

Akhtar ul Islam Siddiqui – A Legend in Philately

By Dr. Muhammad Ashraf Choudhry



Mr. Muhammad Khan Junejo Prime Minister of Pakistan awarding Gold Medal to Mr. A.I. Siddiqui in ECOPHILEX 86.



It is a privilege to write a few words about a philatelist and a writer who is a living legend in the field of philately at National and International Level. Akhtar ul Islam Siddiqui the philatelist and journalist was born in 1947. He did his Master from University of the Punjab, Lahore in 1971. He started collecting stamps in 1956 at the age of 9 years showing that he was a born philatelist. Firstly he started to collect the world stamps but later on he adopted Pakistan as a speciality.

For the last many decades he is actively participating in the activities of many National and International philatelic associations and proved his worth many times. He is the active member of many National philatelic Associations. He worked as Publication Secretary and now he is the member of Executive committee in Philatelic Federation of Pakistan. He is also Founder member of the Federation. He is Life Member and Ex. Publication Secretary of Pakistan Philatelic Association. He is the Founder member and president of Pakistan Philatelic Writers League and Faisalabad Philatelic Association. He is also Ex. Vice President of Stamps Society of Pakistan, Karachi. He is Member of ASCAT – Association of the Catalogue Editors, Switzerland and Philatelic Webmasters Association, Switzerland.

After introducing himself as a collector in the philatelic circle of Pakistan he started writing articles in National newspapers and philatelic magazines. His first article on Pakistan Philately appeared in 1968. The first Philatelic Column "Tiktoon Ki Dunia" appeared in Sunday Magazine "Daily Mashriq" Lahore, which was the largest news paper of that time. It becomes very popular & collectors showed much eagerness for that which definitely proved helpful for the promotion of the hobby in the country.

He showed a keen interest in writing a book on stamps collecting for childrens. The first book published in the country in Urdu "Dak Ki Tikat Jama Karna" was written by Mr. Siddiqui in 1971. It was published by "M/s Feroze Sons Ltd" an esteemed publishing agency. This was a very popular book which was reprinted many times up till 1976. The revised edition of this book was published in 2002 by the author. This book was declared as "Best book on childrens literature" by National Book Foundation, Government of Pakistan, Islamabad and was awarded commendation

Certificate and cash prize of Rs.10,000/-. This was first time in the history of the country that a stamps book was awarded Cash prize by the Government of Pakistan.

He is a pioneer in introducing stamps catalogue in Pakistan and services rendered by Mr. Siddiqui for the cause of philately in the country are extremely valuable. The first catalogue of Pakistan Postage stamps published in 1975 titled "Pak Stampage Catalogue". Later on in 1983 the title of the catalogue was changed as "Collect Pakistan Postage Stamps" depicting details of postage stamps of Pakistan, Bhawalpur and Lasbella .Twenty editions of this catalogue has been published till to date. It is a handy pocket size book printed on art paper. This is the only catalogue of Pakistan postage stamps which is being published regularly since 1975.In 2000, the silver jubilee of this catalogue earmarked his great success.

First time in the philatelic history of Pakistan the on line catalogue was made available during the year 2008 at website Pakistan Philately i.e. (www.pakistanphilately.com) by Mr. Siddiqui. He has also introduced the First catalogue of Pakistan postage stamps "Collect Pakistan Postage Stamps" on CD.

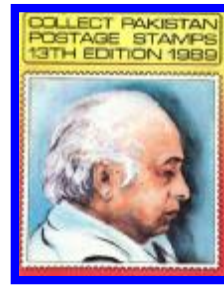
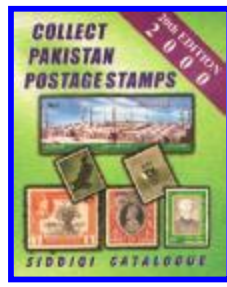
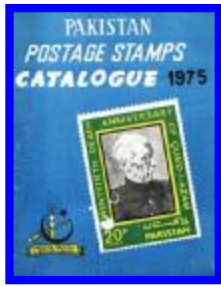
It is the only catalogue of Pakistan Postage Stamps, which is registered under Copy Right Act, Government of Pakistan. New stamps collectors can up date their knowledge through this catalogue about all the Pakistan postage stamps 1947 to 2010.

Mr. Siddiqui is the ex. editor of Pakistan Stamps Journal – The official magazine of Pakistan Philatelic Association .He was also co-editor of "Monthly Stamp Connection"– A stamps magazine of Karachi. He also edited many Exhibition Souvenirs especially at Pakphilex 83 & Ecophilex 86 as publication Secretary of the Exhibition Committee.

He was first Pakistani who participated in literature section of International Philatelic Exhibition - PHILEKOREA 84. Korean Post Office issued a Souvenir Sheet with Pakistan Flag on this occasion He was awarded medals in many national and International Stamps Exhibitions. In stamps exhibitions at India, China, France, Hong Kong, Korea and in many other countries medals were awarded to Mr. Siddiqui. In 1986 he was awarded a Gold Medal by the then Prime Minister of Pakistan. He contributed a lot to arrange many stamps exhibitions as a Publication Secretary and Member Executive Committee of Pakistan Philatelic Association, Lahore from 1968-1986.

Pakistan Post also appreciated and honored his valuable suggestions regarding the issuance of commemorative stamps on many occasions i.e. to commemorate the Eid ul Fiter ,(The Leaflet was also written By Mr. A.I.Siddiqui) To commemorate the 100 years Government College, Faisalabad - the design of stamp was based on the photograph provided by Mr. Siddiqui.

The electro media also pay a important role in the promotion of philately in the country. The Pakistan TV delivered a detail interview of Mr. Siddiqui on Pakistan Philately in the morning nashriat of August 1999. The Express TV and AAJ TV also delivered many programs with the interviews of Mr. Siddiqui.



First time in the history of Pakistan Mr. Siddiqui launched a comprehensive Website on Pakistan Philately. This web site consists of the following items:

1. First On line Catalogue of Pakistan and Bhawalpur Postage Stamps from 1947 to February 2010.
2. Directory of Philatelists of Pakistan. (City wise list)
3. News
4. Article on Pakistan Stamps.
5. List of Associations in Pakistan.
6. Post Office column andmany other things.

Collectors can visit this website at www.pakistanphilately.com

This Website was awarded Vermeil Medal at Lahore 2009 - Stamps Exhibition. This website is popularized throughout the world. Many articles from the prominent philatelists published to commend this website. An article is available in Philatelic Webmasters Organization web site and another article of Mr. George Rab Editor PAKPHIL (U.K.) in his Bulletin are worth mentioning.

The Switzerland post office issued two different sheet lets with advertisements and photograph of Mr. Siddiqui on the occasion of Silver Jubilee of Siddiqui Stamps Catalogue "Collect Pakistan Postage Stamps".

