

USAGES OF THE INDIA 1948 GANDHI ISSUE



APS AmeriStamp Expo, Riverside CA. Feb 13-15, 2015

Introduction

This exhibit is a study of how one of the most important stamps of Independent India, the set of Mahatma Gandhi stamps, 1½ Anna, 3½ Annas, 12 Annas and Rs 10, issued on 15th Aug 48, the first Anniversary of Independence, were used.

The sale, registration and delivery were done via Postal Notice #32 dated 7th Aug 1948 ensuring sale and delivery on a Sunday and further limiting the sale of these stamps for 3 months. On 11th Nov 1948, this was extended till 31st Dec 1948 via Postal Notice #50 to accommodate its use during the 55th session of the Indian National Congress, held in Jaipur, India. The usage after 1948 tapered down since these stamps were no longer sold.

The 1½ Anna was meant for Inland Mail, 3 ½ Annas was for overseas surface Mail, 12 Annas was for Airmail to UK. Rs 10 for Telegrams, Licenses & Parcels.

EXHIBIT PLAN

- (1) Use as Intended
- (2) Domestic Mail
- (3) Overseas Mail
- (4) Used Abroad
- (5) Odds & End

Decimalization

The decimal system in India was introduced on 1st April 1957. 1 Rupee = 16 Annas, 1 Anna = 4 Pice, 1 Pice = 3 Pies. Affective 1st Oct 1959, the odd Anna Stamps, viz 1½ and 3½ Annas stamps were demonetized since they were not divisible by 4 Annas. However 12 Annas which converted to 75 NP and Rs 10 to Rs 10 continued to be used and could be still used today.

Exhibit Organization

This exhibit is organized in 8, 11x17 size pages. This facilitated some of the philatelic material which was too big or broad to be displayed horizontally.

Since some of the covers have cancellations or stamps in the back, the exhibitor decided to display the stamps and provide a cropped image of the other side which in most cases is the cancellation. The subject is broad, it has been never been researched in depth outside of this

exhibit due to limitations on material availability, needless to say the material picked for this exhibit is very exclusive. It covers every major area of postal use at the time along with some rare and unusual ones.

Exhibit Notes

The exhibit begins with "Use as Intended" displaying all four values. Examples of each intended use is shown. The Rs 10 on cover and receipts (Telegrams & Wireless receiving station are shown). Use of postage stamps for revenue was approved in 1948 and continued till 1953.

Domestic Mail:

The intended use and rate for majority of domestic mail was 1 ½ Annas. However, examples displayed include express mail, registered mail, uprated registered postcard, OHMS usage, acknowledgement due and airmail. The rates varied based on weight, means such as airmail and other additional services. These services comprised of express delivery, registration and acknowledgement due that tagged additional fees. It's interesting to note that weight for domestic mail was calculated in "Tolas" as opposed to "Oz" for international mail.

International Mail:

It's a classic situation where the intended use for overseas mail outside of UK was never there. The rates varied, ½ Oz Airmail to UK was 12 Annas, rest of Europe 14 Annas and to USA 18 Annas. You add 4 Annas registration fee in the mix and it becomes tough to get stamps for the exact postage. That's where the George VI stamps come in handy and have been sparingly used. Examples shown with the exhibit cover Europe and USA.

Used Abroad:

Indian postal agencies operated in several Tibetan centres (Gartok, Gyantse, Pharijong and Yatung) from 1904 until the Chinese occupation. The Indian postal service maintained offices in French possessions independently of the French post offices. Pondicherry was the capital of the French possessions and occupied an area of 113

square miles. Nepal, which was had a post office at the British Legation (superseded in 1948 by the Indian legation) in Katmandu used Indian postage stamps for overseas mail up until 1959. Examples from all three are shown.

Odds & End:

This is where the fun starts. Partition of India, caused occasional confusion and letters ended up in "Dead Letter Offices". Lack of availability of postage stamps perhaps led to "postage due". Mail sent and received by armed forces continued to be "censored" even after the war ended. "Magazine wrappers" were the best way to ship printed material. "Uprated" mail included – postcards, letters and prepaid covers.

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. American Philatelist, Aug 1980, By T.N. Mehta.
2. A Philatelic Handbook on Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, 2006, by Reuben A. Ramkisson.
3. Indian Postal History, 1947–1997, by Ashok Bayanwalla.
[Http://www.stampsofindia.com/readroom/b013.htm](http://www.stampsofindia.com/readroom/b013.htm)

SPECIAL INTEREST ITEMS

1. Rs 10 on Registered & Insured Cover
2. Rs 10 on Receipt for License
3. Rs 10 on Telegram
4. Used Abroad: Indian Embassy Nepal
5. Used Abroad: Tibet
6. Used Abroad: Pondicherry – French Territory Usage
7. Dead Letter Office
8. Censor Mail
9. Magazine Wrapper with 1½ Anna
10. Diplomatic Mail sent from American

Basic Rate Table

Rates (Annas)	Type	Service	Destination
Domestic	Weight in Tola		
1.5	Letter	Surface	India
1.5	Postcard	Surface	India
2	Letter	Express Mail	India
4	Letter	Registered	India
1	Letter	Airmail	India
1	Letter	Acknowledgement Due	India
International	Weight in Oz		
3.5	Letter	Surface	Worldwide
12	Letter	Airmail	UK
14	Letter	Airmail	Rest of Europe
18	Letter	Airmail	USA
4	Letter	Registered	Worldwide
1.5	Magazine Wrapper	Surface	USA