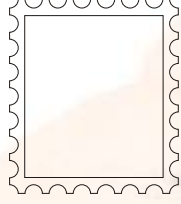


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The New Face for Indian Rupee



Finally, the Indian rupee will get its unique symbol July, 15, Thursday as the Union Cabinet is expected to approve the final design in its meeting.

According to reports, the committee has zeroed in on a Hindi letter 'R' with a double-slash.

With this, the rupee will join the elite league of global currencies like US dollar (\$), British pound sterling (£), euro and Japanese yen (¥) which have their unique symbols.

While these foreign currencies have their own unique symbols, other than their abbreviations like USD and GBP, Rupee is only referred to by the abbreviation 'Rs'.

Moreover, the same abbreviated forms are also used in neighbouring countries like Pakistan, Nepal and Sri Lanka.

The decision to have a symbol for Rupee was taken by the government last year. It was also decided to invite designs from the public for the new symbol.

Government had instituted a seven-member jury, comprising of officials from the government and RBI as also people from institutes like JJ Institute of Applied Art, National Institute of Design, Lalit Kala Akademi and Indira Gandhi National Centre, to decide on the symbol.



D. Udaya Kumar

The new symbol, designed by IIT post-graduate D Uday Kumar was approved by the Union Cabinet today.

Kumar's entry was chosen from among 3,000 designs competing for the currency symbol. He will get an award of ₹2.5 lakhs.

She said the government will try that the symbol is adopted within six months in the country and globally within 18 to 24 months.

Download Rupee Font: Download Rupee Font from <http://blog.foradian.com/rupee-font-version-20> and copy-Paste the Font **Rupee_Foradian** to Control Panel/Fonts. The symbol can be typed under the key ` (above Tab key) and select it as the Rupee_Foradian font.



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Depiction of Punch-marked coins in Early Indian Art: The case of *Litta Jātaka* at Bhārhut - part 2

Litta Jātaka (Pali Jātaka No. 91)

playing the game. Cunningham remarked, 'they are exactly the same as the coins used for paving the Jetavana'. Six of them are piled up near the upper corner-side of the board, and one is placed before the first person to the left. Whether they be taken as dice pieces or square coins, it is difficult to say. But it would be very strange if only one dice is played while other six are placed apart. It is to be noted that the first player on the left side is pointing with the index finger of his right hand to the one square piece before him. He might be drawing attention of his opponent to the winning numbers if the square piece is dice, or putting one of his coins at stake, if the pieces be square coins. But in the latter inference several valid objections can be raised, that, then with what they are dicing, and, that where is the money of the opposite party on the right. Until any certain clue from literature to interpret this scene is found, one cannot say whether they (the party on right) have already lost all the money, or their money is not visible only because the same is hidden behind human figures in the sculpture. The squares with all possibilities may or may not be representations of square punch-marked coins. Regarding this Jātaka Cunningham (1879:34) and Agrawala (1965:170-76) had not left any details of story, but after searching more references I came to know that, this scene belong to the story known as Litta Jātaka. In 1895 Chalmers translated Jātaka stories in six volumes, there is one Jātaka titling 'Litta Jātaka' in first book 'Ekanipāta', which give us idea about the story narrated in above depiction.

This story was told by the Master (Buddha) while at Jetavana, about using things thoughtlessly. The story is known as "Litta Jātaka" and is as follow: "Once on a time when Brahmadatta was reigning in Benares, the Bodhisattva was born into a well-to-do family, and when he grew up, he became a dice-player. With him used to play a sharper, who kept on playing while he was winning, but, when luck turned, broke up the game by putting one of the dice in his mouth and pretending it was lost,--

By Amol N. Bankar

after which he would take himself off. "Very good," said the Bodhisattva when he realized what was being done; "we'll look into this." So he took some dice, anointed them at home with poison, dried them carefully, and then carried them with him to the sharper, whom he challenged to a game. The other was willing, the dice-board was got ready, and play began. No sooner did the sharper begin to lose than he popped one of the dice into his mouth. Observing him in the act, the Bodhisattva remarked, "Swallow away; you will not fail to find out what it really is in a little time." and he uttered this stanza of rebuke: "He bolts the die quite boldly, knowing not what burning poison thereon lurks unseen. Aye, bolt it, sharper! Soon you'll burn within. But while the Bodhisattva was talking away, the poison began to work on the sharper; he grew faint, rolled his eyes, and bending double with pain fell to the ground. "Now," said the Bodhisattva, "I must save the rascal's life." So he mixed some simples and administered an emetic until vomiting ensued. Then he administered a draught of ghee with honey and sugar and other ingredients, and by this means made the fellow all right again. Then he exhorted him not to do such a thing again. After a life spent in charity and other good works, the Bodhisattva passed away to fare thereafter according to his deserts. His lesson ended, the Master said, "Brethren, the thoughtless use of things is like the thoughtless taking of deadly poison. " So saying, he identified the Birth in these words, "I was myself the wise and good gambler of those days." (Varma, Chalmers 1895: 221, Jataka 91). The find depiction of the same story also in some Thai paintings

Discussion regarding depiction of punch-marked coins

After the discovery of famous Jetavana scene at Bhārhut was made, the following the inscription, which is placed immediately below the sculpture, was translated by Childer: 'Jetavana Anatahpindako deti Kotisathatena Keta' - 'Anāthapiṇḍaka presents Jetavana, (having become) its purchaser for a layer of kotis'. This story is also available in

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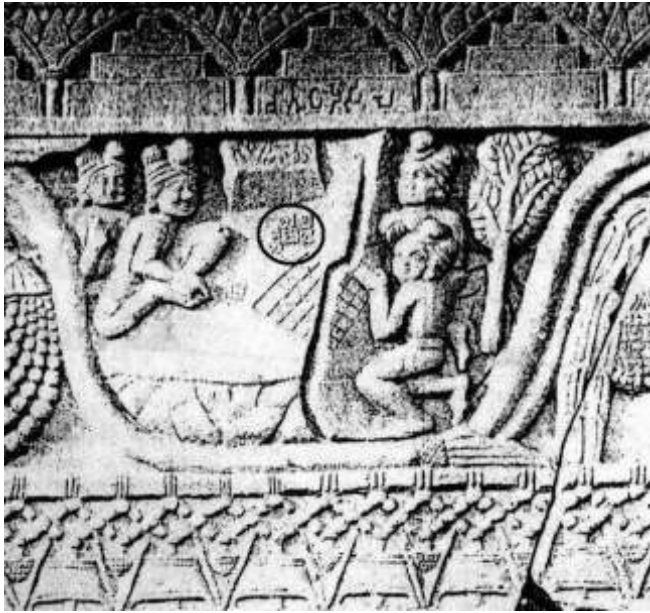


Fig. 5: The story of Litta Jātaka at Bhārhut (After Cunningham)

Buddhaghōṣa's introduction (*Nidāna*) to the Buddhist Jātaka. It describes not only the story of Anāthapiṇḍaka, but the expression a 'layer of Kotis,' which is crucial one in the inscription. The passage from Buddhaghōṣa's introduction is as follows: “*tasmin samaye Anāthpindiko gahapati...Jetavanam Kotisantharena attharasahirannakotihi Kiniva navakammam patthapesi. So majjhe Dasabalassa Gandhakutim karesi.*” (At that time the *gahapati*, having purchased the garden of Jeta for a layer of kotis, for 18 kotis of gold, began to build. In the midst he built Buddha's pavilion.) The Chinese pilgrim Huen-tsang (Cunningham, 1879:86) repeats the same story in a very concise form, adding that Prince Jeta's demand for as much gold as would cover the surface of the garden. Fah-hian also mentions the Jetavana as “the plot of ground which the nobleman Sudatta (which is another name of Anāthapiṇḍaka) bought after covering it with gold coins” (Cunningham, 1879:86).

However the facts that we must remember that, Cunningham had taken references from writings of Buddhaghōṣa and it is already known that this celebrated Buddhist author had lived in 5th century AD (Sircar, 2008:91). The passages, quoted from his famous commentaries on the Buddhist canonical works in Pāli, viz. *Mahāvagga*, *Sāmantapāsādika*, *Visuddhimagga* and *Kanikhavitarani*, give very valuable information about ancient Indian currency that exist in 5th century AD Samatapasādika explains coins of gold as well as coins of silver and copper. Buddhaghōṣa applies the epithet 'Purāna' (*i.e.* old or old-fashioned) to the *Nila Kārśapāna*, while his commentators say that, this coin was what was manufactured with special marks according to the specifications of ancient treaties such as *Rupaśāshtra* mentioned in Buddhaghōṣa's commentary on *Mahāvagga* (Sircar, 2008:98). Hence it is very clear that, the *Nila-Kārśapāna* was no doubt the silver *Kārśapāna* called *Purāna*, which were older and having less denominational value than the gold coins. There is no surprise that Buddhaghōṣa had used the contemporary context of gold coins the story regarding purchase of Jetavana. I had made some interesting calculations, if we assume minimum size of a punch-marked coin as 15 mm x 15mm approximate, 18 crore coins may cover an area of approximately 4,32,180 Sq. feet.



Fig. 6: Comparison of Punch-marked coins depicted in Jetavana scene (left) and Litta Jātaka (right).
(Enlarged parts of figs. 1 & 5, After Cunningham)

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No gold coins of square coins with special marks from the 6th Century BC - 1st Century AD have been discovered. Allan had correctly attributed these square coins with small symbols (depicted in above scene) as punch-marked coins and his opinion is supported by evidence of punch-marked coins excavated in the vicinity. This identification is considered valid by almost all other subsequent researchers. Allan had pointed that, "In the sculpture we see the garden being paved with coins, which is interesting to note are mainly square. Whether the artist knew of square coins in his own time or thought that square coins were in use in Buddha's time is a question which is not important, as square and round punch-marked coins seem at all times to have been issued together, although some mints tend to prefer one shape and some another." But regarding the square shape of coins Cunningham had opined that, the square coins are shown touching one another and those are placed so perfectly that they appear just like the squares of the chess board. According to the story Anāthapiṇḍaka was bound to cover all the land with money and it may represent that his servants were taking care to cover the whole land was so that, the bond between two parties we remain unbroken.

One non-Indian literary source refers to coinage in ancient India. The Roman historian Quintus Curtius stated that Alexander the Great received as tribute 80 talents of 'argenti signati' i.e. marked silver from the king of Taxila 325 BC. Curtius was writing in the first century AD, but it is probable that he was using contemporary sources as his authority. The interpretation of 'argenti signati' as punch-marked silver coins does not conflict with other evidence (Cribb, 2005:86).

The scene from story of Litta Jātaka (Fig. 5), depicts six square pieces (see enlarged photo in Fig. 6) which are portrayed above the dice-board (marked by a circle). The enlarged photograph indicates that, they bear some notable small symbols, and if we compare these symbols available on Punch-marked coins from Jetavana scene at Bhārhut, it undoubtedly certain that, these six square pieces are none other than the punch-marked coins, which were widely accepted in that phase.

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Mr. Umesh Bahri (Jamnagar) receiving the **Reesha Numismatic Trophy** at hands of Mr. Farokh Todywalla on the 19th Shukla Day Coin Fair at Mumbai on 25th April 2010.

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By Ravi Shankar Sharma

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August	20-22	Ahmedabad	Ahmedabad Coins & Currency Fair	Shatrughan Jain, Classical Numismatic Gallery Auctions at Hotel Comfort Inn President, C G Road.
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Coimbatore Coin Exhibition 2010



Mr. Girish J. Veera lighting the traditional lamp at the opening of the Exhibition. Others smiling are the Mayor and the Dy. Mayor of Coimbatore city, Mr. T M Ravichandran and others



Mr. N S Dwarakanth, the President of the Mysore Numismatic Association, receiving the Shield at the hands of Mr. Girish J. Veera. Others are Mr. T M Ravichandran and Mr. A V Jeyachandran

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Editor: Dr. Dilip Rajgor

Correspondents:

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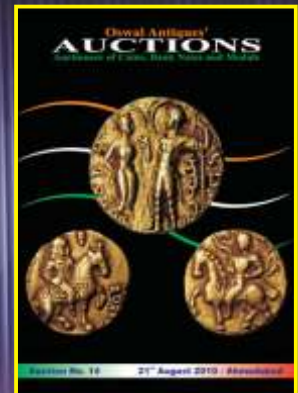
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E-mail: girishvira50@hotmail.com • girishvira50@rediffmail.com • Website: www.indiacoingallery.com