

# BURMA 1966 LOCALLY OVERPRINTED OFFICIAL STAMPS

Burma gained independence from Great Britain in 1948, but stamps were not printed in Burma. When definitive stamps were ordered, some were requested to be overprinted for use on official mail. Due to the failure to order enough official stamps, some denominations ran low. In 1964, 1965, and 1966 stamps were overprinted locally for official mail. Eventually the Government Printing Works in Tokyo was able to supply Burma's needs.

This exhibit gives an overview of Burma official stamps 1954-1968 with a detailed focus on the difficult-to-find local overprints done in 1966, showing varieties, errors, and on cover uses. Discovery items and never-before certified items are included.

- Exhibit Plan:
- Background
- 1966 15mm Local Overprints
- 1966 12mm Local Overprints
- Used with Tokyo, Leipzig Overprints

The most significant items are double framed in **dark red**. Rarity statements are in **dark red**.  
 = Discovery or research.

## BACKGROUND - 1954

The 1954 new currency issue, 100 pyas = 1 kyat, was printed by Security Printing Press in Nasik, India. A portion of thirteen values also received a Burmese language overprint at Nasik for use on official mail.

### အစိုးရကိစ္စ = Government Service

13mm overprints



15mm overprints



# BACKGROUND – 1964

On April 16, 1964 a new set was issued, printed by the Government Printing Works, Tokyo. No official stamps were ordered.



### Service OVERPRINT →

There was a shortage of 3 pyas Official stamps in 1964. For urgent replenishment of stock, 3 pyas regular postage stamps of the previous issue were quickly overprinted by the Burma Government Printing Works in Rangoon, but inadvertently it was done in English. This stamp was still officially authorized and brought into use.



Soon more of the old 3 pyas stamps received an 1 1/2 mm Service overprint in Burmese.

Other shortages developed and some old 1, 5, and 15 pyas stamps were given the same 1 1/2 mm overprint.



### အစိုးရကိစ္စ

# BACKGROUND – 1965

In 1965 five values of the new 1964 series received the same 1 1/2 mm local overprint used in 1964.



## Synopsis - Burma 1966 Locally Overprinted Official Stamps/Minnesota Stamp Expo 2024

**Treatment** – The exhibit gives an overview of Burma official stamps 1954-1968 with a detailed focus on the difficult-to-find local overprints done in 1966, showing varieties, errors, and on cover uses. Discovery items and never-before certified items are included. The title page has background information and material from 1954-1964 to introduce the story. The final two pages show the subject stamps used with the later 1966 Tokyo overprints and 1968 Leipzig overprints.

**Importance** – It is easy to claim this is the finest exhibit on the subject since it may be the first one ever attempted. I seem to have cornered the market. At least that is the opinion of Richard Warren, the editor of *The Burma Fantail*, the quarterly journal of the Burma Myanmar Philatelic Study Circle (UK).

**Knowledge, study, research** – In addition to reading everything ever written on the subject, it has taken quite a bit of work and patience to examine stamps and find the varieties shown. Nothing is published about the rates. I worked with a young philatelist from Myanmar (the new name for Burma) who is now an engineer in Singapore and whose English is particularly good. Together we deduced the rates. He also translates covers for me.

**Rarity and Difficulty of Acquisition** – The stamps in this story are listed by Scott as O90 to O93. Stanley Gibbons numbers them as O192 to O195. In either one you will see low catalog values. Burma collectors have long questioned these low values since the stamps are so hard to find. I have never found a single item in this exhibit at a WSP show. There are a few eBay or Delcampe items shown. The majority came in lots from Harmer's of London 20 years ago, and more recently Harmer's of New York, and Eastern Auctions in Canada.

SG O192 is not currently listed with the overprint inverted. The exhibit shows two multiples of this stamp with inverted overprint, and I have obtained RPSL certificates for both. These certificates will be the basis for a future listing. SG O195 is listed but unpriced with a double overprint. The exhibit shows one that has an RPSL certificate obtained by me. SG O195 is also listed but unpriced with an inverted overprint. The exhibit shows a single and two on cover, all of which have RPSL certificates obtained by me. These are the only certificates they have ever given for this stamp.

**Rarity Statements** – I use "number known", which means known to me. I have been collecting Burma since 1991. I own every 1966 local overprint cover I have ever seen. I maintain the only known census of these covers. I have read every page of every issue of *The Burma Peacock* and its successor, *The Burma Fantail*. No covers are illustrated except those in my articles. My plea in the journal for information and scans, even if not interested in selling, has turned up nothing.

Later in February 2021 I gave a presentation based on this exhibit at the zoom Burma Philatelic Study Circle AGM hosted in London. The people at the AGM knew the 1966 local official overprints existed but had not seen much of this material and had no additional information to add or knew what other material might exist. The editor of the study circle's journal wanted me to do a two-part article on the subject that appeared in the April and July 2021 issues. I attended and exhibited (not this) at Thailand 2023. Even though Thailand borders Burma, now Myanmar, I was unable to find anything for this exhibit. Some people from Myanmar I met for the first time. I gave a presentation at the society meeting, and nobody could add anything about this exhibit subject.

**Exhibitor Credibility** – I have been collecting Burma since the early 1990's when I joined the above-named study circle. I was a director of the society and in January I became the secretary of the organization. The society has a world-wide membership and I have access to collectors in Burma itself.

**History** – In February 2021 it was judged at the Sarasota National Stamp Exhibition virtual show and received 88 points, scoring high in presentation, rarity, knowledge, study, and research. First responder Tim Wait had some legitimate treatment concerns that have been addressed.

It was shown at Chicagopex 2021. I had a very crowded epilogue on a double page. My first responder liked what was in the epilogue but highly recommended I have my epilogue on two 1 1/3 size pages. That seemed like a big epilogue for a single frame exhibit, but he said in this case it was justified. I followed his suggestion and am pleased how it turned out.

At Chicagopex 2023 it received 89 points. Since then, I changed the purpose statement (2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph) on the title page to more accurately describe what I am actually doing in the exhibit.

**Bibliography:**

Alan Meech, "Scott and Gibbons Catalogue Listings of the 1964-66 Locally-Overprinted 'Official' Stamps," *The Burma Peacock*, Vol. 13, No. 1 (Spring 1992, pp. 9-10) *The author was also the long-time editor of the journal and pursuing these stamps. He questioned the low catalogue values and mentioned that he had only seen them for sale once.*

T. A. Mickey, "Errors and Varieties of the 1966 Official Stamps Overprinted Locally in Burmese," *Burma Peacock*, Vol. 9, No. 2 (Summer 1988, pp. 27-34)

Mike Ley, "The 1966 locally overprinted official stamps, part 1: 1, 2 and 3 pyas values," *The Burma Fantail*, Vol. 18, No. 2 (April 2021, pp. 1, 23-26)

Mike Ley, "The 1966 locally overprinted official stamps, part 2: the 15 pyas value," *The Burma Fantail*, Vol. 18, No. 3 (July 2021, pp 1, 35-38)