

Egypt's Mystery New Postal Stationery Envelopes

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On May 12 last year, the Egyptian National Postal Organisation announced on its website that new postal stationery was being designed to help with sorting. The English-language announcement read in full:

Ideal Post Envelope:

To make a time scheduled for post delivery, an Egypt Post team designed a new ideal envelope that contains all the required information and how it should be written on both sides of the envelope. This is to facilitate technical handling in the different stages of sorting.

Since May 12, nothing at all was heard in Egypt about this envelope (apart from the odd sighting on eBay; thank you, Bill Johns, for alerting us!!). But at the Stampex meeting on February 25 Khetcho Hagopian (ESC 304) astounded us all by showing some specimens of what appears to be a new issue of six different envelopes. These have come, says Khetcho, not from the Cairo main office, but from one of the smaller offices away from the centre. The envelopes do not seem to have been put into general use, but he has been able to use one internally to send to his own address, so at least the internal envelope is accepted by the postal authorities.

I shall make a brief description of the various types, and we should all watch out for their use, or for an announcement from the authorities that they have been officially issued. I am very grateful to Mostafa El-Dars (ESC 556) for help with translating the Arabic, but not all of what follows is necessarily “official”!

1. Internal use. 230x110mm, printed front and back in single colour, deep blue, with rectangle for stamp at top right 20x27mm; the flap is a shallow rounded V with cutaway corners. The address details on the face measure 110x45mm in four lines to be filled in (slightly off balance in my example!), with the top line (Name) separated from the other three by a line saying “Address of the Recipient”; followed by address details (from right): Street, Number, City, Province, District, and on the bottom line, Postcode. The reverse details are precisely the same except that the intervening line reads “Address of Sender” (rather than Recipient). The price of this envelope is 10pi, and the present internal rate is 30pi, meaning that 20pi has to be added in stamps.

2. Registration. Size as the last, with name and address details back and front printed bilingually English and Arabic in black in five lines covering 157x35mm, much as the last but with “Zip Code” in English, and “Phone No” added. The top half of the envelope, cut off by a green line, has at left the Egypt Post swooping bird of paradise logo in green, at right a 24x30mm space for the stamp with “Post Office” below; and in the centre a green box 39x14mm containing “Registration number” in Arabic only. Below that, in red, is the essence: Registered Letter, in Arabic only. The local registration rate was, Khetcho reports, 75pi to December 24, but £E1.75 since then.

3. Registration for Arab countries. This envelope is precisely as the last, except that across the top left corner it bears a green stripe. This envelope is sold at £E2.50, and a further £E3.75 must be added in stamps to defray postage to Arab countries.

4. Registration for Europe and Overseas. Again as the last, except that the corner stripe is in magenta. To the £E2.50 cost must be added £E4 for overseas registration.

5. Avis de Reception, local. Here is a real departure from the norm. The envelope comes in two sizes, one as above, the other smaller, 177x125mm, but their design is essentially the same though the smaller example I have is printed in much paler grey-green rather than the larger’s vibrant blue-green. In both cases the all-Arabic address details follow the pattern of 1 above, though the intervening “Address of the Recipient” line now has dots for manuscript addition. The address panel is hence in five lines, 93x37mm on the larger envelope and 110x42mm on the smaller.

What is novel, however, is what is above the separation line: at left is a dark blue box containing the Arabic equivalent of “Registered with proof of arrival” (ie, AR). At right is the Egypt Post logo; and between them

is a solid red line of Arabic reading “All Postal Fees Paid”. In other words, no stamps need to be added to cover AR within Egypt, and the envelope itself accounts for the full franking. These envelopes, says Khetcho, are on sale for £E2.50. Since the internal rate up to 20gm is 30pi, the Registration and AR charge internally must now be £E2.20.

Khetcho also showed modern reprints of some of the cassette envelopes at the meeting, reporting that the £E1 and £E2 ½ values had been reprinted on heavier paper than originally. In another change of policy, these new cassette envelopes are now sold at face value; previously, we learn, the envelope was subject to a 25pi surcharge.

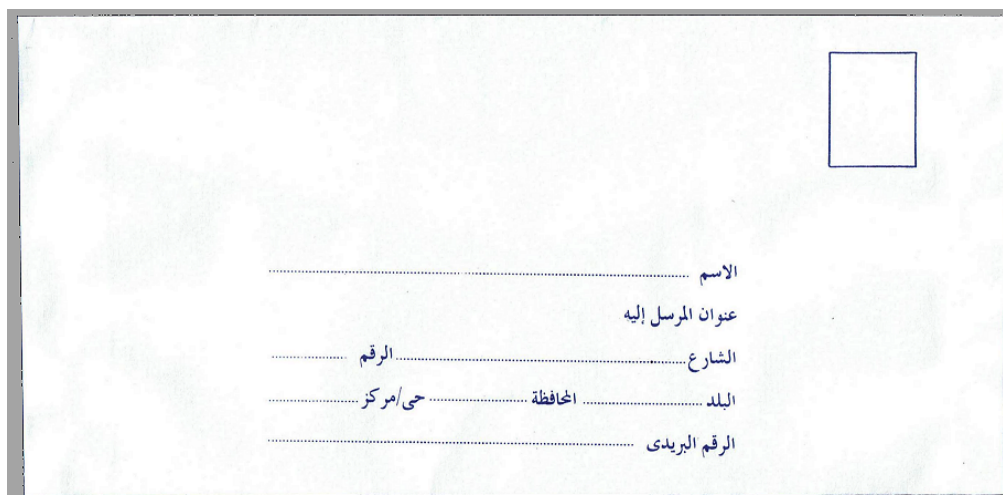


Fig. 1



Fig. 2



Fig. 3



رقم المسجل

خطاب مسجل

مكتب بريد

RECIPIENT'S NAME: اسم المرسل إليه

ADDRESSES: العنوان

CITY: المدينة STATE / PROVINCE: المحافظة

COUNTRY: البلد ZIP CODE: الرقم البريدي


PHONE NO: رقم التليفون

Fig. 4

AR

مسجل يعلم الوصول

خالص الأجور البريدية



الاسم

عنوان المرسل إليه

الشارع الرقم

البلد المحافظة حي / مركز

الرقم البريدي

Fig. 5

AR

مسجل يعلم الوصول

خالص الأجور البريدية



الاسم

عنوان المرسل إليه

الشارع الرقم

البلد المحافظة حي / مركز

الرقم البريدي

Fig. 6