

No's 9-10
Oct/Dec 1971

Pictorial Issue

THE Gobi Times

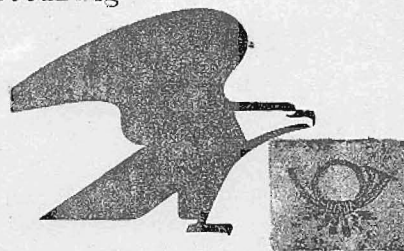
A Newsletter specialising in the philately
of Mongolia, Tuva, Bhutan, and the surrounding
areas



This issue of the Gobi Times is devoted solely to Bhutan. We designate it a pictorial issue as it is devoted to those things that do not lend themselves particularly to words alone.

Of historical interest this issue is the Tibetan language cancellations and markings of civil officers of Bhutan. We have given each type known to us thus far a number. Many sources have been combed for the illustrations and some have been taken from covers in instances where they have yet to be announced in major philatelic journals. We have numbered them without making any attempt to read them, correct the information about them or date them where original source material did not already carry such information, whether it was right or wrong. The purpose here is to give the cancels a number for easier reference in the future as well as to bring them all together for the first time in somewhat of a catalogue fashion. I hope the results meet with general approval.

DABA Deutsche-Amerikanische Briefmarken Ausstellung
GAPEX German-American Philatelic Exhibition
Kaseme Mähringen
Kelley Barracks
Mähringen
American Youth Association Building
6-7.V.72
6 & 7 May 1972
10:00am



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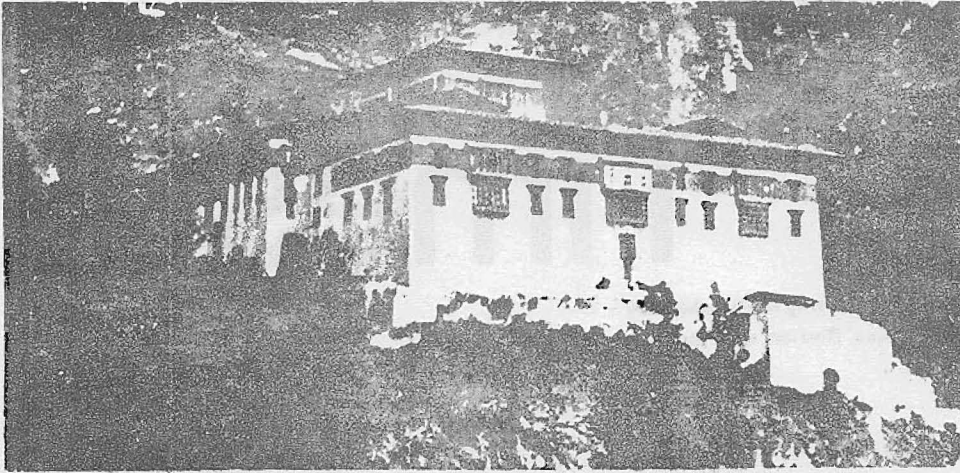
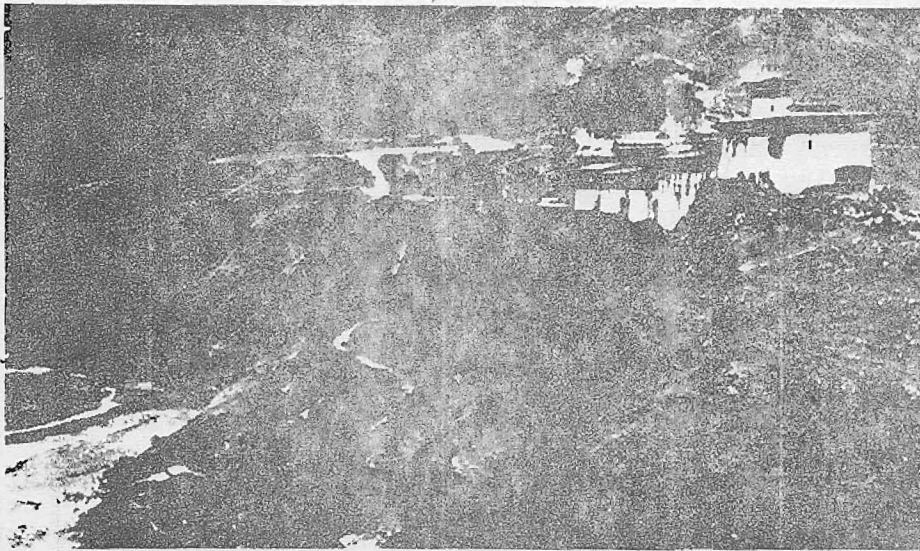
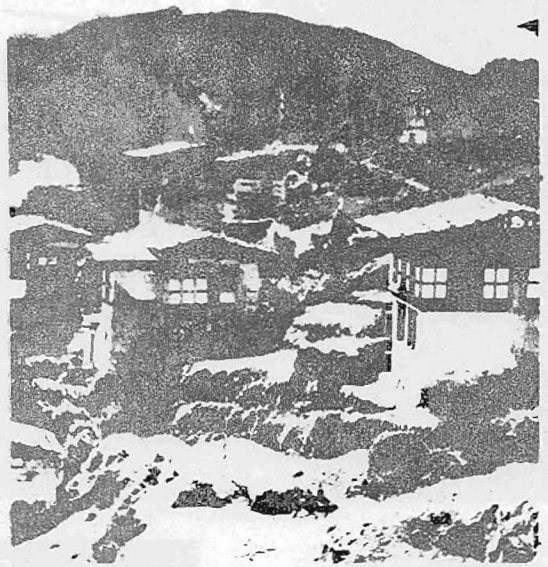
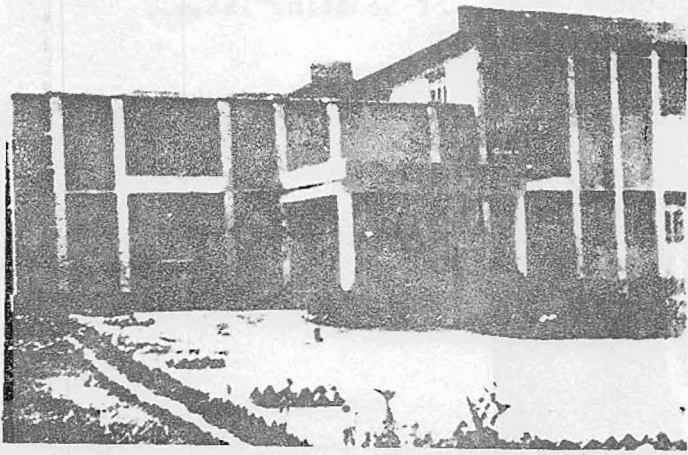


Image: Bhutan

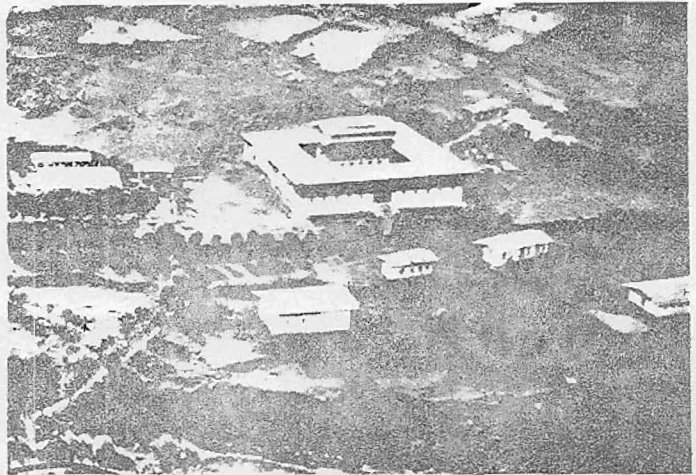
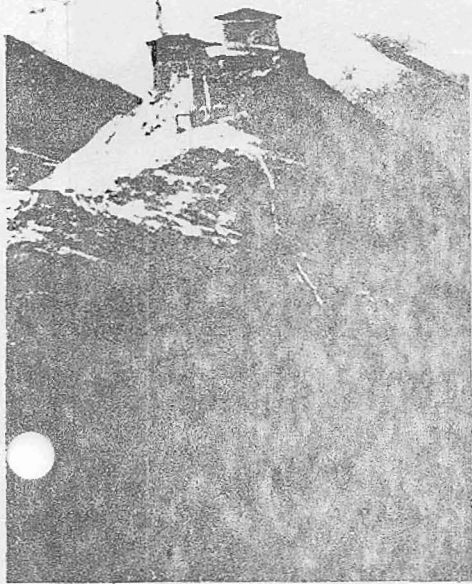
Hampung Dzong, Paro ▲ ▼



at the pilot range



▲ GPO Phuntsholing
Near Thimpu ▶
Ha (Wangchuklo) Dzong ▼
◀ Lingshi Dzong



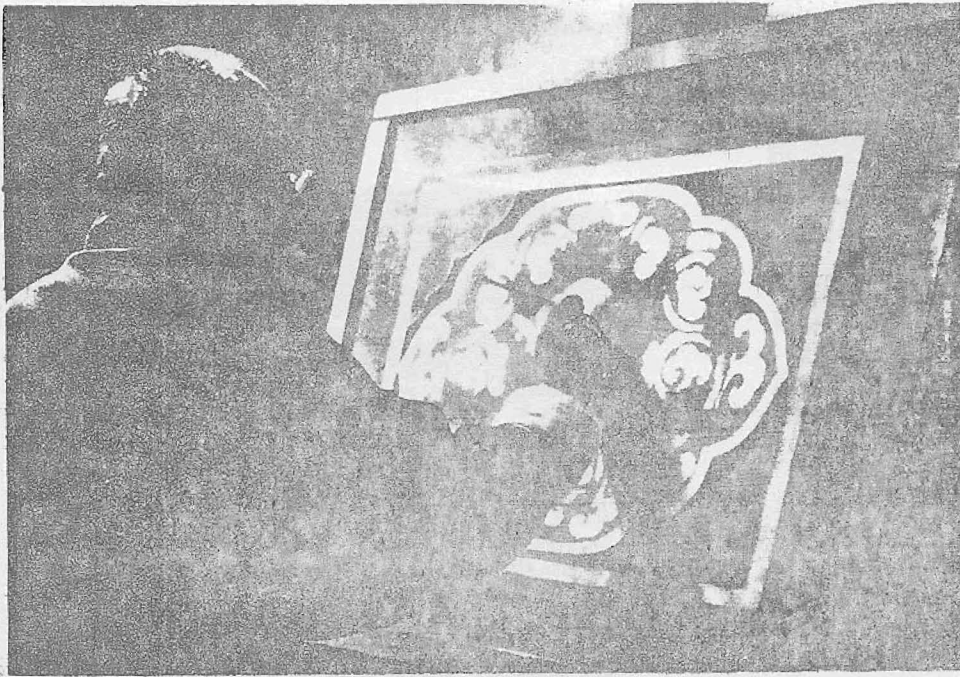
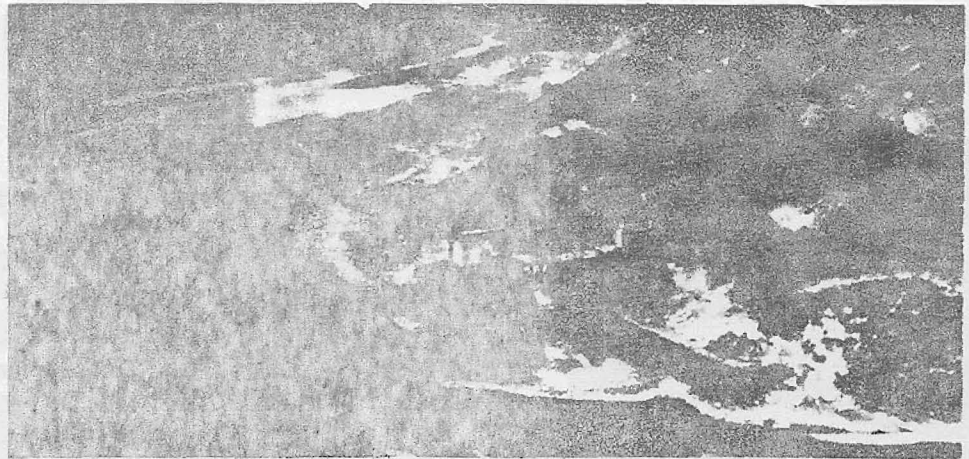


Photo from Armin Haab book adopted for design of Scouting issue.

Former bridge at Wangdiphodrang was replaced with a metal span after the floods of 1966.



Another design from Armin Haab book used for scouting issue .

GUEST EDITORIAL

Shri D. K. Ramamurti
Former Postal Advisor
from India to
Bhutan

Mr. Ramamurti was Mr. Lam Penjor's predecessor as well as the chief instrument in the establishment of the Indo-Bhutan postal agreement, acting on behalf of India as the agreement's signator. His Bhutanese counterpart was former "prime minister" Mr. Lhendup Dorji. This text was received through Herr Karl-Heinz Michel. ed.

Prior to 1955, no proper procedure would appear to have existed for the transmission of mails in Bhutan. Mails would appear to have been sent either through casual travellers or special messengers depending upon its urgency. The first attempt to systemize the transmission of mails in the interior of Bhutan would appear to have been made in 1955 with the instructions issued by the Chief Secretary to the Government of Bhutan on the 13th of the Bhutanese 8th month of 1955. These instructions prescribed that all "dak" other than those relating to His Majesty should bear stamps. These stamps were usually of four annas denomination and were also used on revenue and legal documents. Even now, these are the only stamps available in the interior of Bhutan where the postage stamps used in the post offices in Phuntsholing, Paro and Thimpu are not available. The instructions also prescribed that each Dzong should dispatch dak at intervals of five days.

Further improvements were effected with the issue of instructions contained in the Chief Secretary's memo dated the 13th of the Bhutanese 6th month of 1958. According to these instructions, dak should be sent from each Dzong twice a week. The memo also indicated the days on which dak should be sent from each Dzong.

The cost of the runner establishment required for the Dzong Dak system is met out of civil revenues. This system would appear to have been intended mainly to facilitate the carriage of official mails. With the advent of the development programme of Bhutan and the establishment of several schools and development projects in the interior of Bhutan, there has been a sizeable increase in correspondence addressed in English. The Dzong Dak system was not able to cope with the work involved in the transmission and delivery

of these mails. In the first instance, correspondence addressed in English could be deciphered by neither the Thrimpon or the staff. Secondly, most of the Thrimpons have hardly one clerk to assist them in all their official work, and due to the pressure of work, the duties relating to the dispatch and delivery of mail are neglected. The delays of the delivery of mail in the interior of Bhutan has had a demoralizing effect on the staff managing the schools and development program, who are anxious for their news from home. Many have actually stopped subscribing to newspapers and magazines, and other periodicals, due to the uncertainty of the postal services in the interior of Bhutan.

The position in the south of Bhutan was slightly better. Mails from India were received through the nearest Indian postoffice and delivered to the SDO(civil), who also arranged for the dispatch of outward mails.

The Present State of the System (1968)

In 1962, the decision was taken that Bhutan should issue her own postage stamps. This however, required that Bhutan should have a few postoffices of her own. Consequently, post offices were opened in Phuntsholing (10.10.62), Paro (5.11.62) and Thimpu (23.6.63). The service at these postoffices was restricted to the sale of Bhutanese postage stamps and dispatch and delivery of unregistered letters. The Phuntsholing postoffice also functioned as an office of exchange in respect of correspondence for and from India, in accordance with the terms of the agreement dated 11.9.62 between the postal administrations of Bhutan and India. The agreement provides for the exchange of unregistered correspondence only. The exchange is on a reciprocal arrangement. No country will charge the other for carriage of mails. Under the agreement, India agreed to undertake forwarding Bhutanese mail bearing Bhutanese stamps to such of the member countries of the Universal Postal Union as indicated by the postal administration in Bhutan. The Bhutanese administration prescribed postal rates, generally in line with the Indian rates.

It may be seen that two systems are in vogue for transmission of mails. One, under the aegis of the local administration in the interior of Bhutan and the other through the post offices at Paro, Thimpu and Phuntsholing financed through adhoc allotments from the Development Fund.

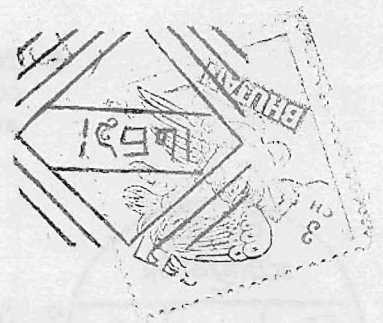
A COMPILATION OF BHUTANESE

Tibetan language
cancellation
devices

- 1 At immediate right is a photo of the coin used as postmark on the bogus "First Flight" covers usually found in combination with the 1962 first issue and one or two bogus surcharged 1954 revenue/fiscal stamps affixed.



- 2 This type was first reported by George Knowles in an early Gobi Times. It's also reported without the inscription "Bhutan" in Tibetan in the center, but this possibly could be due merely to a bad impression



- 3 This mark, here a reconstruction by Robert D. West, was first reported by H.D.S. Haverbeck in the Collectors Club Philatelist in March 1967. Reportedly it's from Ha Dzong. West, in his APS article, May 1970, calls this an official seal. It has been seen on the 1955 fiscals.



- 4 Generally same as above, reputedly from Ha.



- 5 First reported by H.D.S. Haverbeck, this is reportedly a mark from Rolung, a place yet to be determined in location. West has determined that lettering could indicate Rinpung (Paro) Dzong. First seen on a cover addressed to the Bhutan Agent, Kalimpong, India without stamps affixed.





6 This mark, in the collection of the author, was found on a current cover, cancelling a denomination of the Dancer's series. There was no other cancellation on the cover. It was internally addressed, and had no return address. It was an envelope printed with "Sherubtse Public School, Kanglum, Bhutan." It was in black ink.

7 This mark has been seen most recently on cancelled to order fiscals of 1954. It has also been seen and is in the authors collection on reverse of covers, not cancelling stamps.

8 This large purple marking was found on the reverse of a cover sealing the flaps, not over stamps. It is from the authors collection.



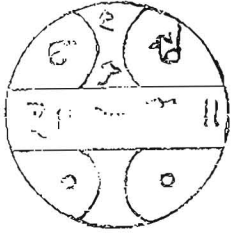
9 This marking has been seen in the collection of Herr Karl-Heinz Michel who arranged with Dr. K. Ramamurti (see guest editorial this issue) to have it returned via Dzong Dak system. It is inscribed "Lingshi Ramzan" at top with the usual date markings and "Bhutan" in the center



10 This mark was found on cover of the author's cancelling Rinpung Dzong definitives of 1966, with no other cancels of the Bhutan post.

11 This mark, to now unreported, is from the collection of Herr Karl-Heinz Michel, Ludwigshafen, Germany (w). Only one specimen so far reported.

12 This specimen, reported by West is reportedly from a cover bearing the printed inscription "Headmaster, Chengmari Government School, Chengmari, Bhutan.

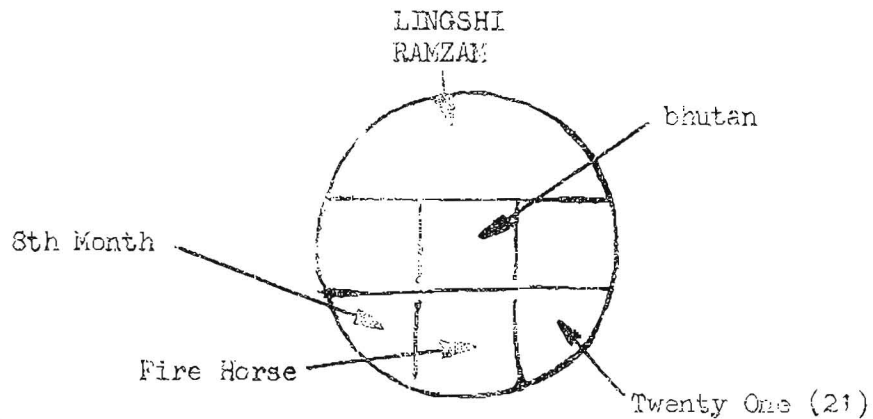


13 Reportedly Paro Dzong mark, this seal was first illustrated by H.D.S. Haverbeck in the Collector's Club Philatelist in 1967. It was cancellation over revenue issue of 1955.



14 This reconstruction by Robert S. West, as with the above mark was first reported by George Knowles. Town origin is unknown and reconstruction is best that can be achieved from the original poor reproduction coupled with the poor impression. Only one specimen has so far been seen.

DZONG DAK CANCELLATION
of Karl Heinz Michel's



This device (represented here without lettering) was the result of a request of Herr Michel's to have covers posted via "Dzong Dak" mail system. In Dr. Ramamurti's reply, he stated he would send Michel covers "from...places that currently have no postoffices." A resultant translation showed inscriptions as indicated above. The middle row, left and right boxes were reported to say merely "office" and are obviously an incomplete translation.

NOTE

Items not pictured here did not arrive in time for illustration and will be included in the next GT.

L. N.

15 This mark, in the author's collection is a purple cancel on the blue 1954 fiscal with the date in red pen. West's 5 May 1970 article reports it's from "Shee Lok Duk" and evidence currently shows there is no such place in Bhutan.



16 This mark was first reported by Haverbeck in the Collector's Club Philatelist in 1967. West quotes "Shee Lok Duk" as source. See above comments. The Haverbeck specimens are on the 1954 fiscals.



17 West reconstructs this cancel reported first by Haverbeck, saying it is from Taga (Daga?) Dzong. This was reported in both black and violet ink.



18 There are several types of this mark, some without the "sun" in the center inscription. In the center here in Tibetan is Bhutan Government. Without the center design the inscription reads "Honored Bhutan Government". This mark appears to be one of the most common types, having been in Indian stamp journals as well as American and British. There is also a squattier type., See below.



19 This "squattier" type has been seen in purple on current covers (the author's reads "Health Service, Govt of Bhutan") as well as on pre-stamp era covers, cancelling fiscals of 1954. The date and location have been filled in on all known examples. The cancels on fiscals are in black ink.



20 This oval reconstruction by West was first reported by George Knowles in the earliest of the Gobi Times'. In the center is "Bhutan" in Tibetan block style letters. Origin is unknown.



Proposals for new post office made

The Bhutan Government Ministry of Trade and Development, His Highness Namgyel Wangchuk recently sanctioned establishment of a 50,000 rupee site at Phuntsholing for industrial and commercial complexes of almost 42 stores. The project, to be completed in two stages, has a post office scheduled among the plans. The site is between the Dhoti stream and the Torsa River. (Kuensel)

"Sovietization of Mongolia"

An excellent article entitled "Sovietization of Mongolia" appears in the April 1972 edition of "Foreign Affairs," on page 547. This current edition is available from Foreign Affairs, 58 E 68th Street, New York 10021. It costs \$2.50. The article gives exciting glimpses into the "normal" life of the government of Mongolia.

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100 post-independence provisional covers	12.50	or	35.00
definitives, first issue mint (8 cpl)	1.15	or	2.75
definitives, first issue, ovpt "Bangla Desh Liberated" (8 cpl)	1.20	or	3.00
redrawn definitives, 1p to Taka 5, mint (15 cpl)	.75	or	1.80

Bhutan

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