

RECORDED DELIVERY

By R. Chellam

The introduction of the new 'Recorded Delivery' service in 1974 is the latest example of the aims and efforts of the P and T Department to keep up with the requirement of changing times and to fulfil to the best of its ability the needs of the public arising from changed circumstances. Now that 'RD' has been in operation for more than three years, it is time to look at its background and take stock of its impact on the public and the Department and assess its prospects in the future.

In the pre-stamp days of the Indian Post Office Department, postal charges were pretty high and increased further with distance. However, the service included free receipts for all postings and the option to defer payment till delivery at destination. These free services were withdrawn when the first All-India postage stamps were issued in 1854 and a uniform but cheap rate of postage was introduced. For people who wanted to make sure that their letters were duly posted and safely delivered, the new facility of 'Registration' was made available for a small additional charge. Soon registered mail became very popular and well established for despatching important and valuable articles through the post.

Through Registration provided a fairly safe and reliable mode of despatch, it did not guarantee full compensation for any losses that occurred within the postal organization due to errors, negligence or criminal acts. This led to the introduction in 1878 of a higher grade facility called Insurance under which senders were guaranteed complete safety for their articles or full compensation in cases of loss or damage. The charges for Insurance were much higher than those of Registration but ridiculously cheap compared to the costs of sending documents, money and valuables by any other means.

While Registration and Insurance took care of the safety of postal articles from posting to delivery, their charges were much too expensive for senders who merely wished to ensure that their letters were actually posted and not thrown away either due to difference or by design. This involves much delay in tracing the articles from point causing dissatisfaction to the complainants who want quick

results and much expenditure to the Department. If this is what the user gets in the case of such a well-established service as 'Registration' he cannot hope to get better results from 'Recorded Delivery' just because it is newer and cheaper.

In APS Mail Milap, Journal of the Army Postal Service Corps

'RD' does not appear to have a bright future unless its limitations are properly publicized and its fee is somewhat reduced. Failing this 'RD' may linger on for some years and then wither away like 'Express Delivery' which was launched similarly with great expectations and much enthusiasm.

COVERS SPEAK

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His religious activities started from Gokul. I started from Khurja to Agra. Stayed there in the night. In the morning I purchased the stamps and covers from Agra HO and rushed to Mathura. From there I took bus for Gokul. It left me on the main road and I had to walk for about 5 miles upto Gokul. There I found a week long celebrations going on and people from Gujarat and Maharashtra talking in their language. The Postmaster helpfully obliged me. Took fresh ink and cleaned the pad with duster before giving postmarks and then I rushed to Mathura and obtained cancellations of Mathura H.O. and then Govardhan. I feel so glad and satisfied that when I look at the prized covers which I prepared I feel myself having added kilos of blood added to my body. The Covers speak!

AMARNATH YATRA

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Amravati stream joins the waters of Panchtarni. Covering an ascent of 3 kms from here the pilgrims reach the Holy Cave to pay homage to the Lord Mountains, Shri Amarnath Ji.

For five days thousands of pilgrims poured into the Post Office to benefit by the services provided by P&T Department. After rendering our services to Yatries we paid homage to Lord Shiva and returned to Srinagar.