



Standard Operating Procedure for Dhai Akhar National Level Letter writing Competition 2024-25

Index

1.	Objective
2.	Description of the Scheme
3.	General Condition
4.	Eligibility
5.	Selection procedure
6.	Prize
7.	Procedure
8.	Implementation Strategy
9.	Timelines
10.	Desired outcome

Standard Operating Procedure for 'Dhai Akhar' National Level Letter writing competition

1. Objective

Research shows that handwriting is a foundational skill that can influence students' reading, writing, language use, and critical thinking. It has an important role in brain development. It is necessary to teach children to write, alongside technology in the classroom, as it promotes success in other academic subjects. In today's fast-paced world, where communication has largely shifted to digital platforms, the art of letter writing has taken a backseat. However, letters hold a special place in our hearts as they carry with them a sense of nostalgia, warmth, and personal touch that is hard to replicate in a text message or an email.

The Dhai Akhar National Level Letter Writing Campaign is not only a celebration of the art of letter writing, but it is also an opportunity for individuals across the country to express their thoughts, feelings, and ideas in a meaningful and heartfelt manner. It encourages creativity, originality, and self-expression, and provides a platform for individuals to display their writing skills and talents. The Dhai Akhar National Level Letter Writing Campaign not only promotes the art of letter writing but also fosters creativity, critical thinking, and empathy among participants.

2. Description of the Scheme

Dhai Akhar is a National Level Letter Writing Competition on a theme/ subject decided by Department of Posts for the citizens of India. Participants will write a Letter expressing their views on the subject addressing to the Chief Postmaster General concerned which would be eligible for Cash awards if shortlisted first at Circle level and then Directorate level.

3. General Conditions

- **Periodicity:** The Dhai Akhar National Level Letter Writing Competition is organized every year. The campaign will start from **14th September to 14th December (three months)**. Letters posted after 14th December of the year will not be accepted.
- **Topic:** The theme and topic for the competition is **The Joy of Writing : Importance of Letters in a Digital age**.
- **Language:** The letter can be written in English, Hindi or any Vernacular.
- **Categories:** The competition will be in the following categories:

(i) **Up to 18 years: -**

- (a) Inland Letter Card Category
- (b) Envelope Category

(ii) **Above 18 years: -**

- (a) Inland Letter Card Category
- (b) Envelope Category

- **Permitted Stationery:** The embossed envelope/ envelope with stamp affixed for plain A-4 size paper letter and the Inland Letter Card (ILC) will be the permitted stationery. The letter can be written on plain A-4 size paper with a word limit of not more than 1000 words, or in an Inland Letter Card (ILC) (not more than 500 words). Letter must be hand written and in any case, no typed letter will be accepted

4. Eligibility

Any citizen of India can participate in this competition. There is no minimum or maximum age prescribed for participation. Any citizen of India can participate in respective category according to his/her choice and age. The participants have to give a certificate of their age on the letter such as “I certify that I am below/above the age of 18 as on 01/01/2024”. In case of winning entries, the respective Circle will verify the age and other ID certificates before sending the 03 best entries in each category to Directorate.

5. Selection Procedure

The best 03 (three) entries in each category will be shortlisted by every Circle and prize will be awarded to these 03 entries at Circle level. These best 03 entries of each category (12 in all) chosen at Circle level will be sent to the Directorate for further evaluation of final best 03 entries in each category at the National Level. To shortlist candidates at Circle level, an Evaluation Committee will be constituted of which CPMG will be the Chairperson, Other members of the committee must be an academician or a scholar of the particular language/ literature/ associated with journalism including a professor/teaching faculty in a college school. The opinion of the scholars shall be given utmost importance while making qualitative selection. Selection Committee at National Level will be constituted at Directorate level for evaluation of final best 03 entries in each category at National Level.

6. Prize

The prize money to be given to the winners of Circle Level and National Level Letters in each category is as follows:

Prize to be given to the winners in each Category at Circle Level: (A)

Prize Category	(Prize Amount) x (No. of Categories) x (No. of Circles)	Total Amount
First Prize in each Category	Rs. 25,000/- x 4 x 23	Rs. 23,00,000/-
Second Prize in each Category	Rs. 10,000/- x 4 x 23	Rs. 9,20,000/-
Third Prize in each Category	Rs. 5,000/- x 4 x 23	Rs. 4,60,000/-
TOTAL (Rs. Thirty-six lakh eighty thousand only)		Rs. 36,80,000/-

Requisite funds to this effect under Major Head Operating Expenses of Philately(A/c head 3201.01.001.03.01.13) are allotted to each Circle under BE of respective Financial Year.

Prize to be given in each Category at National Level: (B)

Prize Category	(Prize Amount) x (No. of Categories)	Total Amount
First Prize in each Category	Rs. 50,000/- x 4	Rs. 2,00,000/-
Second Prize in each Category	Rs. 25,000/- x 4	Rs. 1,00,000/-
Third Prize in each Category	Rs. 10,000/- x 4	Rs. 40,000/-
TOTAL (Rs. Three lakh forty thousand only)		Rs. 3,40,000/-

Requisite funds to this effect under Major Head Promotion & Marketing of Philately (A/c head 3201.01.001.03.01.26) are kept with Philately Division.

7. Procedure

The following is the process that must be followed each division to deploy Dhai Akhar Letter writing Competition:

- Training of on-ground teams.
- Outreach in schools & colleges as per targets
- Installation of Dhai Akhar travelling photo-booth and letterbox in Schools
- Collection & Judging

8. Implementation Strategy

- Wide publicity of the Campaign shall be given through newspaper advertisements, electronic media, social media and other media including local level pamphlet distribution.
- Circles would make on ground teams undergo online training for effective outreach to schools and public (training videos would be provided)
- Circles would contact/visit schools, hold workshops/ seminars/ give presentations etc to inform about the scheme in detail to ensure maximum participation.
- Ensure videography and photography of activity to use as social media content. Guidelines shall be provided for the same.
- Circles would also write to State Government Education & School Boards & District Administration etc informing them of the scheme and seeking support for its propagation.
- Web push notifications by Schools having websites/app be encouraged
- Awareness about the competition during Account opening drive/PLI & RPLI Mela
- Postman staff be sensitized to make residents aware about the competition while effecting delivery
- Services of Marketing team along with PRIs(P)/Postmen be utilized for promotion.
- Circles to ensure creation of Dhai Akhar photobooth with small hanging letterbox to create a photo corner in Schools/Colleges. Designs and budget for the same shall be conveyed. As per the size of the division, 2-5 sets of these should be ready with each division. This setup will travel from one school/college to another.
- In addition, Circles may adopt their own local strategy to implement the Scheme. Any

such adoption may be communicated to the Directorate so that it can be shared with all other Circles

- Targets of obtaining entries will be assigned to the Circles on the basis of no. of Post Offices and past performance
- To make Dhai Akhar Letter Writing Campaign a success, Circles will have to ensure that sufficient stationery (ILC and envelopes) is available in their Circles
- Circle will ensure that no letter posted remains unattended either at Letter boxes or Post offices To adhere to timelines , it is to be ensured that Letter boxes are opened/cleared as scheduled and with no delay
- Special arrangement of delivery of such letters in co-ordination with participating schools be made
- Circles to hold letter writing competition in schools/colleges as per programme detailed below:

Sequence of Activities	Activity	Description
1.	Setup	Installation of travelling photobooth and small letterbox for a period of upto 6 days in one school. Design and specifications shall be provided by the Circle. Also setup the projector and introduction space as allocated by school/college, and do a tech-check.
2.	Introduction	Start with personal introductions to create a good atmosphere and connect with the children.
3.	Short Video	Video Capsules/Short Movies on India Post/Philately to be played to set context and interest amongst children <i>Video shall be provided</i>
4.	Presentation	Take the children through a brief history of the postal department, key concepts of post and philately and current schemes such as Sparsh before leading to Dhai Akhar. The presentation would also highlight the importance of writing by hand. <i>Presentation shall be provided</i>
5.	Philately Quiz	Quiz will be organised containing 5-10 questions based on Philately outlining the famous personalities, heritage, places etc.on which CPS/ Special Covers have been issued. <i>Question deck shall be provided</i> Winners of the Quiz will be awarded with prizes (worth Rs. 50 to 100/- approx.). Expenditure to this effect may be incurred into the Philately Promotion Head of the Circles
6.	Dhai Akhar Letter writing	The main activity i.e. Dhai Akhar Letter Writing Competition will commence subsequently. Students will be writing a letter on the Theme as decided by Directorate
7.	Documentation	Good Quality photographs/Short videos of the above to be shared on Social Media handles of the India Post on the same day of the activity performed

8.	Dhai Akhar Letter writing	The main activity i.e. Dhai Akhar Letter Writing Competition will commence subsequently. Students will be writing a letter on the Theme as decided by Directorate
9.	Opening of Philatelic Club in School and PDA Accounts	After Letter Writing, efforts to be made to open Philatelic Deposit Accounts/ Philatelic Clubs in the Schools. The School Administration should be informed as to how a Philatelic Club can make a positive impact on the learning of students and they be made acquainted with the various important personalities and their contribution in Nation building, with the various aspects of rich art & culture and prosperous heritage of India as depicted in stamps.

9. Timelines

- The Dhai Akhar letter writing competition will start from 14th September 2024
- Last date of submission of entries will be 14th December 2024. Letters posted after 14th December will not be entertained
- Each Circle must arrange and ensure to declare their respective State/ Circle level result by 23rd of January 2025.
- Circle will also ensure that A monthly report in the following Performa be sent to Directorate by 30th of the month of inception of event and till completion

Month	Number of Schools/colleges participated	Number of participants	Philatelic Club opened	Philatelic Deposit account opened	If activity done uploaded on Social Media Handle	Remarks if any

- The winning entries (12 for each Circle) will be sent to Directorate by 7th February 2025. It is to be ensured by Circles that the winning entries in Vernacular (other than Hindi/ English) should be sent to Directorate along with English Translated Versions.
- The entries received from the Circles will be evaluated at Directorate Level and best 12 entries (03 in each 04 categories) will be selected for National Level prize

10. Desired outcome

Stamps effectively serve as the currency of the letter world and hence letter writing competition will not only allow individuals to take their time to craft their thoughts, express emotions, and share experiences in a more thoughtful and considered manner but will also connect mass to Post Office. This activity with its level of participation across India would lead to :

- Giving greater visibility to Philately across the gamut and Mainstreaming of Philately in School & educational curriculum,
- Create awareness about Philately among parents, academicians, children and public at large,

- Mainstreaming of Philately in School & educational curriculum,
- Increase in the number of Philately Deposit Accounts,
- Creating the linkages between all the stakeholders in Philately i.e. Philatelists, Department of Posts, Children & Youth and the prospective Philatelists,
- Involving/ Using expertise of Philatelist in promotion of philately amongst children/youth across India
- A source of revenue by sale of Envelopes and Postage Stamps.
- Winners of the competition to be brand Ambassadors for motivating and inspring others to develop interest in philately
