

ASIAN-PACIFIC POSTAL UNION NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 01
2023

FROM SECRETARY- GENERAL'S DESK

As the year 2023 comes to an end, I would like to take this opportunity to *Thank you* all for your continued support and cooperation in advancing the postal sector in the Asia-Pacific region. It has been a challenging yet rewarding year for us, and we need to be proud of what we have achieved together.



One of the highlights in November was the successful organization of the 10th APPU Business Forum, which was held in Bangkok from November 20 to 22. The Forum brought together more than 130 participants from 20 countries, including CEOs, postal leading regulators, postal operators, industry experts, and business partners. The Forum provided a platform for sharing best practices, exploring new opportunities, and fostering partnerships for postal development. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all the speakers, moderators, sponsors, and the Bureau staff who contributed to the success of the Forum.

Marking the culmination of the 2023 APPC Training Schedule was the completion of the last two regular courses on the International Postal Services (IPS) and Operations Management (OMC), which were well organized and attended by 19 participants from 15 countries. I would also like to mention that the APPU hosted the UPU ORE 3 Workshop, which was conducted by the UPU PTC expert and UPU Regional Field Expert. Sponsored by the UPU using the USPS fund, the Workshop provided valuable training on "IT Systems and Tools" to the participants.

As we look forward to the new year, the first 2 training programs at APPC will start on January 29, with 4-week courses on Business Development and Marketing (BDM) and Managing Quality of Service (MQS). These courses will cover topics such as market analysis, customer segmentation, product development, pricing, promotion, quality standards, etc. I encourage the member countries to nominate their officials for these courses to benefit from the learning opportunities offered by the APPC.

In conclusion, I would like to wish you all a happy and prosperous new year. I hope you will enjoy the festive season with your family and friends, and stay safe and healthy. I look forward to working with you again in 2024, and to strengthening the collaboration and friendship for the benefit of the postal sector and the people we serve.

Dr. Vinaya Prakash Singh



POSTAL CEOS

SHARED THEIR INSIGHTS ON
THE DIGITAL AGE AND
FUTURE WORKFORCE AT THE
1ST APPU CEO'S FORUM 2023



The 1st APPU Postal CEO's Forum was held in Bangkok on November 20, 2023, as part of the 10th APPU Postal Business Forum. The Forum, brought together postal CEOs and postal leadership from 10 countries in the Asia-Pacific region, including Bhutan, Cambodia, China (P.R.), Japan, Laos, Malaysia, Maldives, Philippines, Singapore and Thailand.

The Forum was inaugurated by Mr. Masahiko Metoki, the Director General of the UPU, who highlighted the importance of innovation, and collaboration for enhancing the resilience and competitiveness of postal operators in the face of the challenges and opportunities posed by the changing market environment.

The Forum featured three engaging panel discussions and insights on two themes: "Postal services in the digital age: challenges and opportunities" and "Workforce for the future: skills, diversity, and inclusion". The panelists discussed the best practices and lessons learned from the successful digital transformation initiatives and projects in their countries.

All the files, presentations and general information in connection with the 2023 Forum is uploaded here

↓ DOWNLOAD

<https://www.postalbusinessforum.com/2023/ab30a8e0-254e-4183-b800-f8306d457770>

The panelists also addressed some of the challenges and solutions for fostering a culture of innovation and change management in the postal sector. They also responded to some of the questions from the audience, such as how to measure and improve the quality of service, how to balance the social and commercial objectives of the postal sector, how to cope with the changing skill requirements, how to ensure the health and safety of the postal staff.

The Forum demonstrated the commitment and readiness of the postal operators to embrace digital transformation and build resilience in the postal sector, as well as the potential and opportunities for collaboration and partnership among the postal stakeholders. The Forum also provided valuable insights for the participants to take back to their respective organizations and implement the best practices and innovations that can enhance the performance and sustainability of the postal sector.

The APPU would like to thank all the participants, speakers, moderators, sponsors, exhibitors, and the Bureau staff for making this event a great success. The APPU looks forward to organizing the next edition of the Forum in 2024 and to continuing its support and service to the postal sector in the Asia-Pacific region.

COMPLETION OF IPS AND OMC COURSES AT APPC

The International Postal Service (IPS) Course and Operations Management Course (OMC) were successfully organized from November 13 to December 8. Two specialized workshops on IPS and IPS.POST, and Operations Management also took place between November 27 to December 1. The program attracted 34 participants from APPU members, offering a unique platform for learning and collaboration.

The academic component covered a spectrum of subjects, providing participants with a robust understanding of IPS and OMC. Beyond the classroom, participants were also taken to valuable site visits, exploring Thailand Post's mail sorting facilities and fulfilment center. Additionally, they gained valuable industry insights through visits to supply chain companies in Bangkok.

The courses' participants also had the opportunities to attend the Postal CEOs Forum and Business Forum from November 20 to 22. This provided them a platform for knowledge exchange and discussions on the latest industry trends.

Beyond the academic setting, after-class activities added a social dimension to the program. The International Food Festival was organized, where participants not only explored the diverse culinary landscape by cooking their country's traditional dishes but also relished the opportunity to share and enjoy these meals together.

Ms. APPC (Ms. Joanna Taufaiula Epati, Samoa) and Mr. APPC (Mr. Mukhtar Ahmed, Pakistan) were recognized for their excellent performance, adding a touch of healthy celebration to the cultural evening.

The training has created lasting memories and connections among the diverse group of participants.



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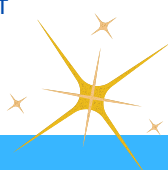
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UPU REGIONAL PROJECT ORE 3 HOSTED “IT SYSTEMS AND TOOLS WORKSHOP FOR ASIA” AT APPU

The UPU successfully hosted a five-day “IT Systems and Tools for Asia” workshop at APPU, Bangkok, from November 27 to December 1, 2023. Sponsored by the UPU through the USPS funds, the workshop targeted Country Project Managers (CPMs)/Dy. CPMs and support team members involved in ORE 3 projects. Attendees gained crucial insights into maximizing use of IT systems and tools for various aspects of international postal services.



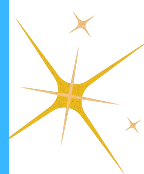
BASIC POSTAL SECURITY REVIEW OF CRITICAL FACILITY, PHNOM PENH, CAMBODIA

From October 16 to 20, 2023, a basic postal security review was conducted in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, to evaluate the level of implementation of UPU certification standards S58 & S59 and guide the Cambodia Post team in obtaining the required security certification. The review team conducted a walkthrough session from mail collection to processing and delivery, which aided the review team in identifying areas for improvement based on the elements of S58 & S59. The elements of S58 and S59 were carefully considered during the OE's development, and as a result, the review team found no major issues or challenges.

Following the mission's completion, a set of recommendations and best practices were shared with the Cambodia Post team. A half-day training session was held for employees of all relevant departments to implement the security standards and best practices. The Cambodia Post team's dedication and support throughout the mission is noteworthy.

Ms. Aishath Shirdha [Maldives], UPU RPSM, suggests that the DOs in the region need to consider getting certified. This will help identify areas for improvement and guide us in getting the required security certification.

Resource: UPU Regional Postal Security Manager (RPSM) for Asia
<https://www.upu.int/en/News/2023/April/Cambodia-Post-modernizes-its-services-in-record-time>



The Future of Posts 2023 is a report by **Escher Group**, that presents the results of a survey of 271 postal operators from 90 countries. The report explores the current and future trends, challenges, and opportunities in the postal industry, with a focus on e-commerce, retail, delivery, automation, and cross-border shipping. The report also provides insights and recommendations on how postal organizations can adapt and transform their strategies for growth in a rapidly changing market. The report is based on the opinions, perspectives, and experiences of the survey participants, as well as the expertise and analysis of Escher's team.

Escher's **Future of Posts 2023** survey highlights:

- ✓ Parcel volumes reversed course at many posts this year shifting from high growth to flat or moderate declines while letter volume declines accelerated slightly. These changes had a moderate impact on revenue but a more pronounced impact on profitability.
- ✓ Focus returned to falling mail volumes with over three-quarters of respondents listing this as a priority this year (the highest response by far), up from 53% last year.
- ✓ Posts are split 50/50 on the capacity challenge with 51% indicating they continued to struggle with capacity constraints created by growing ecommerce volumes while nearly half indicated volumes were declining or flat creating utilization issues.
- ✓ Large macro-economic challenges (i.e. inflation driven volume challenges, increased cross-border competition) continue to distract postal organizations from their customer's strategic priorities of accelerating delivery and the need for innovative solutions to deal with an increasing volume of returns.
- ✓ Strategic clarity for postal organizations eroded as they grappled with how to maximize return on invested capital for both their retail and delivery networks. Over half are rethinking their strategies for both networks and 15% are actively working to shrink their network size.
- ✓ Lockers remained a top priority with over two-thirds of respondents listing lockers as a top retail priority, the highest ranked retail priority despite the challenges presented by locker implementations. Over half see lockers as the answer to deal with growing reverse logistics demand.
- ✓ Transforming the last mile, fixing issues with cross-border deliveries and improving the customer experience remained the most important investment areas.
- ✓ Over three-quarters of respondents said they were adopting new strategies and organization structures to cope with fluctuating ecommerce parcel demand as the market remained chaotic. They also see the dual power of optimization and automation as key to managing these challenges.
- ✓ Developing Delivery Duties Paid (DDP) capabilities and gathering required Advanced Electronic Data (AED) to comply with new regulations remain the biggest challenges for cross-border ecommerce.



CAMBODIA GOVERNMENT LAUNCHES UN SYSTEM TO ACCELERATE POSTAL CLEARANCE



The Cambodia Post and the General Department of Customs and Excise have successfully connected the UPU's Customs Declaration System (CDS) with the General Department of Customs and Excise's Automated System for Customs Data (ASYCUDA). The interfaced system enables Cambodia Post to exchange messages using the joint UPU-WCO CUSITM-CUSRSP electronic messaging standards and the Cambodia General Department of Customs and Excise to respond in a timely manner on the release or not of postal consignments.

This supports the WTO's Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) for the pre-arrival/pre-departure processing of postal consignment, strengthening and harmonizing the automated clearance processes, applying advanced risk management techniques, and adhering to international practices and procedures.

The interface streamlines and facilitates the efficient customs clearance of postal consignments by exchanging pre-arrival / pre-departure information between Cambodia Post and Cambodia Customs. This automatic exchange of messages is part of the improving Small Package e-Trade for SMEs (SeT4SME) project - a joint collaboration between Swisscontact and the Ministry of Commerce on behalf of the Global Alliance for Trade Facilitation. The project was undertaken in collaboration with multiple stakeholders, including UPU, Cambodia Post, Cambodia Customs and UNCTAD's ASYCUDA Programme.



Source



INDIA POST AND BLUE DART

INTRODUCE DIGITAL PARCEL LOCKERS FOR CONVENIENT AND SECURE DELIVERY

India Post has partnered with Blue Dart Express to introduce automated digital parcel lockers at selected post offices. The lockers allow customers to conveniently retrieve their shipments without the need for personal receipts or signing for a package. The lockers are secure and easily accessible, with deliveries that can be collected at any time by authorized personnel.

Read more at:

<https://www.financialexpress.com/business/industry-blue-dart-india-post-enters-into-strategic-partnership-introduces-automated-digital-parcel-lockers-3311823/>



The partnership is a transformative innovation in logistics, according to Mr. Amitabh Singh, the Postmaster General of Maharashtra Circle. He said that the smart parcel delivery system (ANVIT) of India Post and the expertise of Blue Dart will redefine the landscape of efficient and reliable logistics solution.



HRH PRINCESS MAHA CHAKRI SIRINDHORN PRESIDED OVER THE OPENING CEREMONY OF "POSTIVERSE: 140TH ANNIVERSARY OF THAILAND POST AND WORLD PHILATELIC EXHIBITION 2023" ON THE OCCASION OF THE 140TH ANNIVERSARY OF THAILAND POST AND THAILAND'S FIRST ACID POSTAGE STAMP

HRH Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn presided over the opening ceremony of "POSTiverse: 140 Years of Happiness to Every Verse, Thailand Post and World Philatelic Exhibition 2023" at the Central Post Office in Bang Rak district. The exhibition was organized from November 27 to December 3 by Thailand Post Co., Ltd. to commemorate its 140th anniversary of postal service in the country. It featured various activities and displayed related to the history, development, and innovation of Thailand Post and philately.

Some of the highlights of the exhibition included a tribute to His Royal Highness Prince Bhanurangsi Savangwongse, the founder of modern postal service in Thailand and a renowned philatelist, with a replica of his personal stamp museum and some of his rare and valuable stamps. Visitors also enjoyed the most expensive stamps in the world and in Asia.

The exhibition also showcased the first stamp and postcard printing plates of Thailand, as well as the original paintings of celestial bodies by Prince Narisara Nuvadtivongs.

Read more at: https://www.thailandpost.co.th/un/article_detail/article/11/31521

RESTORATION OF MANILA'S HISTORIC POST OFFICE BEGINS

The Philippine Postal Corporation (PHLPost) has partnered with a group of architects and heritage experts to restore the old Manila Central Post Office, which was severely damaged by a fire in May 2023.

The Memorandum of Cooperation (MOC) was signed on November 28, 2023 at the iconic building, which is one of the most significant architectural landmarks in the Philippines.

The MOC aims to provide architectural conservation, archaeological, documentation and research assistance for the initial phase of the restoration project.



The collaborative efforts are expected to boost the process of restoration of the historic building, which was built in 1926 and designed by Filipino architect Juan M. Arellano.

Read more at: <https://www.bworldonline.com/the-nation/2023/11/28/560251/post-office-restoration-deal-linked/>



**THE APPU BUREAU COLLEAGUES
EXTEND THEIR WARMEST WISHES
FOR A JOYOUS AND PROSPEROUS
NEW YEAR 2024 TO OUR ESTEEMED
FRATERNITY IN THE REGION AND
BEYOND.**

