



FROM SECRETARY- GENERAL'S DESK



Greetings from the Asian-Pacific Postal Union!

As Artificial Intelligence (AI) continues to capture headlines and attention at global forums, I felt it timely to share a few reflections. For many of us in the postal community, it's natural to wonder how such rapidly evolving technologies will influence our work. While AI is already reshaping industries, our sector, grounded in physical infrastructure, complex logistics, and the promise of universal service, needs a considered and practical approach.

There is certainly great potential. From smarter address recognition and dynamic route planning to better data analytics and customer interaction, AI can support us in delivering more efficiently and responsively. But to truly benefit, we must focus on the basics: strengthening our digital infrastructure, using resources wisely, and aligning innovations with our national priorities.

At APPU, we don't see AI as a far-off ideal, nor as a solution to everything. Rather, we view it as part of a broader wave of innovation that we must approach thoughtfully. Our goal is to help our members navigate these changes, not by prescribing solutions, but by offering platforms for dialogue and training, so each member can explore what works best in their context.

Last month, I was pleased to visit Philippines and join the **PHLPost Capacity Building Program** in Manila from 22 to 25 April 2025, supported by the UPU India Fund. It was inspiring to see the commitment of participants keen to sharpen their leadership and operational skills. My sincere thanks to the Postmaster General Luis D. Carlos and the entire PHLPost team for their proactive approach to human resource development and to all those who engaged wholeheartedly.

Looking ahead, May has been shaping up to be a very active month. The **Specialized Capacity Building Program on the 28th Universal Postal Congress**, from 5 to 16 May at the Asian-Pacific Postal College (APPC), marks a historic first for us. Designed to demystify the workings of the UPU Congress, examine key proposals, and prepare participants for the upcoming Dubai Congress, this program also covers important topics like the UPU's Integrated Product Plan, Integrated Remuneration Plan and Integrated Quality of Service Plan.

Later this month, from **19 to 23 May**, we'll host the **sixth regional workshop under the UPU's Operational Readiness for E-Commerce (ORE 3)** initiative. With a focus on cross-border e-commerce, data exchange, supply chain visibility, and performance tracking tools like QCS Mail BigData and IQRS, the workshop tackles some of the most pressing issues our members face as global trade patterns evolve.

We'll round off May and begin June with two key training programs at APPC, **Parcel, Logistics and Operations Management (PLOM)** and **International Mail Accounting (IMA)**, running from **26 May to 20 June**.

At the same time, we are actively preparing for the **2025 APPU Executive Council Meeting**, to be held in Ulaanbaatar from **30 June to 4 July**, in close coordination with Mongol Post. I encourage all members who haven't registered yet to do so soon—we are aiming for a productive meeting and strong participation from across our membership in the region.

Colleagues and friends, while change is inevitable, what keeps our sector resilient is your commitment—your openness to evolve, your spirit of collaboration, and your belief in the postal mission. APPU is proud to walk with you on this journey—not chasing buzzwords, but offering steady support, grounded learning, and shared purpose.

Happy reading!

Warm regards,



Dr. Vinaya Prakash Singh
Secretary-General, APPU

SECRETARY GENERAL ATTENDS NATIONAL POSTAL EVENTS IN PHILIPPINES



Secretary General Dr. Vinaya Prakash Singh undertook an official visit to Philippines from 22 to 25 April 2025, where he joined two major events organized by the Philippine Postal Corporation (PHLPost).

The first was the External Capacity Building Programme held in Quezon City, which brought together 50 postmasters for in-person training and nearly 80 more online. Under the theme “Best Practices in Managing Post Offices,” the programme featured sessions led by the APPC Lecturers Mr. Anucha Soonglertsongpha and Mr. Sandeep KP. Topics included digital transformation, customer service excellence, and operational leadership. The programme was supported by the UPU India Fund as part of ongoing efforts towards human resource development within the postal community of the region.

Dr. Singh also attended the National Philatelic Exhibition 2025 (NAPEX) in Manila, which coincided with PHLPost’s 33rd Corporate Anniversary. Highlights included commemorative stamps honoring Filipino medalists from the 2024 Paris Olympics and vibrant cultural issues celebrating festivals across the country.

During the visit, Dr. Singh also met with H.E. Mr. Harsh Kumar Jain, Indian Ambassador to Philippines. They discussed enhancing regional collaboration through India’s ITEC Programme and UPI platform, underscoring the value of South-South cooperation and shared expertise among postal operators.



APPC NEWS

TRAINING PROGRAM ON THE 28TH UPU CONGRESS BEGINS IN BANGKOK

The Asian-Pacific Postal College (APPC) launched its Specialized Capacity Building Program on the 28th Universal Postal Congress on 5 May, welcoming 35 participants from 19 countries, including Bangladesh, Bhutan, Brunei, Cambodia, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Kiribati, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Maldives, Mongolia, Nepal, Philippines, Samoa, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Tonga, and Vanuatu.

Over the two weeks, the participants will also have sessions led by some UPU and regional

experts, covering key topics such as UPU Acts, Congress procedures, product strategy, remuneration reform, and regional coordination.

The program opened with remarks from APPU Secretary-General Dr. Vinaya Prakash Singh and an orientation led by Course Director Mr. Sandeep KP. The two-week training is designed to help member countries prepare for the UPU Congress in Dubai this September, focusing on UPU structures, procedures, and strategic documents.

The course runs until 16 May 2025 at the APPC in Bangkok.



At the APPU Postal Business Forum 2024, China Post received the Sustainable Development in the Postal Sector Award for its national rural revitalization initiative. This project demonstrates how postal operators can play a catalytic role in addressing long-standing development challenges such as connectivity, market access, and inclusive financial services in underserved rural regions.

Highlights: China Post's project stands out for its scale, integration, and long-term impact. The initiative offers a forward-looking model that links postal logistics, digital transformation, and green development to national development goals. It represents one of the most comprehensive efforts in the region to align postal operations with rural development policy. Through investments in last-mile infrastructure, smart technologies, e-commerce, and inclusive finance, the project not only extends essential services but also supports small-scale producers in becoming active participants in the national economy.

Project Overview: Empowering Villages through Postal Innovation

In support of China's rural revitalization strategy, China Post launched an ambitious initiative to use its nationwide infrastructure and data capabilities to boost economic inclusion in rural areas. The project focuses on four key areas: developing the rural digital economy, building new rural infrastructure, promoting the upgrading of the agricultural industrial chain, and providing rural digital inclusive services.

To solve logistics difficulties, China Post applied a postal and express waybill recognition system that enables simultaneous sorting on a single machine with 95% accuracy, reducing sorting time by 40%. Cooperation with other delivery firms now covers 75% of administrative villages, with 2.7 billion parcels delivered to villages in 2023, a tenfold increase in just three years. Drones have also been piloted in remote areas, enhancing mail access to islands and mountainous regions.

To tackle sales challenges, China Post built a two-way distribution system linking rural and urban markets. This model grew two-way business volume by 43.6% and boosted related package volume by 40%. The value of managed financial assets doubled year-on-year. Additionally, platforms for product traceability and live e-commerce sales have supported small producers in expanding market reach.

On the financing side, China Post's services now reach over 3.9 million rural households, 2.2 million cooperatives, and 90,000 agri-merchants. The balance of agriculture-related loans has doubled to 2.22 trillion yuan over five years, offering accessible credit via both in-person and digital channels.

China Post also emphasized green development, delivering more than 108 million mail items in recyclable packaging and reusing over 94 million corrugated boxes.

Together, these efforts form a highly integrated system that improves rural livelihoods, boosts farmer incomes, and supports sustainable economic development—offering a scalable model for the postal sector globally.





INDIA POST CELEBRATES 55TH EARTH DAY WITH SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVE

India Post marked the 55th anniversary of Earth Day with a special event from 22-24 April at the National Philatelic Museum in New Delhi, alongside celebrations held across the country. This year's Earth Day theme, "Our Power, Our Planet," inspired a range of activities aimed at highlighting the importance of environmental conservation.

A key highlight of the event was an exhibition showcasing a collection of stamps issued by India Post over the years, emphasizing the crucial role of protecting and preserving the environment. To further commemorate the occasion, a plantation drive was organized, and vibrant picture postcards along with special cancellations were released.

Engaging younger generations, school children enthusiastically participated in do-it-yourself (DIY) activities and letter-writing sessions, fostering awareness and creativity around environmental themes.

In her address, Ms. Vandita Kaul, Secretary of the Department of Posts, highlighted how postage stamps have historically played a significant role in raising awareness about environmental issues and inspiring action among citizens.

India Post's Earth Day celebrations reaffirm its commitment to promoting sustainability and environmental stewardship through its philatelic initiatives and community outreach programs.



Source: India Post



CAMBODIA POST PARTNERS WITH GENERAL DEPARTMENT OF IDENTIFICATION TO ENHANCE ID DOCUMENT DELIVERY

In a move to improve public service delivery, Cambodia Post and the General Department of Identification have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to formalize their partnership. Under the agreement, Cambodia Post will take charge of delivering identification documents, such as passports, directly to citizens.

The collaboration aims to make the process of receiving vital identification materials more convenient, efficient, and accessible for the public across Cambodia.

This initiative builds on Cambodia Post's existing infrastructure, which already supports public service delivery through cooperation with provincial governments under the One Window Service mechanism. It also manages exclusive delivery services for specific judicial documents.



Source: Cambodia Post



AUSTRALIA POST SET TO INCREASE POSTAGE PRICES FOLLOWING INTERIM ACCC VIEW

Australia Post is set to increase postage prices following the interim view of the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC), which has indicated it does not object to the proposed changes. These include raising the Basic Postage Rate (BPR) from \$1.50 to \$1.70 and adjusting prices for Regular large letters.

There will be no change to the price of concession stamps, which remain at \$3 for a booklet of five, nor to the seasonal greeting card rate, which stays at \$0.65 for a small letter.

Final confirmation of the new prices and their effective date will follow the completion of the regulatory process.



Full article

<https://auspost.com.au/disruption-s-and-updates/pricing-updates/bpr-letter-pricing-update>

PHLPOST NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

You Send. We Deliver.


Celebrating Marine Life through Jellyfish Stamps

The Philippine Postal Corporation (PHLPost) has released a new stamp series featuring five jellyfish species found in the Indo-Pacific and the Philippines. Four are shown in a "16 on sheet" regular stamp set: the venomous Box Jellyfish, the upside-down Cassiopea mayeri, the massive Lion's Mane Jellyfish, and the vibrant Pacific Sea Nettle. A special souvenir sheet highlights the Spotted Jellyfish (*Mastigias papua*), while the First Day Cover features the newly discovered endemic species *Cassiopea culionensis*, named after Culion Bay in Palawan. These stamps celebrate marine biodiversity and raise awareness of the jellyfish's ecological role in ocean ecosystems.



Philippines- Morocco issues joint stamps to celebrate 50 years of diplomatic relations



To mark 50 years of diplomatic ties between the Philippines and Morocco, PHLPost and Morocco Post have jointly issued commemorative stamps. The Philippine stamp features Mactan-Cebu

International Airport's iconic Terminal 2, inspired by traditional Filipino boat canoes. Morocco's stamp showcases Marrakech-Menara Airport, a fusion of modern architecture and Islamic design. Postmaster General Luis D. Carlos emphasized the stamp as a symbol of innovation and friendship between the two nations. The collaboration reflects shared values of cultural connection and partnership, supported by the leadership of postal and diplomatic officials from both countries.



Young Voices Shine in UPU Letter Writing Contest

PHLPost announced national winners of the 54th Universal Postal Union (UPU) International Letter Writing Contest. Mikaela Ashika Vargas of Catanduanes National High School took first place with her compelling letter written from the perspective of the ocean, urging humanity to care for marine life. Her winning entry will represent the Philippines in the global competition to be held in Berne, Switzerland. Second and third places went to Aime Renny Suon (Agusan National High School) and Jayden Lyle Darcy Tonosgan (Antique Vocational School). The contest encourages young writers to express their thoughts on sustainability and strengthens the global message of postal cooperation.



IRAN POST BOOSTS LOGISTICS EFFICIENCY WITH NEW INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

Iran Post, in collaboration with private sector partners and knowledge-based companies, has been actively working on infrastructure projects to enhance its logistics services.

A key milestone is the expansion of its locker-to-locker (L2L) service, which now operates in eight cities nationwide with over 150 parcel lockers. This project aims to improve accessibility and convenience for customers while demonstrating a promising future for the country's logistics sector.

In a move to improve delivery speed and efficiency, Iran Post has also added 22 new

vehicles to its postal fleet. This expansion is expected to streamline operations and optimize parcel distribution nationwide.

Additionally, Iran Post has partnered with five leading e-commerce companies to introduce preprinted shipping labels. This initiative is designed to simplify the shipping process, allowing businesses to hand over products more efficiently.

With these developments, Iran Post continues to modernize its services, reinforcing its role as a key player in the country's evolving logistics and e-commerce landscape.



Source: Iran Post

INDUSTRY INSIGHTS FROM APPU PARTNERS

INTERVIEW WITH **escher** Held during the APPU Postal Business Forum 2024 BREAKING THE PROFITABILITY CODE



Brody Buhler | Chief Executive Officer | Escher Group (Irl) Ltd

APPU:

To begin, could you please introduce yourself and your company?

Brody Buhler:

My name is Brody Buhler, and I'm the CEO at Escher. Escher provides software solutions focused on three key areas: retail, delivery, and automation enhancement. These technologies are used to run post office networks, support delivery operations, and power the automation behind mail and parcel sortation.

APPU:

Escher works with around 45 Posts globally. How would you describe your experience working with the postal sector?

Brody Buhler:

I've been in this industry for 26 years, and I find it incredibly exciting. Postal services are central to the e-commerce revolution, transforming how people buy and receive goods. It's a fast-moving and essential sector.

APPU:

At the APPU Postal Business Forum, you presented on "Breaking the Profitability Code." What are the key takeaways from your study?

Brody Buhler:

First, digital transformation is critical for Posts to stay relevant. With mail volumes declining and parcel competition rising, Posts must rethink how they operate. This includes integrating mail and parcel networks and introducing more digital solutions. Secondly, cost structures must be optimized, especially in the middle and last mile, since Posts often have higher costs than private competitors.

APPU:

From your experience, what is the biggest challenge to implementing postal solutions in the Asia-Pacific region?

Brody Buhler:

Scale is the biggest challenge. This is a very dynamic and competitive region with many startups in the parcel space. The key is to implement solutions at a pace and scale that allow postal operators to stay competitive.

APPU:

What would be your message to postal operators in the region?

Brody Buhler:

We're at a pivotal point in the industry. The next two to three years will define long-term success. It's essential to make the right moves now, especially in network integration and customer service models.

APPU:

In terms of digital transformation, how does Escher support postal clients?

Brody Buhler:

There are three main ways. First, we help digitize the branch network with self-service kiosks, mobile integration, and smart drop-off/pick-up. Second, we provide delivery technology tailored to parcels, making networks more dynamic and cost-effective. Lastly, we improve automation rates, raising sortation efficiency from 82% to as high as 95% in some cases.

APPU:

What specific strengths does Escher offer for postal digital transformation?

Brody Buhler:

We specialize in transforming the retail network of a Post, making it more digital, frictionless, and profitable. We also support delivery operations with solutions that handle the entire journey from induction to the last mile. Our systems are designed specifically for postal organizations and can replace outdated technologies with more efficient, scalable solutions.

APPU:

How quickly can Escher's solutions be implemented by a postal operator?

Brody Buhler:

Our software can be deployed in as little as three months when minimal configuration is needed. For larger, more complex projects, it could take six months to a year. But the process is generally swift and efficient.

APPU:

Artificial Intelligence has become a major industry topic. How is Escher incorporating AI in its solutions?

Brody Buhler:

AI is central to everything we do. In automation, it helps continuously improve sortation. In retail, AI enhances customer service tools. In delivery, we use AI for route optimization. It's foundational across all our platforms.

APPU:

Can you share a real-world use case for AI in the postal sector?

Brody Buhler:

A great example is customer service. Around 70% of calls to postal call centers are about parcel tracking. AI can handle these queries via chatbots trained on large language models, freeing up human agents for more complex tasks. It's a perfect fit for automation.

APPU:

What do you see as the next big shift after e-commerce?

Brody Buhler:

The next transformation is the localization of retail. As retailers move inventory closer to consumers, local delivery networks, like those run by Posts, will become even more essential. Posts need to adapt and enable these retailers to access their networks flexibly and efficiently.

APPU:

If you were to summarize Escher in one sentence, how would you describe it?

Brody Buhler:

Escher powers postal organizations from first to last mile.

Hybrid letter in the universal service

SWISS POST TO OFFER DIGITAL LETTER

Swiss Post has announced plans to introduce a hybrid letter service, allowing customers to send and receive letters digitally. This new option, supported by a proposed amendment to the Postal Services Ordinance, ensures secure and legally certified digital delivery, including features like a regulated seal and qualified timestamp. Recipients can choose digital or physical formats, with full integration for business users. The initiative reflects Swiss Post's strategy to modernize universal services while maintaining trust and efficiency. Additional regulatory proposals include standardizing delivery punctuality at 90% and adjusting delivery obligations to settlements inhabited year-round, potentially impacting 2% of households. Swiss Post supports these updates as steps toward greater service flexibility and sustainability.

[Full article](https://www.supplychaindive.com/news/postal-service-delivery-standards-changes/743973/)

<https://www.supplychaindive.com/news/postal-service-delivery-standards-changes/743973/>

ROYAL MAIL LAUNCHES 'SEND IT YOUR WAY' INFLUENCER CAMPAIGN

Royal Mail has launched a new influencer-led campaign called "Send It Your Way" in collaboration with SocialChain. The campaign aims to promote Royal Mail's Out of Home (OOH) parcel services, including lockers, postboxes, and Collect+ stores, by showcasing how they fit into the busy lives of parent creators and small business owners.

The first phase of the campaign focuses on TikTok, engaging marketplace creators and small businesses to highlight the accessibility and convenience of Royal Mail's parcel solutions. The initiative is designed to encourage e-commerce businesses with high return rates to use Royal Mail's service.

<https://mobilemarketingmagazine.com/royal-mail-launches-send-it-your-way-influencer-campaign/>



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