

RAJYA SABHA

Thursday, the 30th April, 1964/thi? 10th
Vaisakha, 1886 (Saka)

The House met at eleven of the clock, MR
CHAIRMAN in the Chair.

MEMBERS SWORN

Shri N. Venkateswara Rao (Andhra
Pradesh).

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS**STAMPS OF PHILATELIC INTEREST**

◆171. SHRI BIREN ROY: Will the Minister
of POSTS AND TELEGRAPHS be pleased to state:

(a) the authority which is responsible for the issue of special stamps and/or stamps of philatelic interests;

(b) how much yearly foreign exchange has been earned during the last three years on philatelic issues;

(c) what steps have been taken for the publicity of Indian philatelic issues in Western countries for earning foreign exchange; and

(d) whether arrangements for the registration of philatelists at big post offices and for taking advance deposit from them for regular supply of new issues have been completed?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE DEPARTMENT OF POSTS AND TELEGRAPHS (SHRI B. BHAGAVATI): (a) The Central Government under Section 16 of the Indian Post Office Act, 1898.

(b) Since bulk sales of all new stamps accrue through stamp dealers, no precise information is available. The available figures in respect of the direct orders received and handled by the Indian Philatelic bureau GPO Bombay, shows the following foreign exchange earnings in terms of rupees during the last three years: — 222 RSD—1.

1961	..	Rs. 24071·36
1962	..	Rs. 13869·56
1963	..	Rs. 24784·48

(c) Normal publicity to all new issues of stamps is arranged by the Press Information Bureau Government of India through its accredited agencies and the Information Services abroad. In view of the potential for foreign exchange earnings through stamps, Govt. have also engaged the services of a specialized agency in New York for publicising and marketing Indian stamps in the U.S.A.

(d) This is still under examination.

SHRI BIREN ROY: In view of the fact that the Government has now realised that it is possible to earn quite a lot of foreign exchange from these stamps, would it consider the advisability of having an Advisory Board on the preparation of stamps which can be of international interest and also of special types of stamps, for example, on the flora and fauna of India, the Indian atomic reactors or supersonic planes or rocket launchings, etc.? These are things which in the philatelic world are of international interest.

SHRI B. BHAGAVATI: Sir, the hon. Member is correct and he has correctly stated that special stamps on birds and animals, etc. are more popular outside the country, in the international field. There is an Advisory Committee to look into all these matters.

SHRI BIREN ROY: Would the Minister state who a very easy stamp on Shakespeare was not issued on the 21st of April but it is going to be issued in September? What is the reason therefor?

SHRI B. BHAGAVATI: Sir, the matter came up for discussion very late. Now it is not possible for the security press to print the stamp in April and moreover for Shakespeare commemoration this whole year will be observed. So, we have proposed to issue the stamp some time later.

SHRI BIREN ROY: Sir, instead of selling in bulk to the stamp vendors and so on, would the Ministry think of keeping a register of those persons who will be allowed to buy the stamps only for export purposes, so that they can have control over the foreign exchange earnings from such stamps? That is number one. Secondly, Sir, would he consider that in the matter of international interest stamps they will print only a certain number of stamps, for instance, up to not more than a million, and not two or three millions, which they are using for India, of the denominations of 50 nP, later on paisa, and one rupee not 15 nP and so on, so that a lot of foreign exchange is earned and control is effective?

SHRI B. BHAGAVATI: Sir, now we have established a special agency for the U.S.A. We propose to have another special agency for the U.K. and other Commonwealth countries. These special agencies will give publicity and also will arrange for sale of these special stamps. Then it will be possible to know exactly how much foreign exchange we can earn by selling these special stamps. At present this is not possible because the sale is mostly done through the stamp dealers. We have at present four important stamp dealers in this country. They do the bulk of this business. As for the other matters referred to by the hon. Member, I think they can be considered later on.

SHRI A. M. TARIQ: Sir, is the Government aware of the fact that at the international airport shops other countries' stamps are available but nowhere are Indian stamps available? Further, Sir, is there any proposal before the Government to publish these stamps in a series in which children and people are interested, for example, stamps of Indian birds, Indian flowers and things like that and, if so, may we know what it is?

SHRI B. BHAGAVATI: Yes, Sir. We want to issue such stamps and for that purpose, as I have already men-

tioned, we have established some agencies in the U.S.A. and we propose to establish such an agency in the U.K. and other Commonwealth countries. When we establish such agencies, it is hoped that it will be possible for us to make good publicity about our stamps. With regard to stamps on our flora and fauna and other birds or animals, at present it is true that we have been hard pressed for issuing personal stamps. There is more and more demand for personal stamps. People for different reasons want that our great men should be honoured by issuing stamps. But for purely philatelic interest it is necessary to issue stamps on flora and fauna, flowers and birds, etc. We shall look into this aspect of the matter as far as possible.

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL: Would the hon. Minister let us know if there is in existence any Advisory Committee which decides on the designs and also on the commemoration stamps and, if there is an Advisory Committee, what is the personnel of that Committee?

SHRI B. BHAGAVATI: I have already stated that there is an Advisory Committee. There are philatelists and 1 MP. on that Committee and also the representatives of the concerned Ministries and the P. & T. Board Members concerned with these matters.

SHRI M. P. BHARGAVA: May I know whether there is any proposal before the Government to issue a series of special stamps to commemorate the award of Bharat Ratna to the various distinguished sons of India?

SHRI B. BHAGAVATI: For 1964 we have a proposal to issue as many as 15 stamps. It is not possible for the security press to print any more. Their capacity is to print up to 12 or 13. So, it is not in our hands to print as many as we want.

SHRI G. M. MIR: Sir, the hon. Minister has not replied to the question whether there is any Advisory Committee for this purpose.

SHRI B. BHAGAVATI.- I havt^ said that it is there.

SHRI G. M. MIR: Then I would like to know the names of the person; who are members of that Committee.

SHRI B. BHAGAVATI: The n imes, Sir, I cannot give.

SHRI A. D. MANI: Has the Government examined at any time in the past the question of having a philatelic booth at some of the principal Embassies and the Trade Missions so that foreign interests may be stirred m Indian stamps of philatelic interest?

SHRI B. BHAGAVATI: Exact! for this purpose we have engagec an agency outside this country. I have already mentioned about it.

SHRIMATI SHAKUNTALA PARANJ-PYE: May I know the strength of the Committee because the Minister < ouia not tell us the names?

SHRI B. BHAGAVATI: Possibly seven Members. I am, however, not very sure.

SHRI BIREN ROY: As there are only bulk vendors, is there any method of checking how much smuggling is going on ten foreign exchange by these people selling the stamps abroad:

SHRI B. BHAGAVATI: It is very difficult to say. I do not know how they can smuggle.

SHRI A. B. VAJPAYEE: You are expected to know.

SHRI B. BHAGAVATI: It has not come to our notice.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It is good that you do not know how they smuggle.

PANCHAYATI POSTAL SCHEME

*172. SHRI A. D. MANI; Will the Minister of POSTS AND TELEGRAPH; be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a new scheme called the Panchayati Postal Scheme has been introduced on an experimental basis in Supa area of Poona district; and

(b) if so, what are the salient features of the scheme and how many letters have been distributed during the three months from the time the scheme was started?'

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE DEPARTMENT OF POSTS AND TELEGRAPHS (SHRI B. BHAGAVATT): (a) Yes.

(b)A statement is laid on the Table of the Sabha.

STATEMENT

The Panchayati Postal scheme is based 'on the concept of community service and envisages extension of postal facilities such as posting, booking and delivery of postal articles in far-flung, spread-out and backward areas with the joint efforts of the Postal Department and the rural public through their village Pancha-yats. Under the scheme, Panchayati Postal centres are established at focal points to serve as convenient centres of transaction, i.e., for bringing and taking away of mail matter. Each Panchayati Postal Centre caters to a group of villages surrounding it and is manned by an Agent provided by the village Panchayat. Simultaneously the villages served by each centre select a panel of volunteers, who in the normal course visit the centre on marketing or other errands, for depositing and collecting of mail from the centre. The centre is controlled by a nearby post office, whose delivery staff visit the centre ^at fixed and regular intervals for bringing and taking away the mail matter.

Unregistered mail and intimations for accountable articles are handed over by the visiting delivery staff of the controlling post office to the Cooperative Agent. The residents of the village where the centre is located,