postage shall be issued by Postal administrations only. It is further mentioned in article 105 that each new issue of postage stamp shall be notified to all other administrations. Under article 187 characteristics of postage stamps have further been defined. This interalia stipulates that postage stamp shall bear the name of the country of origin, may be of any shape, marked with punched perforation etc. In addition, commemorative postage stamp may bear an inscription indicating the occasion for which it has been issued.

The postage can broadly be paid in the following forms:

- i) The postage stamps can be adhesive so that these can be pasted on the articles.
- ii) These can be printed on the articles which are sold ready stamped at the counter.
- iii) This can be franked on articles either in the premises of the customer or at the counter of the post office by using franking machines.
- iv) The postage can be paid in cash beforehand for which a mark can be given by the post office on the article.
- v) Recently with the introduction of P.C. based Multi purpose counter machines an adhesive label is being given to the customer to be used in lieu of postage stamp.

While there are various ways of paying postage, in this article we will concentrate only on item (i) which is adhesive postage stamp.

3. The first adhesive postage stamp was issued in Great Britain. The stamp is popularly known as PENNY BLACK. It was a small square piece of paper, black in colour showing Queen's head and postage of one penny. The Penny Black was issued valid from 6th May 1840 and

it was made clear that postage stamp is meant for payment of postage and for a considerable period of time this continued to be the role of postage stamp. Sir Rowland Hill who is given the credit for issuing the first postage stamp in the world also decided on its design by using Queen's portrait in a miniature form on the stamp. The design was printed in black colour for one penny and later in blue colour for two pennies. The Penny Blacks were in use for less than a year and were replaced by Penny Red in 1841. The Penny Blacks were the path finders in the field of postage stamps and other countries gradually entered the field of adhesive postage stamp.

4. It is interesting to note here how seemingly lifeless objects namely, adhesive postage stamps gradually became an item of great interest and caught the imagination of some people in Great Britain. The advertisements started appearing in newspapers mentioning that there are persons who are very keen to buy large quantity of used penny stamps for pasting on bed room walls or decorating lamp shades. An advertisement appeared in an English magazine in 1891 which read as follows: A stamp collector, the possessor of a collection of 12544 stamps wishes to marry a lady who is an ardent collector and the possessor of the blue two penny stamps of Mauritius issued in 1847. This shows the length to which individuals were ready to go to possess a postage stamp of his liking and value. This also made gradually a printed adhesive piece of paper a philatelic material of immense significance to its collector.

5. The first postage stamp in India, Scinde dawk was issued on 1st July 1852, by Sir Bartle Frere, Commissioner of Sind, now a Part of Pakistan, before the system of public post was introduced and first adhesive postage stamp was printed by the then British Government. On introduction of public post the first adhesive paper postage stamp was issued in India on 1st October 1854. The stamp was not perforated or gummed. It was designed and printed by lithograph process at the Surveyor General's Office at Calcutta. The first half anna stamp was in blue colour and showed Queen's head. Subsequently, one anna denomination of such stamp and four annas denomination also were printed. Information available shows that till May 1855 total of postage stamp printed under lithographic process amounted to about 4.11 crores of rupees. From 1855 the work of printing was entrusted to a London based company and gradually new stamps came to be used.

6. There are broadly two categories of stamps which are normally used. The first and most important category is definitive stamps. These stamps are for every day postal use and can be used for indefinite period. These are printed in huge number and are so designed that the cost is kept

to the minimum. Definitive stamps are smaller in size. Many of the definitives still follow the size and shape of penny black of Great Britain issued in 1840. Incidentally the penny black measured 22 mm. X 18mm. Let us look into the type definitive stamp issued by some of the advanced countries of the world. In Belgium, definitive stamps are issued bearing portrait of the reigning monarch as also on tourist subject. In France, definitive stamps are issued showing replica of the French Republic, places and monuments of tourists interest and on air mail subjects. All these stamps remain in force for several years though usually tourists issues are changed with the change in postage rate. In many countries definitive stamps are issued in one colour though sometimes two colours are used. In France, dimensions of definitive stamps are 17 x 23 mm., in Germany, 21.5 x 25.5 mm. and 23 x 27.3mm. In Switzerland, definitive stamps are on sale everywhere and without restriction and are replaced by issues with new designs. In Belgium, definitive stamps remain current until printing is stopped and notified. In Australia, definitive stamps are usually replaced at three-yearly intervals. However, in New Zealand the definitive stamps remain on sale at all post offices indefinitely. In India, the first series of definitive stamps were issued in the year 1947 and the currency of definitive stamps remain unless otherwise notified.

7. The second important category of stamps is commemorative or special stamps. These are usually issued for a limited period to celebrate a particular event or anniversary of an occasion and are quite distinct from definitive stamps. The commemorative stamps are usually larger in size and designs depicted are also colourful and more interesting. It is mentioned in the history of philately that first commemorative stamp was issued by Peru in 1870 to commemorate 20th anniversary of their railways. As commemorative stamps are associated with a specific date the issue may also become an annual event. Broadly speaking, commemorative stamps are issued on following considerations:

- i) To commemorate an important occasion.
- ii) To meet the requirement of philatelists.
- iii) To project the achievement, wealth natural or otherwise of a country.

In many countries of the world including India commemorative stamp is considered a unique honour bestowed on people and events. The designs of commemorative stamps should be representation of classical and artistic discipline known and appreciated by the general public. This is a stipulation of Belgium Postal administration. In USA commemorative stamps are issued on themes and events of wide spread national appeal and

significance. The Postal administration aims at themes which contribute most to the development of knowledge, lofty sentiment and artistic education. The United Kingdom issues commemorative stamps keeping in view suitability for postal purposes, being of interest to philatelic market reflecting some aspects of British contribution to the world of Arts, Science or commemorating some national or international events. In West Germany commemorative stamps depict achievements, activities and anniversaries.

8. Though the first Indian postage stamp was issued on 1st October, 1854, the first commemorative issue printed in India on air mail in 1929 showed a pictorial design apart from King's head. This depicted an aeroplane flying over an area which included hills, a lake and vegetation. In commemoration of inauguration of Delhi as capital of India, a series of commemorative stamps were issued in 1931 and depicted five land marks of new Delhi namely, Purana Quila, the wall memorial arch, the counsel house, the Vice-roy's house and the imperial secretariat. The next important commemorative series was Silver Jubilee commemorative stamp of 1935 and depicted King George-V along with prominent Indian architectural or monumental structures. These were Gateway of India, Bombay, Victoria Memorial and Jain temple at Calcutta, Rameswaram temple at Rameswaram, the Tajmahal at Agra, the Golden temple at Amritsar and the pagoda in Mandalay, Burma. A special set of postage stamp were issued in 1947 to commemorate national and international significance of 15th August 1947. The stamps bore the inscription JAIHIND in Hindi. Later on first anniversary of India's Independence on 15th August 1948 homage was paid to Mahatma Gandhi by issuing commemorative stamps printed in Switzerland. In October 1949, on the occasion of 75th anniversary of Universal Postal Union, a commemorative stamp was issued. On 26th January 1950 the inauguration of Republic was celebrated by issue of a postage stamp. The list of commemorative stamps issued by India are endless and cover all categories mentioned in the policy guidelines followed by different countries of the world in this matter.

9. The Department of Post is the only Department which has the widest public contact and reach the doorsteps of people of every strata of society. To fulfil the aspirations of the people and to familiarize them with various facets of national life, culture and heritage and national and international events and developments, the Department has selected the medium of postage stamp. Perhaps here lies the utmost significance of postage stamp which from a mere instrument of payment of postal charge suddenly becomes a symbol of both past and future of a nation.

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