

DR. RUTH KATHARINA MARTHA PFAU
(1929 - 2017)



First Day Of Issue





PAKISTAN POST

پاکستان پوسٹ

2017-11

DR. RUTH KATHARINA MARTHA PFAU

(1929 - 2017)

COMMEMORATIVE POSTAGE STAMP

December 03, 2017

SALIENT FEATURES

Size of Stamp	:	50 x 50 m.m.
Size of Print	:	46.5 x 46.5 m.m.
Number of Stamps in a sheet	:	(4 x 5) = 20 Stamps
Perforation	:	13 C
Denomination	:	Rs. 8/-
Colours	:	CMYK
Printing Technology	:	Lithography (Offset)
Format	:	Circle Shape
Paper	:	100 GSM W/M Gummed Paper
Gum	:	PVA
Quantity	:	0.2 Million (2 Lac)
Designer	:	Mughiz Khan
Printer	:	National Security Printing Company, Karachi.



DR. RUTH KATHARINA MARTHA PFAU

(1929 - 2017)

COMMEMORATIVE POSTAGE STAMP

December 03, 2017

Ruth Pafu was a German doctor who devoted 57 years of her life fighting against Leprosy in Pakistan. She was known for her humanitarian services to people of Pakistan to root out Leprosy from the country. Born on 9th September, 1929 in Leipzig Germany, she grew up seeing the horrors of the Second World War (1939-1945) during which her city was bombed and destroyed. When the war ended, her country was divided into East and West Germany. In 1948, when she was just 17 years old she headed for the border to cross from East (then under Russian occupation) into West to pursue her medical education which she completed in 1950. Feeling unsatisfied with her life and with a desire to do something more purposeful in her life she decided to dedicate the rest of her life to the poor people of the world. Her devotion to God was so strong and unshakable that she eventually became a Nun and joined the Catholic Order of the 'Daughters of the Heart of Mary' . Her skills as a doctor made an asset to the Order's various charity missions. In 1960, she was given an assignment to assist Mother Teresa in India to help with the healthcare of the poor. However, due to visa problem she stopped over in Karachi. While staying in Karachi she along with other Nuns of her Order visited a Lepers colony situated at McLeod Road. There a small dispensary made of wooden crates was already established by her group members. It was an experience that she never forgot "I felt saddened when I saw people living in caves, crawling like animals. They had compromised with their faith but it was not their fate, they deserved a much better and happier life".

There were no proper drugs to treat Leprosy, no facilities, no electricity, no water. Sewage water mixed with all the garbage and stench overflowing from the open drains and the long lines of people who had lost their dignity because of being affected by Leprosy, and to add to the sorrow were some patients whose hands and feet became nutritional supplements for rats. Seeing the sub-human condition of the Lepers colony and people affected by Leprosy, Dr. Pfau realized that God had stopped her over in Karachi for a reason and that her real mission was to help the unfortunate and vulnerable. She decided that the care of patients would be her life's calling.

Dr. Pfau quickly reorganized the rough-hewn dispensary into a proper hospital - a full service Leprosy treatment and rehabilitation Center, free of charge to patients. She travelled to various parts of Pakistan to identify and treat

patients affected by Leprosy. Soon, the makeshift clinic became a two-storey hospital, known as the Marie Adelaide Leprosy Centre with 157 branches across Pakistan. She trained doctors and paramedical workers and treated thousands of patients affected by Leprosy. Her dedication inspired the government to establish a national program to bring Leprosy under control.

With her efforts, in 1996 the World Health Organization declared Pakistan the first country in EMRO region to have controlled Leprosy.

Dr. Ruth Pfau was one of those great people in the history of mankind who selflessly devoted their lives to serving humanity without any interest for fame or personal benefits and without any discrimination of race, religion and geographical boundaries. She proved to be an angel in blessing for such poor people suffering from Leprosy.

Dr. Pfau was the moving spirit of the Leprosy Control Program. She spent over half a century in Pakistan. In search of the index cases, she travelled to every nook and corner of Pakistan. After controlling Leprosy, she launched an elimination campaign throughout Pakistan. She also included other health disciplines like Tuberculosis, Blindness control, Community Based Inclusive Development (CBID) of Persons with Disabilities and Maternal Child Health Care (MCHC) so that Leprosy activities are sustained till its eradication.

Dr. Ruth Pfau was recognized in Pakistan and abroad as a distinguished human being and was awarded many prizes and medals most prominently. The Order of the Cross with Star from her native country Germany, Hilal-e-Imtiaz, Hilal-e-Pakistan and Nishan-e-Quaid-e-Azam from the Government of Pakistan, Magsaysay award from the Government of Philippines and the BAMBI award in Germany (the most popular media award of Europe).

She was someone who never sought out the spotlight for herself but spent every waking hour defending those who are ignored and forgotten.

She was someone who mourned for others when they were in need. She felt the pain of people when they were treated like second-class citizens because of Leprosy.

She treated her patients with gentleness and compassion and worked hard to support the lives of others by offering medical care, food and funds.

She always thought every person is unique and deserves respect because

they are created by God and that just because you are a Leper or a poor farmer does not mean that you are below everyone.

Through her hard work, Dr. Pfau made Pakistan- a nation considered sub-standard when compared to other great nations in Asia- the first country in the continent to have Leprosy controlled.

Whether it is flood or an earthquake, natural or man-made disaster, she was there to help poor people. She actively participated in 2005 earthquake in Azad Jammu & Kashmir and floods in 2010 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Sindh and facilitated deserving communities through relief, reconstruction and rehabilitation activities. She also established community based inclusion program for persons with disabilities and Maternal Child Health Care program to serve the poor communities.

“The person is the centre of our concern. His dignity is our sacred trust.”

On Dr. Ruth Katharina Martha Pfau (1929 - 2017) , a Commemorative Postage Stamp of Rs. 8/- denomination is being issued by Pakistan Post on December 03, 2017.

TERMS OF SALE

The Commemorative Postage Stamps will be available for sale from December 03, 2017 at all important Post Offices in the country.

Overseas orders for Stamps, First Day of Issue Covers and Leaflets should be addressed to the Manager, Philatelic Bureau, Karachi GPO or Manager, National Philatelic Bureau, Islamabad GPO, accompanied by a Bank Draft or Crossed Cheque encashable in Pakistan.

Issued by
THE DIRECTOR GENERAL, PAKISTAN POST, ISLAMABAD.
www.pakpost.gov.pk