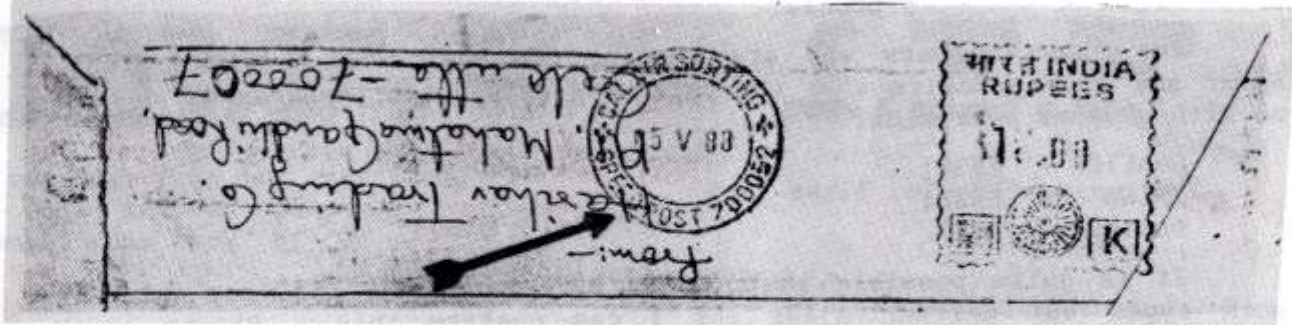

 **
 ** SPEED POST SERVICE METER STAMPS OF INDIA **
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by Dr. R. S. GANDHI

Special speed post service is already in operation in various countries under different names - EXPRESS MAIL SERVICE (EMS), DATA POST, SPEED POST etc. etc. The domestic and international speed post services were introduced in India with effect from 1 August 1986, initially limited to a few important cities/countries, which were later on expanded phase wise. It provides a secure, effective and highly reliable service offering a guaranteed time-bound delivery of registered postal articles within 24 to 72 hours, excluding Sundays and three National holidays for domestic speed post. Standard delivery period for International speed post articles is between 48 and 96 hours, depending upon the destination. Usually a handstruck postmark inscribed SPEED POST is applied to deface the affixed postage stamps, but only two post offices are on known record to have been using franking machines with similar inscriptions engraved either in the value-die or in the licence-die, causing interesting varieties in the absence of definite and clear-cut directions from the Postal Directorate/Postal Circle headquarters. The earliest date of use of such a speed post meter is 28 November 1987.



Special SPEED POST inscription added in the licence-die of bi-lingual Kilburn Model K-999 franking machine. Generally this space is earmarked for user's initials. The postal article has been tendered at CAL AIR SORTING extension counter of Calcutta Air Port - 700 052 post office under West Bengal Postal Circle.



Replacement of compulsory bi-lingual legend 'भारत INDIA' or uni-lingual 'INDIA POSTAGE' by the inscription 'SPEED POST' in the value-die of Kilburn model K-999 franking machine violated mandatory provisions with regard to the name of the country. Therefore the status of this type of meter is a subject matter for open discussion as to what extent its validity is in conformity with the Rules & Regulations of the Department of Posts, Government of India. The cover was received at the extension counter at RAILWAYPURA - 380 002 post office under the jurisdiction of AHMEDABAD (G.P.O.) of Gujrat Postal Circle.

Any additional information on this theme for listing would be much appreciated.
