

CHAPTER 520

POST OFFICE

Ordinances AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND AND CONSOLIDATE THE LAW RELATING TO THE POST OFFICE IN SRI LANKA.

- Nos.11 of 1908, 23 of 1909, 24 of 1912, 26 of 1914, 20 of 1917, 14 of 1926, 27 of 1932, 5 of 1933, 30 of 1933, 35 of 1933, 21 of 1934, 12 of 1936, 37 of 1938, 65 of 1938, 6 of 1940, 18 of 1941, 61 of 1946,

- Acts Nos.31 of 1955, 24 of 1957,

- Law No. 6 of 1973.

[1st January. 1909.]

Short title. 1. This Ordinance may be cited as the Post Office Ordinance.

Presumptions as to delivery of postal articles. 2. For the purposes of this Ordinance—

- (a) a postal article shall be deemed to be in course of transmission by post from the time of its being delivered to a post office to the time of its being delivered to the addressee, or of its being returned to the sender or otherwise disposed of under section 37;
(b) the delivery of a postal article of any description to an officer of the post office authorized to receive postal articles of that description for the post shall be deemed to be a delivery to a post office; and
(c) the delivery of a postal article at the house or office of the addressee, or to the addressee or his servant or

agent or other person considered to be authorized to receive the article according to the usual manner of delivering postal articles to the addressee, shall be deemed to be delivery to the addressee.

PRIVILEGE AND PROTECTION OF THE GOVERNMENT

3. (1) Wherever posts or postal Establishment communications are established, the Government shall have the exclusive of post offices. privilege of conveying by post, from one place to another, all letters, except in the following cases, and shall also have the exclusive privilege of performing all the incidental services of receiving, collecting, sending, dispatching, and delivering all letters, except in the following cases, that is to say:—

- (a) any letter entrusted to or carried or delivered by a friend or other

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private agent of the sender or of the receiver, without payment or promise of any fee or reward for the collection or acceptance or the carriage or delivery thereof;

- (b) any letter entrusted to or carried or delivered by a paid agent or messenger who is specially and solely employed for the purposes of the sender or receiver and is not a person generally engaged or open to engagement by members of the public for collecting and delivering letters for fee or reward ;
- (c) any letter which relates solely to a consignment of goods and which is sent and intended to be delivered with such consignment without payment or promise of any fee or reward over and above the fee or reward payable for the carriage and delivery of such consignment;
- (d) any letter containing trade announcements, circulars, printed extracts from newspapers or advertisements, which is not addressed to any person by name and is one of a number of letters distributed to members of the public without reference to any list of names or addresses;
- (e) any letter carried by any person other than an officer of the post office either to a post office or letter box for the purpose of posting or from a post office for delivery to the addressee;
- (f) any letter which is not transmissible by post under any written law for the time being in force.

(2) Nothing contained in subsection (1) shall be deemed to authorize any person to make a collection of letters of the description set out in paragraphs (a), (b) and (c) of that subsection for the purpose of sending or dispatching such letters otherwise than by post.

Monopoly of carriage of letters.

4. Wherever posts or postal communications are established, the following persons are expressly forbidden to collect, carry, tender, or deliver letters or to receive letters for the purpose of carrying or delivering them, although they obtain no

hire, reward, or other profit or advantage for so doing, that is to say:—

- (a) common carriers of passengers or goods and their servants or agents, except as regards letters solely concerning goods in their carts, carriages or other vehicles; and
- (b) owners and masters of vessels sailing or passing on any river or canal in Sri Lanka or between any ports or places in Sri Lanka, owners, pilots or other persons in charge of aircraft flying between any places in Sri Lanka, and the servants or agents of such owners, masters, pilots or other persons, except as regards letters solely concerning goods on board, and except as regards postal articles received for conveyance under section 43.

5. For the purposes of sections 3 and 4, unless the context otherwise requires, " letter " includes a post card, a letter-card, commercial papers and any communication written or printed or otherwise recorded on any material of any description whatsoever.

Definitions for purposes of sections 3 and 4.

6. The Government shall not incur any liability by reason of the loss, misdelivery, or delay of, or damage to, any postal article in course of transmission by post, except in so far as such liability may in express terms be undertaken by the Minister as hereinafter provided ; and no officer of the post office shall incur any liability by reason of any such loss, misdelivery, delay, or damage, unless he has caused the same fraudulently or by his wilful act or default.

Government protected from liability for losses not caused by wilful act or default.

POSTAGE

7. (1) The Minister with the concurrence of the Minister in charge of the subject of Finance may by notification in the Gazette, fix the rates of postage and other sums to be charged in respect of postal articles sent by the inland post under this Ordinance.

Power to fix rates of postage.

(2) Unless and until such notification as aforesaid is issued the rates in force at the date of the passing of this Ordinance shall be the rates chargeable thereunder.

Power to make rules.
[§ 2, Law 6 of 1973.]

8. (1) The Minister may by rule-

- (a) require the prepayment of postage on inland postal articles, or any class of inland postal articles, and prescribe the manner in which prepayment should be made ;
- (b) prescribe the postage to be charged on inland postal articles when the postage is not prepaid or is insufficiently prepaid ;
- (c) provide for the redirection of postal articles and the transmission by post of articles so redirected either free of charge or subject to such further charge as may be specified in the rules;
- (d) provide for the franking of postal articles by officers of the public service and members of Parliament under such limitations as may from time to time be deemed expedient; and
- (e) prescribe the scale of weights, terms and conditions subject to which the rates fixed for postage shall be charged.

(2) Every such rule shall be published in the Gazette and shall have effect from the date of such publication. Every such rule shall, as soon as possible after such publication, be tabled before Parliament. If Parliament, within a period of three months from the date on which such rules are so tabled, disapproves of any such rule, such rule shall cease to be effective with effect from the date of such disapproval but without prejudice to anything done thereunder. In the computation of the said period of three months, any period during which Parliament is not in session shall not be reckoned.

9. (1) The Minister may make rules providing for the registration of newspapers for transmission by inland post as registered newspapers.

Power to make rules for transmission of registered newspapers.

(2) For the purpose of such registration every publication consisting wholly or in great part of political or other news or of articles relating thereto or to other current topics, with or without advertisements, shall be deemed a newspaper, subject to the following conditions, namely :—

- (a) that it is published in numbers at intervals of not more than thirty-one days; and
- (b) that it has a bona fide list of subscribers.

(3) An extra or supplement to a newspaper, bearing the same date as the newspaper and transmitted therewith, shall be deemed to be part of the newspaper:

Provided that no such extra or supplement shall be so deemed unless it consists wholly or in great part of matter like that of the newspaper, and has the title and date of publication of the newspaper printed at the top of each page.

Explanation.—Nothing in this section or in the rules made thereunder shall be construed to render it compulsory to send newspapers by post.

10. (1) The Minister may from time to time authorize the Postmaster-General to make arrangements with the postal authority of any foreign country, for all or any of the following purposes, namely :—

Arrangements with other countries for the transmission of postal articles.

- (a) for the transmission by post of postal articles between Sri Lanka and any foreign country, or through Sri Lanka or any foreign country, to or from any part of the world, as the case may be, and for the payment of the expenses thereof, not exceeding such sums as from time to time are appropriated for the purpose by Parliament;

(b) for the fixing and collection of postage or other dues upon postal articles transmitted as aforesaid ; chargeable on his accepting delivery of the postal article, unless he forthwith returns it unopened:

(c) for the prepayment in full, or otherwise, of the postage due on any such postal articles; Provided that, if any such postal article appears to the satisfaction of the Postmaster-General to have been maliciously sent for the purpose of annoying the addressee he may remit the postage.

(d) for the transmission of registered, insured, and value-payable postal articles, and the rates to be charged therefor; (2) If any postal article on which postage or any other sum chargeable under this Ordinance is due is refused or returned as aforesaid, or if the addressee is dead or cannot be found, then the sender shall be bound to pay the postage or sum due thereon under this Ordinance.

(e) for the interchange of money orders and postal orders, the manner in which and the conditions subject to which such orders may be issued and paid, and the rates of commission to be charged thereon; 12. If any person refuses to pay any postage or other sum due from him under this Ordinance in respect of any postal article, the sum so due may, on application made by an officer of the post office authorized in this behalf by the written order of the Postmaster-General, be recovered for the use of the post office from the person so refusing, as if it were a fine imposed under this Ordinance, by any Magistrate having Jurisdiction where that person may for the time being be resident; and the Postmaster-General may further direct that any other postal article, not being on State service, addressed to that person shall be withheld from him until the sum so due is paid or recovered as aforesaid.

(f) for the division and the mutual accounting for and payment of the money collected under any such arrangement; Enforcement of Payment of postage.

(g) for the granting of compensation for the loss of postal articles or their contents or for any damage caused to them in course of transmission by post, and the conditions and limitations subject to which such compensation may be granted.

(2) The rates and regulations existing under any such arrangement now in force shall continue until altered as herein provided.

(3) Where any arrangement under this section is in force, the Minister may, in conformity with the provisions of such arrangement, determine and adequately notify the terms, conditions and requirements to be observed in respect of any of the purposes specified in subsection (1) of this section.

13. When a postal article on which any duty of customs is payable has been received by post from any place beyond seas, the amount of the duty shall be recoverable as if it were postage due under this Ordinance. 14. In every proceeding for the recovery of any postage or other sum alleged to be due under this Ordinance in respect of a postal article—

Recovery of customs duty by the post office.

Rules of evidence.

Payment of surcharged postage on insufficiently stamped articles.

11. (1) The addressee of a postal article on which postage or any other sum chargeable under this Ordinance is due shall be bound to pay the postage or sum so (a) the production of a postal article having thereon the official mark of the post office denoting that the

article has been refused, or that the addressee is dead or cannot be found, shall be prima facie evidence of the fact so denoted ; and

(b) the person from whom the postal article purports to have come shall, until the contrary is proved, be deemed to be the sender thereof.

Further rules of evidence.

15. The official mark on a postal article denoting that any postage or other sum is due in respect thereof to the post office of Sri Lanka, or to the post office of any foreign country, shall be prima facie evidence that the sum denoted as aforesaid is so due.

POSTAGE STAMPS

Provision of postage stamps and power to make rules as to them.

16. (1) The Minister shall cause postage stamps to be provided of such kinds and denoting such values as he may think necessary for the purposes of this Ordinance and the Minister may, if he thinks fit, cause dies and franking machines for impressing postage stamps to be provided.

(2) The Minister may make rules as to the supply, sale, and use of postage stamps and dies and franking machines for impressing the same.

(3) In particular and without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing power such rules may—

- (a) fix the price at which postage stamps shall be sold and the commission, if any, to be allowed to persons selling them;
- (b) declare the classes of postal articles in respect of which postage stamps shall be used for the payment of postage or other sums chargeable under this Ordinance;
- (c) prescribe the conditions with regard to perforation, defacement, and

all other matters subject to which postage stamps may be accepted or refused in payment of postage or other sums;

- (d) regulate the custody, supply, and sale of postage stamps;
- (e) declare the persons by whom, and the terms and conditions subject to which, postage stamps may be sold; and
- (f) prescribe the duties and remuneration of persons selling postage stamps.

(4) The provisions of the Stamp Ordinance* shall not be applicable to postage stamps.

17. Postage stamps shall be deemed to be stamps issued by Government for the purpose of revenue within the meaning of the Penal Code, and, subject to the other provisions of this Ordinance, shall be used for the prepayment of postage or other sums chargeable under this Ordinance in respect of postal articles, except where the Minister directs that prepayment shall be made in some other way.

Postage stamps protected by Penal Code.

CONDITIONS OF TRANSMISSION AND DELIVERY OF POSTAL ARTICLES

18. (1) The Minister may by rule provide for the redelivery to the sender, without reference to the consent of the addressee and subject to such conditions (if any) as may be deemed fit, of any postal article in course of transmission by post.

Redelivery to sender of postal article in course of transmission by post.

(2) Save as provided by rules made under subsection (1), the sender shall not be entitled to recall a postal article in course of transmission by post.

19. (1) No person shall send by post any article or thing which is likely to injure postal articles in course of transmission by post or any officer of the post office.

Transmission by post of injurious, filthy and noxious articles prohibited.

* See also the Stamp Duty Act, No. 43 of 1982.

(2) Except as otherwise provided by rule, and subject to such conditions as may be prescribed thereby, no person shall send by post any explosive, dangerous, filthy, noxious, or deleterious substance, any sharp instrument, or any living creature.

Transmission by post of anything indecent, &c., prohibited.

20. No person shall send by post—

(a) any indecent or obscene printing, painting, photograph, lithograph, engraving, book, or card, or any other indecent or obscene article; or

(b) any circular or advertisement representing or suggesting that any publication or article therein advertised is of an indecent or obscene nature; or

(c) any postal article having thereon or on the cover thereof any words, marks, or designs of an indecent, obscene, seditious, scurrilous, threatening, or grossly offensive character; or

* (d) any proposal, circular, or ticket relating to any lottery promoted or conducted in Sri Lanka otherwise than under a lottery licence issued under the Lotteries Ordinance or to any lottery promoted or conducted outside Sri Lanka; or

(e) any circular or advertisement regarding drugs or medicines purporting to be remedies for diseases of the sexual organs or sexual stimulants; or

(f) any substance which may, by notification under the Excise Ordinance, be declared to be deemed to be cocaine, and any preparation or admixture of the same:

Provided that the Minister may, by notification in the Gazette, exempt any medicinal preparation containing cocaine from the provisions of this paragraph;

Provided further that the provisions of this section shall not apply when cocaine is sent—

(i) to a person licensed to possess or deal in cocaine, or

(ii) on the prescription of a registered and qualified medical practitioner or a qualified veterinary surgeon.

21. (1) The Minister may make rules as to the transmission by post and the delivery of postal articles.

Power to make rules as to transmission by post and delivery of postal articles.

(2) In particular and without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing power such rules may—

(a) specify articles which may not be transmitted by post;

(b) prescribe conditions on which articles may be transmitted by post;

(c) provide for the detention and disposal of articles in course of transmission by post in contravention of rules made under paragraph (a) or paragraph (b);

(d) provide for the granting of receipts for, and the granting and obtaining certificates of, posting and delivery of postal articles and the sums to be paid in addition to any other postage for such receipts and certificates;

(e) regulate covers, form, dimensions, maximum weight, and enclosures, and the use of postal articles other than letters for making communications; and

(f) prescribe the fees to be charged for locked bags, locked boxes, and postal or tappal books, and the additional postage (if any) to be paid on articles posted in contravention of the provisions of this Ordinance.

* See also section 5 (2) of the Control of Publications on Horse-racing Act.

(3) Postal articles shall be posted and delivered at such times and in such manner as the Postmaster-General may, by order, from time to time appoint.

22. (1) Where the dispatch or delivery from a post office of letters would be delayed by the dispatch or delivery therefrom at the same time of other postal articles, such postal articles or any of them may, subject to such rules as the Postmaster-General may make in this behalf, be detained so long as may be necessary.

(2) Where separate parcel posts are established, parcels may be forwarded and conveyed by them, being detained, if necessary, for that purpose.

23. (1) Any postal article sent by post in contravention of any of the provisions of this Ordinance may be detained and either returned to the sender or forwarded to destination, in each case charged with such additional postage (if any) as the Minister may by rule direct.

(2) Any officer of the post office in charge of a post office or authorized by the Postmaster-General in this behalf may open or unfasten any postal article other than a closed letter or parcel which he suspects to have been sent by post in contravention of any of the provisions of this Ordinance.

(3) Notwithstanding anything in subsection (1)—

(a) any postal article sent by post which is suspected to contravene the provisions of section 19 may, under the authority of the Postmaster-General, be detained and opened and if necessary destroyed ;

(b) whenever the Postmaster-General has reason to suspect that any postal article other than a closed letter contains anything in contravention of the provisions of

section 20, he may cause such postal article to be detained and opened, and if it is found to contain any such matter he shall cause it to be destroyed.

24. (1) Every postal article received from beyond seas shall be liable to examination for the purpose of enforcing the provisions of the Customs Ordinance.

(2) Any such postal article, except a letter not bearing a label authorizing the customs to open it, may be opened at any post office by an officer of the post office nominated by the Postmaster-General in the presence of an officer of the customs nominated by the Principal Collector of Customs.

(3) If the value and description of the contents of the postal article is found to have been truly declared, they shall be repacked by the officer of the post office in the presence of the officer of the customs, and shall be forwarded to their destination in a suitable cover secured with a seal or seals bearing the inscription “ ශ්‍රී ලංකා රේගුව විසින් විවෘත කරන ලදී ”.

(4) If the value of the contents is, in the opinion of the officer of the customs, undervalued, or the description of contents incorrect, or if the contents or articles are totally or conditionally prohibited from being imported under the Customs Ordinance, or any enactment amending the same, or under any other enactment, the postal article with its contents shall be delivered to the Principal Collector of Customs to be dealt with as provided by the Customs Ordinance.

(5) If any letter received from beyond seas not bearing a label authorizing the customs to open it is suspected to contain dutiable articles, or articles totally or conditionally prohibited from being imported as mentioned in the preceding

Examination of postal articles received from beyond seas for the purpose of customs duties.

Delivery of letters to take precedence over delivery of other postal articles.

Power to deal with articles posted in contravention of this Ordinance.

subsection, it shall be delivered to the Principal Collector of Customs to be dealt with under the Customs Ordinance, and the Postmaster-General shall cause notice in writing to be forthwith sent to the addressee advising him of the arrival of the letter and of its transmission to the Principal Collector of Customs, and requesting him to clear it personally or by agent, or to authorize the Principal Collector of Customs in writing to open the letter and assess the contents for duty.

(6) The procedure hereinbefore prescribed shall be carried out without any avoidable delay, but no person shall have any right to compensation or otherwise, nor shall any liability be imposed on the Government or on the Postmaster-General by reason of the opening or detention of any postal article dealt with under the provisions of this section.

In public emergencies the Minister may direct the interception of any postal article.

25. (1) On the occurrence of any public emergency, or in the interest of the public safety or tranquillity, the Minister with the concurrence of the Minister to whom the administration of the Police Department is assigned, may by order in writing direct that any postal article or class or description of postal articles in course of transmission by post shall be intercepted or detained, or shall be delivered to the Government or to an officer thereof mentioned in the order, to be disposed of in such manner as the Minister may direct.

(2) If any doubt arises as to the existence of a public emergency, or as to whether any act done under subsection (1) was in the interest of the public safety or tranquillity, a certificate signed by the Inspector-General of Police shall be conclusive proof on the point.

Use of fictitious and previously used stamps prohibited.

26. (1) Where a postal article is received by post at any post office—

- (a) bearing a fictitious postage stamp, that is to say, any facsimile or imitation or representation of a postage stamp; or

- (b) purporting to be prepaid with any postage stamp which has been previously used to prepay any other postal article,

the officer in charge of such post office shall send a notice to the addressee inviting him to attend, either in person or by agent, within a specified time, at the post office to receive delivery of the postal article.

(2) If the addressee or his agent attends at the post office within the time specified in the notice and consents to make known to the officer in charge of the post office the name and address of the sender of the postal article and to redeliver to the officer aforesaid the portion of the postal article which bears the address and the fictitious or previously used postage stamp, or the entire postal article if it is inseparable from the stamp, then the postal article shall be delivered to the addressee or his agent.

(3) If the addressee or his agent fails to attend at the post office within the time specified in the notice, or, having attended within that time, refuses to make known the name and address of the sender or to redeliver the postal article or portion thereof as required by subsection (2), the postal article shall not be delivered to him, but shall be disposed of in such manner as the Minister may direct.

(4) For the purposes of this section the expression "postage stamp" includes any postage stamp for denoting any rate or duty of postage of any foreign country.

REGISTRATION, INSURANCE AND
VALUE-PAYABLE POST

27. The sender of a postal article may, subject to the other provisions of this Ordinance, have such article registered at the post office at which it is posted, and require a receipt therefor; and the Minister with the concurrence of the Minister in charge of the subject of Finance may, by notification in the Gazette, direct that, in

Registration of postal articles.

addition to any postage chargeable under this Ordinance, such further fee as may be fixed by the notification shall be paid on account of the registration of postal articles.

Power to make rules as to registration.

28. (1) The Minister may make rules as to the registration of postal articles.

(2) In particular and without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing power such rules may—

- (a) declare in what cases registration shall be required;
- (b) prescribe the manner in which the fees for registration shall be paid; and
- (c) direct that twice the fee for registration shall be levied on the delivery of a postal article required to be registered on which the fee for registration has not been prepaid.

(3) Postal articles made over to the post office for the purpose of being registered shall be delivered, when registered, at such times and in such manner as the Postmaster-General may by order from time to time appoint.

Insurance of postal articles.

29. The Minister with the concurrence of the Minister in charge of the subject of Finance may, by notification in the Gazette, direct—

- (a) that any postal article may, subject to the other provisions of this Ordinance, be insured at the post office at which it is posted against the risk of loss or damage in course of transmission by post, and that a receipt therefor shall be granted to the person posting it; and
- (b) that, in addition to any postage and fees for registration chargeable under this Ordinance, such further fee as may be fixed by the notification shall be paid on account of the insurance of postal articles.

30. The Minister with the concurrence of the Minister in charge of the subject of Finance may, by notification in the Gazette, declare in what cases insurance shall be required, and direct that any postal article containing anything required to be insured, which has been posted without being insured, shall be returned to the sender or shall be delivered to the addressee, subject to the payment of such special fee as may be fixed by the notification:

Insurance when to be compulsory.

Provided that the levy of such special fee as aforesaid shall not impose any liability upon the Government in respect of the postal article.

31. (1) The Minister with the concurrence of the Minister in charge of the subject of Finance may make rules as to the insurance of postal articles.

Power to make rules as to insurance.

(2) In particular and without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing power such rules may—

- (a) declare what classes of postal articles may be insured under section 29;
- (b) fix the limit of the amount for which postal articles may be insured ; and
- (c) prescribe the manner in which the fees for insurance shall be paid.

(3) Postal articles made over to the post office for the purpose of being insured shall be delivered, when insured, at such places and times and in such manner as the Postmaster-General may by order from time to time appoint.

32. Subject to such conditions and restrictions as may be by rule prescribed, the Government shall be liable to pay compensation, not exceeding the amount for which a postal article has been insured, to the sender thereof for the loss of the postal article or its contents, or for any

Government to be liable for the amount insured.

damage caused to it in course of transmission by post:

Provided that the compensation so payable shall in no case exceed the value of the article lost or the amount of the damage caused.

Compensation may be paid on uninsured articles.

33. The Minister with the concurrence of the Minister in charge of the subject of Finance may, by notification in the Gazette, permit of the payment of compensation for loss or damage to uninsured registered postal articles, and may prescribe the conditions under which such compensation may be paid, and the limit of the amount of such compensation.

Combined rates for postage, registration, and insurance.

34. The Minister with the concurrence of the Minister in charge of the subject of Finance may, by notification in the Gazette, prescribe combined rates for postage, registration and insurance.

Value-payable postal articles.

35. The Minister with the concurrence of the Minister in charge of the subject of Finance may, by notification in the Gazette, direct that, subject to the other provisions of this Ordinance and to the payment of fees at such rates as may be fixed by the notification, a sum of money specified in writing at the time of posting by the sender of a postal article shall be recoverable on the delivery thereof from the addressee, and that the sum so recovered shall be paid to the sender:

Provided that the Government shall not incur any liability in respect of the sum specified for recovery, unless and until that sum has been received from the addressee.

Explanation.—Postal articles sent in accordance with the provisions of this section may be described as ** value-payable " postal articles.

Power to make rules as to value-payable postal articles.

36. (1) The Minister with the concurrence of the Minister in charge of the subject of Finance may make rules as to the transmission by post of value-payable postal articles.

(2) In particular and without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing power such rules may—

- (a) declare what classes of postal articles may be sent as value-payable postal articles:
- (b) limit the value to be recovered on the delivery of any value-payable postal article; and
- (c) prescribe the form of declaration to be made by the senders of value-payable postal articles and the time and manner of the payment of fees.

(3) Postal articles made over to the post office for the purpose of being sent as " value-payable " shall be delivered, when so sent, at such times and in such manner as the Postmaster-General may by order from time to time appoint.

UNDELIVERED POSTAL ARTICLES

37. (1) The Minister may make rules as to the disposal of postal articles which for any reason cannot be delivered (hereinafter referred to as " undelivered postal articles "). Power to make rules as to postal articles which cannot be delivered.

(2) In particular and without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing power such rules may—

- (a) prescribe the period during which undelivered postal articles at a post office shall remain in that office;
- (b) provide for the publication of lists of undelivered postal articles, or of any class of undelivered postal articles;
- (c) provide for the manner in which undelivered postal articles shall be finally dealt with or disposed of.

Postal article addressed to any person at any bank, shipping office, &c., deemed to be under control of Postmaster-General until delivered to addressee.

38. Every postal article addressed to any person at any bank, or at any premises licensed under the Excise Ordinance, or at any shipping office or public or private lodging-house, and delivered to or received by the manager of such bank, or the licensee of such premises, or the person apparently in charge of such office or lodging-house, or anyone acting as agent or servant of such manager, licensee or person, shall be deemed to be under the control of the Postmaster-General until delivered to the person to whom the same is addressed.

the port or place of arrival, and which is within the exclusive privilege conferred by section 3, the master of such ship or the pilot or other person in charge of such aircraft shall without delay report the fact to the officer in charge of the post office of the port or place of arrival, as the case may be, and shall act according to any directions issued by that officer; and the receipt of that officer shall discharge such master, pilot or other person from any further responsibility in respect of the postal article or mail bag referred to in the receipt.

Postal articles addressed to any person at any bank, &c., if not delivered to addressee to be returned to nearest post office.

39. (1) If the postal article is not so delivered within two months after the receipt thereof by or on behalf of such manager, licensee or other person as aforesaid, and if instructions to the contrary have not been received from the addressee, the manager, licensee, or other person as aforesaid shall return the postal article to the nearest post office, with his reasons for doing so.

41. It shall be lawful for any officer of customs at any port or place in Sri Lanka, who in the due execution of his duty as a revenue officer shall discover on board any vessel or aircraft in any port or place whatever any mail bags or postal articles in respect of which any of the provisions of this Ordinance have been infringed, to seize and forward the same to the nearest post office with a report of the circumstances of such seizure.

Customs officer may seize mail bags in respect of which the law has been infringed.

(2) Every such postal article shall on return to the nearest post office be dealt with as provided by rules made under section 37.

42. The master or agent of every vessel which is about to proceed from the port of Colombo to any port beyond seas—

Master of vessel to give notice of his intended departure.

POSTAL ARTICLES ON SHIPS AND AIRCRAFT

Postal articles on ships or aircraft.

40. (1) The master of every ship arriving at any port in Sri Lanka and the pilot or other person in charge of every aircraft arriving at any place in Sri Lanka shall without delay cause every postal article or mail bag on board such ship or aircraft, as the case may be, which is directed to that port or place and is within the exclusive privilege conferred on the Government by section 3, to be delivered either at the post office of that port or place, or to some officer of the post office authorized in this behalf by the Postmaster-General.

(a) shall give at the General Post Office at least twenty-four hours' previous notice in writing of the intended departure of such vessel; and

(b) shall give timely written notice at the General Post Office of any alteration in the time of such departure.

(2) If there is on board any ship or aircraft, referred to in subsection (1), any postal article or mail bag which is directed to any place within Sri Lanka, other than

43. The master of a ship, not being a mail ship, about to depart from any port in Sri Lanka to any port within or any port or place beyond Sri Lanka shall receive on board any mail bag tendered to him by any officer of the post office for conveyance, granting a receipt therefor in such form as the Postmaster-General shall prescribe, and shall without delay deliver the same at the port or place of destination.

Master of ship bound to receive and convey mail bag tendered to him by officer of post office.

Gratuities to be given for the conveyance of mails.

44. The Minister with the concurrence of the Minister in charge of the subject of Finance may, by notification published in the Gazette, declare what gratuities shall be allowed to masters of ships, not being mail ships, or to pilots or other persons in charge of aircraft, not being aircraft under contract with Government for the carriage of mails, in respect of postal articles received by such masters, pilots or other persons for conveyance on behalf of the post office ; and the master of any such ship, or the pilot or other person in charge of any such aircraft, which is about to leave any port or place in Sri Lanka, who receives on board his ship or aircraft a mail bag for conveyance, shall be entitled to demand and obtain immediately the amount of the gratuity payable in respect of the mail bag and its contents.

MONEY AND POSTAL ORDERS

Issue and payment of money orders.

45. (1) The Minister may provide for the remitting of money through the post office by means of money orders, and may make rules as to the issue and payment of such money orders:

Provided that no rule under this section or under section 47 prescribing the rates of commission or the fees to be charged on money orders shall be made except with the concurrence of the Minister in charge of the subject of Finance.

(2) In particular and without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing power such rules may—

- (a) prescribe the limit of amount for which money orders may be issued ;
- (b) prescribe the period during which money orders shall remain current;
- (c) prescribe the rates of commission or the fees to be charged on money orders or in respect thereof;

(d) prohibit the issue and payment of money and postal orders in connexion with lotteries whether promoted in Sri Lanka or elsewhere;

(f) prescribe the procedure for the recovery of money overpaid or erroneously paid to a banker in respect of any money order and provide for the deduction from any money payable to a banker in respect of any money order of any money paid to that banker in excess of what ought to have been paid to him in respect of any other money order.

46. (1) Subject to such conditions as the Minister, with the concurrence of the Minister in charge of the subject of Finance as regards rates of commission, may by rules made under section 45 prescribe in respect of the levy of additional rates of commission or fees or any other matters, a person remitting money through the post office by means of a money order may require that the amount of the order, if not paid to the payee, be repaid to him, or be paid to such person other than the original payee as he may direct.

Power for remitter to recall money order or alter name of payee.

(2) If neither the payee nor the remitter of a money order can be found, and if within the period of one year from the date of the issue of the order no claim is made by such payee or remitter, the amount of such order shall not be claimable from the Government.

47. The Minister, with the concurrence of the Minister in charge of the subject of Finance as regards rates of commission, may authorize the issue, in such form as may be suitable, of money orders, to be called postal orders or by such other designation as may be deemed appropriate, and may make rules as to the rates of commission to be charged thereon, and the manner in which and conditions subject to which they may be issued, paid, and cancelled:

Issue of postal orders.

Provided that no such order shall be issued for an amount in excess of twenty rupees.

Moneys paid in error may be recovered.

48. (1) If any person, without reasonable excuse, the burden of proving which shall lie on him, neglects or refuses to refund—

(a) any amount paid to him in respect of a money or postal order by an officer of the post office in excess of what ought to have been paid to him in respect thereof ; or

(b) the amount of a money or postal order paid by an officer of the post office to him instead of to some other person to whom it ought to have been paid,

such amount may on application made by an officer of the post office, authorized in this behalf by the written order of the Postmaster-General, be recovered for the use of the post office from the person so refusing (as if it were a fine imposed under this Ordinance) by any Magistrate having jurisdiction where that person may for the time being be resident ; and such amount may be so recovered notwithstanding it may exceed the amount of fine which a Magistrate may in his ordinary jurisdiction impose.

(2) Where an application is made under subsection (1) for the recovery of any amount from any person who has neglected or refused to refund that amount, it shall be lawful for the Magistrate to order such person to pay, in addition to the amount specified in the application, a sum not exceeding twenty-five rupees as the costs of and incidental to such application ; and any sum so awarded as costs shall be recovered for the use of the post office as if it were a fine imposed under this Ordinance.

Matters in respect of which no suit lies against the Government or any officer of the post office.

49. No suit or other legal proceeding shall be instituted against the Government or any officer of the post office in respect of—

(a) anything done under any rule made under the provisions of sections 45 and 47 ;

(b) the wrong payment of a money or postal order ;

(c) any loss or injury occasioned by delay in payment of a money or postal order ;

(d) any other irregularity in connexion with a money or postal order.

50. A money order or postal order shall be deemed to be a document and a valuable security within the meaning of the Penal Code.

Money and postal orders to be deemed valuable securities for the purposes of the Penal Code.

51. No animal, and no motor car, carriage, jinricksha, bicycle, tricycle, or other vehicle used for the purposes of the post office being the property of the Government shall be subject, or shall be deemed at any time to have been subject to any tax or to any provision as to licence under any other enactment.

Vehicles used for the purposes of the post office immune from taxation.

51A. (1) Any prescribed officer of the post office may in the prescribed manner inscribe or cause to be inscribed on any mail bag the words “ ශ්‍රී ලංකා තැපැල් කාර්යාලය ” and the equivalent of those words in the Tamil language. Such words are, and such equivalent is, hereafter in this Ordinance referred to as the “ official inscription ”.

Official inscription on mail bags. [§ 2, 24 of 1957.]

(2) The Postmaster-General may make rules prescribing—

(a) the officers of the post office who may make or cause to be made the official inscription on mail bags, and

(b) the manner of making such inscription.

Every rule made under this subsection shall be published in the Gazette and shall take effect upon such publication.

(3) In this section, “ prescribed ” means prescribed by rule made under subsection (2).

PENALTIES AND PROCEDURE;
OFFENCES BY OFFICERS OF THE
POST OFFICE

Offences by persons employed to carry or deliver any mail bag or postal article.

52. Whoever, being employed to carry or deliver any mail bag or any postal article in course of transmission by post—

- (a) is in a state of intoxication while so employed; or
- (b) is guilty of carelessness or other misconduct, whereby the safety of any such mail bag or postal article as aforesaid is endangered ; or
- (c) loiters or makes delay in the conveyance or delivery of any such mail bag or postal article as aforesaid ; or
- (d) does not use due care and diligence safely to convey or deliver any such mail bag or postal article as aforesaid,

shall be punishable with fine which may extend to fifty rupees, and in default of payment with imprisonment of either description not exceeding three months.

Person employed to carry or deliver any mail bag or postal article prohibited from withdrawing from duties without notice.

53. Whoever, being employed to carry or deliver any mail bag or any postal article in course of transmission by post, voluntarily withdraws from the duties of his office without permission or without having given one month's previous notice in writing, shall be punishable with imprisonment of either description which may extend to one month, or with fine which may extend to fifty rupees, or with both.

Punishment of person employed to carry or deliver any postal article for making false entry.

54. Whoever, being employed to carry or deliver any postal article in course of transmission by post and required while so employed to keep any register, makes or causes or suffers to be made any false entry in the register with intent to induce the belief that he has visited a place, or

delivered a postal article, which he has not visited or delivered, shall be punishable with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to six months, or with fine which may extend to one hundred rupees, or with both.

55. Whoever, being an officer of the post office, commits theft in respect of; or dishonestly misappropriates, or for any purpose whatsoever secretes, destroys, or throws away, any postal article in course of transmission by post or anything contained therein, shall be punishable with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to seven years, and shall also be punishable with fine.

Theft by officer of the post office.

56. Whoever, being an officer of the post office, contrary to his duty, opens or causes or suffers to be opened any postal article in course of transmission by post, or wilfully detains or delays, or causes or suffers to be detained or delayed, any such postal article, shall be punishable with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to two years, or with fine, or with both :

Unlawful opening and detention of postal articles by officer of the post office.

Provided that nothing in this section shall extend to the opening, detaining, or delaying of any postal article under the authority of this Ordinance, or in obedience to the order in writing of the Minister, or the direction of a competent court.

57. Whoever, being an officer of the post office—

Offences in respect of official marks.

- (a) fraudulently puts any wrong official mark on a postal article ; or
- (b) fraudulently alters, removes, or causes to disappear any official mark which is on a postal article; or
- (c) being entrusted with the delivery of any postal article, knowingly demands or receives any sum of

money in respect of the postage thereof which is not chargeable under this Ordinance,

shall be punishable with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to two years, and shall also be punishable with fine.

Fraudulently altering or destroying a document.

58. Whoever, being an officer of the post office, entrusted with the preparing or keeping of any document, fraudulently prepares the document incorrectly, or alters or secretes or destroys the document, shall be punishable with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to two years, and shall also be punishable with fine.

Reissuing a postal order previously paid.

59. Whoever, being an officer of the post office, reissues a postal order previously paid shall be deemed to have issued such order with intent to defraud, and shall be punishable with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to two years, or with fine, or with both.

Defrauding Government of postage.

60. Whoever, being an officer of the post office, sends by post or puts into any mail bag any postal article upon which postage has not been paid or charged in the manner prescribed by this Ordinance, intending thereby to defraud the Government of the postage on such postal article, shall be punishable with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to two years, and shall also be punishable with fine.

OTHER OFFENCES

Other offences.

61. Whoever—

- (a) conveys, otherwise than by post, a letter within the exclusive privilege conferred on the Government by section 3; or
- (b) performs any service incidental to conveying otherwise than by post

any letter within the exclusive privilege aforesaid; or

- (c) sends or tenders or delivers in order to be sent, otherwise than by post, a letter within the exclusive privilege aforesaid ; or

- (d) makes a collection of such letters as are referred to in paragraphs (a), (b) and (c) of subsection (1) of section 3 for the purpose of sending them otherwise than by post,

shall be punishable with fine which may extend to fifty rupees for every such letter, and in default of payment with imprisonment of either description not exceeding three months.

62. Whoever, having already been convicted of an offence under section 61, is again convicted thereunder, shall, on every such subsequent conviction, be punishable with fine which may extend to five hundred rupees, and in default of payment with imprisonment of either description not exceeding six months.

Enhanced punishment on person previously convicted.

63. (1) Whoever, in contravention of the provisions of section 4, carries, receives, tenders, or delivers letters, or collects letters, shall be punishable with fine which may extend to fifty rupees for every such letter, and in default of payment with imprisonment of either description which may extend to three months.

Carrying, &c., letters in contravention of section 4 an offence.

(2) Whoever, having already been convicted of an offence under this section, is again convicted thereunder shall, on every such subsequent conviction, be punishable with fine which may extend to five hundred rupees, and in default of payment with imprisonment of either description which may extend to six months.

64. Whoever being appointed to sell postage stamps—

- (a) takes from any purchaser for any postage stamp or quantity of

Offences by vendors of postage stamps.

postage stamps a price higher than that fixed by any rule made under section 16 (3) (a) shall be punishable with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to six months, or with fine which may extend to one hundred rupees, or with both; or

- (b) commits a breach of any other rule made under section 16 shall be punishable with fine which may extend to one hundred rupees, and in default of payment with imprisonment of either description which may extend to six months,

Punishment for offences in contravention of sections 19 and 20.

65. (1) Whoever, in contravention of the provisions of section 19 or section 20, sends or tenders or makes over in order to be sent by post any postal article or anything, shall be punishable with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to one year, or with fine, or with both.

(2) The detention in the post office of any postal article on the ground of its having been sent in contravention of the provisions of section 19 or section 20 shall not exempt the sender from any proceedings which might have been taken if the postal article had been delivered in due course of post:

Provided that no prosecution for a contravention of section 20 (c) shall be instituted without the previous sanction of the Attorney-General.

Offences relating to letter-boxes.

66. Whoever places in or against any letter-box provided by the post office for the reception of postal articles any fire, match, or light, any explosive, dangerous, filthy, noxious, or deleterious substance, or any fluid, or commits a nuisance in or against any such letter-box, or does anything likely to injure any such letter-box or its appurtenances or contents, shall be punishable with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to one year, or with fine, or with both.

67. Whoever, without due authority, affixes any placard, advertisement, notice, list, document, board, or other thing in or on, or paints, tars, or in any way disfigures any post office or any letter-box provided by the post office for the reception of postal articles, shall be punishable with fine which may extend to fifty rupees, and in default of payment with imprisonment of either description which may extend to three months.

Punishment for disfiguring a post office or letter-box.

68. Whoever, being required by this Ordinance to make a declaration in respect of any postal article to be sent by post or the contents or value thereof, makes in his declaration any statement which he knows or has reason to believe to be false, or does not believe to be true, shall be punishable with fine which may extend to two hundred rupees, and in default of payment with imprisonment of either description which may extend to three months, and if the false declaration is made for the purpose of defrauding the Government, with fine which may extend to five hundred rupees, and in default of payment with imprisonment of either description which may extend to six months.

Punishment for making false declarations.

Whoever—

being the master of a ship, fails to comply with the provisions of section 43; or

Offences by masters of ships and pilots, &c., in charge of aircraft.

- (b) being the master of a ship, or the pilot or other person in charge of an aircraft, without reasonable excuse, the burden of proving which shall lie on him, fails to deliver any postal article or mail bag or to make a report to, or to comply with the directions of, the officer in charge of the post office at a port or place of arrival as required by section 40,

shall be punishable with a fine which may extend to five hundred rupees.

Punishment of master for retaining postal articles.

70. (1) Whoever, being the master of any ship arriving at any port in Sri Lanka, or the pilot or other person in charge of any aircraft arriving at any place in Sri Lanka, or being a person on board any such ship or aircraft, knowingly has in his baggage or in his possession or custody, after all or any of the postal articles on board such ship or aircraft have been sent to the post office at the port or place of arrival, any postal article which is within the exclusive privilege conferred on the Government by section 3, shall be punishable with a fine which may extend to fifty rupees for every such postal article as aforesaid.

(2) Whoever, being such master, pilot or other person as aforesaid, detains any such postal article as aforesaid after demand made for it by an officer of the post office, shall be punishable with fine which may extend to one hundred rupees for every such postal article.

Punishment for wrongful detention of mails.

71. Whoever, except under the authority of this Ordinance or in obedience to the order in writing of the Minister or the direction of a competent court, detains any postal article in course of transmission by post or any officer of the post office or vehicle carrying mail bags or postal articles, or on any pretence opens a mail bag in course of transmission by post, shall be punishable with fine which may extend to two hundred rupees, and in default of payment with imprisonment of either description which may extend to three months:

Provided that nothing in this section shall prevent the detention of an officer of the post office carrying any mail bag or any postal article in course of transmission by post on a charge of having committed an offence declared to be cognizable by the Code of Criminal Procedure Act, or any other law for the time being in force ;

Provided, further, that any mail bag may be detained or opened under the written authority of the Postmaster-General.

Punishment for fraudulent retention of or refusal to deliver postal articles.

72. Whoever fraudulently retains, or wilfully secretes or makes away with, or keeps or detains, or when required by an officer of the post office neglects or refuses to deliver up, any postal article in course of

transmission by post which ought to have been delivered to any other person, or a mail bag containing a postal article, shall be punishable with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to two years, and shall also be punishable with fine.

73. Any licensee or other person referred to in section 38 who omits or fails to return any postal article as required by section 39 shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding fifty rupees, and in default of payment to imprisonment of either description which may extend to three months.

Offences by licensees, banks, &c.

74. Whoever, not being an officer of the post office, wilfully and maliciously, with intent to injure any person, either opens or causes to be opened any letter which ought to have been delivered, or does any act whereby the due delivery of a letter to any person is prevented or impeded, shall be punishable with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to six months, or with fine which may extend to five hundred rupees, or with both :

Punishment for unlawfully opening letters.

Provided that nothing in this section shall apply to a person who does any act to which the section applies, if he is a parent, or in the position of a parent or guardian, of the addressee, and the addressee is a minor or a ward.

75. Whoever reveals, discloses, or in any way makes known the contents of any postal article opened under the authority of this Ordinance, except so far as may be necessary for the purpose of returning the same or so far as may be authorized by the Postmaster-General in writing, shall be liable to a fine not exceeding two hundred rupees, or to imprisonment of either description not exceeding twelve months, or to both.

Punishment for unlawfully disclosing contents of a postal article.

76. (1) It shall not be lawful for any person to—

Manufacture and unlawful possession of fictitious postage stamps.

- (a) make, knowingly utter, deal in, or sell any fictitious stamp, or knowingly use for any purpose any fictitious stamp; or

- (h) have in his possession, unless he shows a lawful excuse, any fictitious stamp; or
- (c) make, or, unless he shows a lawful excuse, have in his possession any die, plate, instrument, or materials for making any fictitious stamp.

(2) Any person who acts in contravention of the preceding subsection shall be guilty of an offence, and liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding two hundred rupees, or to simple or rigorous imprisonment for a term not exceeding two years, or to both.

(3) Any stamp, die, plate, instrument, or materials found in the possession of any person in contravention of this section may be seized and shall be forfeited to the State.

(4) The Postmaster-General or any postmaster may detain (if necessary) any postal packet found in the post containing or bearing any fictitious stamp. Any postal packet so detained may be either returned or given up to the sender thereof, or dealt with or disposed of in such other manner as may be authorized by the Postmaster-General.

(5) Nothing in this section shall affect the enactments contained in sections 248 to 256 of the Penal Code.

(6) For the purposes of this section "fictitious stamp" means any facsimile or imitation or representation, whether on paper or otherwise, of any stamp for denoting any rate of postage, including any stamp for denoting a rate or duty of postage of any foreign country, and includes any such facsimile or imitation or representation of an international reply coupon.

Punishment for making without lawful authority the official inscription on any mail bag. [§ 3, 24 of 1957.]

76A. Whoever without lawful authority (the proof of which authority shall be on the accused) makes the official inscription on any mail bag shall be punishable with imprisonment of either description for a term not exceeding six months, or with a fine not exceeding one thousand rupees, or with both such imprisonment and fine.

76B. Whoever, with intent to conceal that any mail bag is the property of the post office, alters, defaces, obliterates or causes to disappear the official inscription on that mail bag shall be punishable with imprisonment of either description for a term not exceeding six months or with a fine not exceeding one thousand rupees, or with both such imprisonment and fine.

Punishment for alteration, defacement or obliteration of, or causing to disappear, the official inscription on any mail bag. [§ 3, 24 of 1957.]

76C. (1) Whoever without lawful excuse (the proof of which excuse shall be on the accused) receives, possesses, keeps, sells or delivers any mail bag bearing the official inscription shall be punishable with imprisonment of either description for a term not exceeding six months, or with a fine not exceeding one thousand rupees, or with both such imprisonment and fine.

Punishment for receiving, possessing, keeping, selling or delivering, without lawful excuse, any mail bag bearing official inscription. [§ 3, 24 of 1957.]

(2) For the purposes of subsection (1), a mail bag shall be deemed to be in the possession or keeping of any person if he knowingly has it in the actual possession or keeping of any other person or in any building or place whether occupied by him or not, and whether it is so had for his own use or benefit or for the use or benefit of another.

77. Whenever any person shall be guilty of an offence under this Ordinance, the punishment of which is a fine not exceeding two hundred rupees, it shall be lawful for the Postmaster-General to accept payment on behalf of the State from such offender of such sum of money as may to the Postmaster-General seem fit, not exceeding the highest amount of fine to which such offender would have been liable on conviction, and no person having made such payment shall be thereafter prosecuted for the same offence.

Power of Postmaster-General to compound certain offences.

78. It shall be lawful for any court before which an offender is convicted under this Ordinance to direct that any share, not exceeding one-half, of any fine actually recovered shall be paid to the informer.

Reward to informer.

79. Whoever abets the commission of any offence punishable under this Ordinance, or attempts to commit any offence so punishable, shall be punishable with the punishment provided for that offence.

Punishment of abetment of offences.

Description of postal articles in criminal charges.

80. In every prosecution for an offence in respect of a mail bag or of any postal article sent by post it shall be sufficient for the purpose of the charge to describe the mail bag or postal article as being the property of the post office, and it shall not be necessary to prove that the mail bag or postal article was of any value.

Penalty for breach of rules.

81. Whoever does any act in contravention of, or fails to comply with, any rule made under this Ordinance, for the breach of which no penalty is specially provided, shall be punishable with fine which may extend 10 fifty rupees, and in default of payment with imprisonment of either description which may extend to one month.

Trial of offences.

82. (1) Offences under this Ordinance which, by reason of the amount of the penalties with which they are punishable, are not within the summary jurisdiction of a Magistrate's Court, may be tried in the High Court:

Provided that if the Attorney-General certifies that any such offence may be prosecuted before a Magistrate's Court, it shall be competent for such court to take cognizance of the offence and to award in respect thereof so much of the punishment assigned thereto as Magistrates* Courts are empowered by law to award.

[§ 4, 24 of 1957.]

(2) No court shall take cognizance of an offence punishable under any of the provisions of sections 54, 56, 57 paragraphs (a) and (b), 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 65, 68, 69, 70, 71, 76, 76A, 76B, 76c and 81 of this Ordinance, unless upon complaint made by order of, or under authority from, the Postmaster-General.

GENERAL

Officers of post office to be exempt from serving on any jury.

83. No officer of the post office in receipt of any salary from the revenues of Sri Lanka shall be liable to serve on any jury or as an assessor in any criminal or civil proceedings.

Officers of the post office prohibited from taking postal contracts and from collecting postage stamps.

84. No officer of the post office in receipt of any salary from the revenues of Sri Lanka shall be a contractor, or have any interest in any contract for carrying mail bags or postal articles, or act as agent, with or without remuneration, for any contractor or person offering to become a contractor to the post office; and no such officer shall collect postage stamps, or have any interest whatever in the collection of postage stamps. Any person acting contrary to the provisions of this section shall be liable to be forthwith dismissed, and to pay to the Postmaster-General on account of the Government all such money as such person may have directly or indirectly realized by means of such contract or agency, or by means of any collection of postage stamps, and any postage stamps collected by such officer shall be forfeited to the Government.

85. The Minister may, by Notification published in the Gazette, authorize either absolutely or subject to conditions, the Postmaster-General to exercise any of the powers conferred on the Minister by this Ordinance.

Minister may delegate certain powers to the Postmaster-General.

86. In addition to the powers in this Ordinance mentioned, the Minister may make rules to carry out any of the purposes and objects of this Ordinance.

Further power of Minister to make rules.

***88.** In this Ordinance, unless there is anything repugnant in the subject or context—

interpretation.

" aircraft " includes all balloons, whether fixed or free, kites, gliders, airships, airplanes and other flying machines;

" inland " used in relation to a postal article means posted in Sri Lanka;

" mail bag " includes a bag, box, parcel, or any other envelope or covering in which postal articles in course of transmission by post are conveyed, whether it does or does not contain any such article;

" mail ship " means a ship employed for carrying mails, pursuant to contract or continuing arrangements by the

* Section 87 is omitted, as it is a transitional provision.

Government of Sri Lanka or the Government of any foreign country;

" master of a vessel" means the person for the time being having or taking the charge or command of a vessel, but does not include the pilot;

" officer of the post office " includes any person employed in any business of the post office or on behalf of the post office;

" postage " means the duty chargeable for the transmission by post of postal articles;

" postage stamp" means any stamp provided by the Minister for denoting postage or other fees or sums payable in respect of postal articles under this Ordinance, and includes adhesive postage stamps and envelopes, cards, wrappers, and other articles on which postage

stamps are printed, embossed, impressed, or otherwise indicated and any impression denoting that postage has been paid made by a stamping die or franking machine authorized by the Minister;

" postal article" includes a letter, postcard, newspaper, parcel, and every article or thing transmissible by post;

" Postmaster-General" means the Postmaster-General of Sri Lanka, and includes the Assistant Postmaster-General;

" post office" includes every house, building, room, carriage, or place used for the purposes of the post office, and every letter-box provided by the post office for the reception of postal articles;

" the post office " means the department presided over by the Postmaster-General.