

HONOURING PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES THROUGH PHILATELY

by

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People with disabilities are those who report being limited in any way because of physical, mental, or emotional problems, or those who have health problems that require them to use special equipment (Behavioural Risk Factor Surveillance Survey, 2005). People with disabilities include, not exhaustively, people with visual impairments, auditory impairments, speech impairments, paraplegia and physical disabilities, Down syndrome, autism, global developmental delay, learning disabilities and others.

Around 10% of the world population, or 650 million people, live with disabilities (Mont, 2007). Reported disability prevalence rates from around the world vary dramatically. For instance, from under 1% in Kenya (Kenya Population Census, 1989) and Bangladesh (Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, 1987) up to 20% in New Zealand (Statistics New Zealand, 1998).

The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is the first human rights convention of the 21st century and the first legally binding instrument with comprehensive protection of the rights of persons with disabilities. The Convention not only clarifies that countries should not discriminate against persons with disabilities, but also it sets out the many steps that countries must take to create an enabling environment so that persons with disabilities can enjoy real equality in society.

The Convention promotes and protects the human rights of persons with disabilities in civil, cultural, economic, political, and social life. However, all over the world, persons with disabilities continue to face barriers to their participation in society and are often forced to live on the margins of society. They are routinely denied basic rights such as to equal recognition before the law and legal capacity, freedom of expression and opinion, and even the right to participate in political and public life, such as voting. Many persons with disabilities are forced into institutions, a direct breach of the rights to freedom of movement and to live in the community (UN, 2008).

International Year of the Disabled Persons

The United Nation Organisation declared the year 1980 as the International Year of the Disabled Persons by which the World Act Programme for the disabled was approved during the General Assembly of the United Nations in the 37/52 Resolutions on 3 December 1982. This programme stresses on the issue of the disabled and normal persons in all aspects of life and in conjunction with the programme, the period between 1983 and 1992 was declared as the United Nation Decade of Disabled Persons.

The list of countries below, joined by the United Nations as a whole, are some of those that honored their disabled via commemorative stamps and/or first day covers for the International Year of the Disabled 1981.¹

¹ The list is not exhaustive and is in alphabetical order.

United Nations



Kurt Waldheim, UN Secretary-General wrote,



“Disabled persons have the right of full participation in the life and development of their societies. It is our obligation to enable them to enjoy this right.”

Australia



Bahamas



China



China Taiwan



Congo



Ethiopia



Fiji



French Andorre



Gabon



Germany



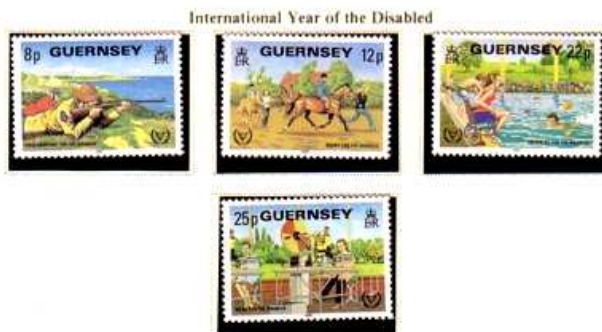
Great Britain



Issue Date: 25th March 1981

- 14p Blind Man with Guide Dog.
- 18p Hand Spelling in Sign Language.
- 22p Man in Wheelchair.
- 25p Artist Painting with Foot.

Guernsey



Jordan



Malaysia



International Year of Disabled Persons Malaysia depicting persons with lower limb disabilities

Issue date: 14 February 1981

- 10 sen Girl undergoing occupational therapy
- 15 sen Girl undergoing vocational training in sewing
- 75 sen Man throwing javelin

Samoa



1981 Year of Disabled

San Marino



Singapore



FDC International Year of Disabled Persons

Issue date: 24 November 1981

- 10c Man in Wheelchair
- 35c Man in Crutches
- 50c Girl doing Sign Language
- 75c Blind Man reading Braille

Spanish Andorra



Thailand



Stamps depicting people with physical lower limb disabilities

United Arab Emirates



UAE United Arab Emirates Year of the Disabled 1981, depicting people with physical disabilities.

Unknown Issuer (possibly United Nations)



Handicapped Disabled International Year FDC

Decade of Disabled Persons for the Asia and Pacific Region

The 48th ESCAP Session held in April 1992 which was attended by 33 countries, through the 48/3 ESCAP Resolution, announced that the period from 1993 through 2002 was to be celebrated as the Decade of Disabled Persons for the Asia and Pacific Region. The resolution is the commitment of governments in the Asia and Pacific Region to ensure the full participation and equal rights of the disabled persons. The decade is intended to provide a window of opportunity to the 56 ESCAP countries to integrate efforts towards regional co-operations in achieving national development and strengthening technical co-operations among developing and developed countries on main issues which effect the life of the disabled persons.

In the implementation of the 48/3 Resolution, several categories have been outlined as the basic of concern. These include, the national level coordination, legislation, information, public awareness, communication and access, education, training and employment, prevent of disability, rehabilitation services, aids, self-help organisations and regional co-operations.

The following countries in Asia-Pacific region demonstrated their support of this resolution by honouring persons with disabilities in their stamps and/or first day covers. The list is not exhaustive and is in alphabetical order.

Brunei	Myanmar
 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20 sen Auditory-impaired children doing sign language • 50 sen Vision-impaired children reading Braille • \$1 People with physical disabilities in a race 	 <p>Asia Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons, 1993-2002</p>

Other Special Days or Events Dedicated to Disabled People

There are various countries who had honoured their persons with different disabilities on special days that are specific to the respective countries, or just in appreciation of disabled people in general. The following is yet another non-exhaustive, alphabetically ordered illustrated list of stamps and their issuers covering this topic.

Brazil



Brazil 2001 Day of Disabled People

China



CN 08' Help Handicapped, Disabled people, roots in hand

Cyprus



Disabled, Man with Broken Leg from Accident, Cyprus



China PR Year of Disabled Persons

Germany



Germany "cinderella" issue advertising social help for the disabled

Great Britain



Great Britain "cinderella" issue Disabled Service

India 1



India Handicapped Educative Cover For Disabled

India 2



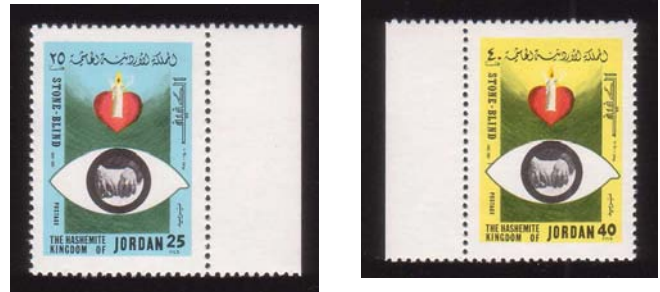
India 2007 Year of Disabled Braille Sheet Handicap

Jordan 1



The Deaf

Jordan 2



Stone-Blind

Jordan 3



Anti-Paralysis Campaign

Jordan 4



White Cane Day

Liberia



Liberia 1982 International Year of the Disabled

Mexico



2007 Disabled People



Morocco

Namibia



Disabled Blind Health
Braille Reading 1969 FDC



Disabled Blind Health
Music Flute 1972 FDC



Disabled Blind Health
Music Drum 1973 FDC



Disabled Blind Health
Music Fiddle 1974 FDC



1992 Disabled
Workers with
physical
challenges



Namibia
Disabled
FDC for
Equalisation
of the
Disabled

Netherlands



Issue date: 10 December 1931.

- 1c Deaf child
- 5c Backward child
- 6c Blind girl
- 12c Neglected child

Panama



SENADIS Panamanian Secretariat for the integration
of Disabled Persons 2007

Philippines



Philippines Disabled Veteran Stamp Sheet

Singapore



1968 State Floral
Emblems Set (6)

1978 Rehabilitation
of the Disabled Set
(3)

Transkei



Nurse, Disabled Children

Tunisia



2006 Disabled Employment

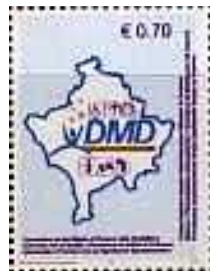


2008 National Disabled Day

U.N. (Kosovo)



2007 Disabled Aid



2007 Disabled Aid

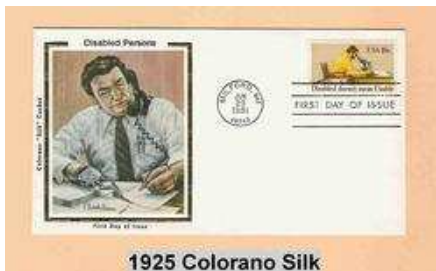
US 1



Disabled Vets & U.S. Servicemen, 2 Ellis Cartoon FDCs + Disabled Vets & Servicemen 6 Cent Sheet



US 2



1925 Year of the Disabled FDC by Colorano Silk



Year of the Disabled: *Disabled doesn't mean Unable*

- 18c A scientist with physical disabilities

US 3



SEEING EYE DOGS Blind Disabled Souvenir Page

Sports for Persons with Disabilities

The sports for persons with disabilities, through its promotion, can be a great resource for nation-building to make the public to have more understanding toward those persons, as well as to form a great impact on the a national policy for the welfare for the disabled. Its objectives include:

- to promote general interest and welfare for the disabled in the region through participation in sports events and other activities;
- to deepen mutual understanding and friendship of the disabled; and
- to promote rehabilitation for the disabled in the region through sports activities.

Other sports that catered to these persons and honoured in the following stamps include the FESPIC Federation (formerly spelled out as Far East and South Pacific Games Federation for the disabled), SouthEast ASEAN games, Far East Games for the Disabled, Disabled Athlete Paralympics, Special Olympics and many others.

Australia



Disabled Athlete Paralympic - 2000 Maxi Card

Brazil



BRAZIL 2006 Disabled Olympics Racing Chair

Canada



Disabled, Terry Fox (1958-1981), Marathon of Hope

China



Postal Card Discus Throw Disabled Sports



Postal Card Tennis Disabled Sports

Hong Kong



Lower limb disabilities

- 30c Ping Pong
- \$1.00 Wheelchair Racing
- \$1.30 Basketball
- \$5.00 Archery



Jordan



Sports for People with Special Needs

Malaysia



9th FESPIC Sports Games For Disabled People 2006



Netherlands



1980 Sport Disabled Olympics

Pakistan



Pakistan Stamps Set 1991 Special Olympics Disabled

Philippines




3rd SouthEast ASEAN Games for Disabled 2005 running and cycling



Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs)

There are various Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) world-wide that advocate for the needs of people with disabilities. The following are some examples:

<p>Jinan City Handicap Association, China</p>  <p>Jinan City Handicap Association, disabled heart, health</p>	<p>Leshan City Federation, China</p>  <p>Leshan City Federation of the Disabled postcard</p>
<p>Lions Club International India</p>  <p>Lions Club International Distict 323-A-India Special Cover to commemorate 25 years of community service to the disabled</p>	<p>Reader's Digest</p>  <p>Disabled Persons 1925 Fleetwood & Readers Digest</p>
<p>Rotary Club, Pakistan</p>  <p>Rotary Club Polio Health Disabled 2000 Pakistan</p>	

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