

Meghdoot Post Cards

"Meghdoot", otherwise Meghaduta, is the title of a lyric poem written by Kālidāsa, regarded as the greatest poet and dramatist in the Sanskrit language. It literally means "cloud-messenger" and was used by the Indian Post Office as the name of their advertising post card service introduced on September 2, 2002. The Meghdoot post cards are sold at 25 paise, (¼ rupee), which is half the postage for a normal post card. The writing space is available for use on the reverse side of the post card, but that alongside the address area is a space for advertising. Any corporate organization, government or semi government bodies, etc. can place an order for cards with their design of advertisement, which may be in multicolour. The advertisements are charged at 2 rupees per card, thus earning the Department of Posts additional revenue, and the minimum order for print is 100,000 of each card.

Meghdoot Cards are printed by the Security Printing Press at Hyderabad in sheets of 8 cards, although some have been supplied to post offices in sheets of 4, and pairs of 2 cards.

As they are a postal stationery article with an advertisement, the area of distribution is determined by the advertiser. In addition to the post offices in the area of distribution the cards are also made available in a limited quantity (2000 cards) at the 8 philatelic bureaux that handle postal stationery, namely Ahmedabad, Bangalore, Chennai, Delhi, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Lucknow, and Mumbai.

The printing of Meghdoot Cards was decentralized to "Circle" level on October 15, 2003 enabling India Post's 23 postal circles to directly place their orders with the press. The decentralization has added to the difficulties in obtaining the necessary information on these cards, including even very basic data such as date of issue, and quantities sold.

The cards were initially popular with poor people as a means of keeping in touch, but with the increased use of smartphones and the internet, the demand for Meghdoot cards has diminished; in 2015 there were 2.1 million sold, a reduction from 2.6 million in 2010. Not many therefore for a country of 1.3 billion people. Their availability varies by area and time, since the cards are only available when and where advertisers dictate that they are sold.

This exhibit is of those cards that are of relevance to the oil and gas industries.

This card, issued April 17, 2003, is an advertisement for Lal Ghoda 20w-40 diesel engine oil, which is produced by Hindustan Petroleum.

The 25 paisa stamp impression used on all of these cards, and on much other postal stationery of the era, shows the rock-cut Rathas at Mahabalipuram in Tamil Nadu, an example of monolithic Indian rock-cut architecture.



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By 2004 the potential for cards to carry worthwhile messages to influence both the sender and the recipient was fully appreciated by the advertisers. Hence the issue of cards with subjects including AIDS control, blindness control, leprosy, stopping smoking and the sanitation campaign, among many others. Cards were issued in various Indian languages as desired by the advertiser, and have been issued in a total of 17 languages, plus English.

The cards were becoming increasingly popular with 71 different cards issued in 2004, compared to 29 in 2003, and only 3 in 2002.

On February 15, 2004, the **Petroleum Conservation Research Association (PCRA)** issued cards showing a smiling 5kg gas cylinder, promoting the use of bottled LPG. The message was "I am small but convenient: use LPG, save trees, save money".

For effective communication to the target groups in semi-urban and rural areas, PCRA uses various regional languages. These cards were issued in 3 languages, Oriya, Hindi and Marathi.

**ମୂ ହେଉଛି ଛୋଟ
ବିଶୁ ସୁବିଧାଜନକ**



**ଏଇ ପାକୀ କନେକ୍ସନ
5 କି.ଗ୍ରା.ର ସିଲିଣ୍ଡରରେ
ମଧ୍ୟ ଉପଲବ୍ଧ**

- ଏଇପାକୀ ବ୍ୟବହାର କରନ୍ତୁ ବୃକ୍ଷ ବଞ୍ଚାନ୍ତୁ
- ଏଇପାକୀ ବଞ୍ଚାନ୍ତୁ ପଇସା ସଂଚାନ୍ତୁ



ପେଟ୍ରୋଲିୟମ କଂଜର୍ଭେସନ ରିସର୍ଚ୍ଚ ଏସୋସିଏସନ
10, ଭୀକାଏଞ୍ଜି କାମା ପ୍ଲେସ, ନୂଆ ଦିଲ୍ଲୀ - 110066
ଇ-ମେଲ : pcra@pcra.org ୱେବସାଇଟ : www.pcra.org

**মেঘদূত পোস্ট কার্ড
MEGHDOOT POST CARD**




भारत INDIA
सौर कुप एवं महाभक्तिपुरम
BOOK-CUT PATHAS, MAHABALPURAM

प्र.सु. / S.P.P. - 2004

पिन PIN

(इस लाइन के नीचे न तो लिखें और न ही मुद्रित करें Do not write or print below this line)

**त पोस्ट कार्ड
DOT POST CARD**




भारत INDIA
सौर कुप एवं महाभक्तिपुरम
BOOK-CUT PATHAS, MAHABALPURAM

प्र.सु. / S.P.P. - 2004

पिन PIN


(इस लाइन के नीचे न तो लिखें और न ही मुद्रित करें Do not write or print below this line)

**मी आहे लहान
पण सुटसुटीत**



**एलपीजी कनेक्शन
5 कि.ग्रा. च्या
सिलेंडरमधेही उपलब्ध**


- एलपीजी इस्तेमाल करें, वृक्ष बचाएँ
- एलपीजी बचाएँ, पैसे बचाएँ



पेट्रोलियम कंजर्वेशन रिसर्च एसोसिएशन
10, भीकाएजी कामा प्लेस, नई दिल्ली-110066
ई-मेल : pcra@pcra.org वेबसाइट : www.pcra.org

**एलपीजी कनेक्शन
5 कि.ग्रा. च्या
सिलेंडरमधेही उपलब्ध**

- एलपीजी वापरा नि वृक्षांचं रक्षण करा
- एलपीजी वाचवा, पैसे वाचवा



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प्र.सु. / S.P.P. - 2004

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The **Petroleum Conservation Research Association (PCRA)** is a society set up under the aegis of the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, Government of India. As a non-profit organization, PCRA is an agency engaged in promoting energy efficiency in various sectors of the economy. It helps the government in proposing policies and strategies for petroleum conservation, which is aimed at reducing excessive dependence of the country on oil. Over the years, PCRA has enlarged its role by encouraging economy in the use of various sources of energy. PCRA aims to make oil conservation a national movement. As part of its mandate, PCRA is entrusted with the task of creating awareness of the importance, methods and benefits of conserving petroleum products & emission reduction.

On February 15, 2004, the PCRA issued cards showing a lady cooking on a two ring gas stove with a family eating in the background. The message was "feed all the members of the household together to save fuel, and increase affection. Gas is valuable: use it carefully for a bright tomorrow".

These cards were issued in 6 languages, Gujarati, Bengali, Kannada, Telugu, Malayalam and Punjabi.

