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**FROM SECRETARY-  
GENERAL'S DESK**



**Greetings from the Asian-Pacific Postal Union!**

As we wrap up August, I am pleased to reflect on a month filled with significant progress and collaboration within our postal community. The highlight, of course, was the APPU Executive Council Meeting 2024, held from August 12 to 16 in the historic city of Siem Reap, Cambodia. This gathering was a powerful testament to our collective commitment to innovation, cooperation, and sustainability in the Asia-Pacific region.

During the meeting, we tackled a wide range of critical issues, from supply chain enhancements to digital transformation and regulatory reforms. I was particularly encouraged by the active participation and insightful contributions from our members.

The discussions on postal financial services and market development were especially impactful, setting the stage for future growth and adaptation in our industry.

One key session in the EC week was the Postal Regulatory Reform Roundtable on August 15, where members shared their progress and challenges. Prioritizing this as a project is essential to ensuring our sector's resilience and adaptability. The Bureau will continue supporting these efforts in the coming year.

The Executive Council meeting also provided me with the opportunity to engage one-to-one with many members. These interactions were invaluable, reinforcing the importance of our shared goals and the strength of our collaboration. I am confident that the relationships and strategies we have built will drive our efforts forward in the months ahead.

I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to the Government of Cambodia for their generous hospitality and for hosting this important event. Their support and warm welcome significantly contributed to the success of the meeting and underscored the importance of our work together.

As we continue to advance our initiatives, let us carry this momentum into the coming months as we work together to ensure a prosperous and connected future for the Asia-Pacific postal sector.

**Happy reading!**



**Dr. Vinaya Prakash Singh**  
Secretary-General, APPU

# APPU EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETING 2024

SIEM REAP, CAMBODIA  
12 TO 16 AUGUST 2024



## APPU EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETING 2024

**A FOCUS ON INNOVATION,  
COOPERATION, AND SUSTAINABILITY**

The APPU Executive Council Meeting 2024 was held from August 12 to 16 in the historic city of Siem Reap, Cambodia. This annual event brought together more than 100 delegates, including representatives from 19 member countries who attended in person, and 3 who participated online. Key figures in attendance included H.E. Dr. Vandeth Chea, Minister of Post and Telecommunications of Cambodia, Mr. Masahiko Metoki, Director General of UPU, and Dr. Vinaya Prakash Singh, Secretary-General of the APPU. We also had in attendance observers from La Poste (France), USA, Oman Post, and PUMed.

The meeting was inaugurated with a welcome address by H.E. Dr. Vandeth Chea, who emphasized Cambodia's commitment to the APPU and the importance of cooperation, innovation, and sustainability within the postal sector. He highlighted Cambodia's efforts in enhancing postal services, including digital transformation, infrastructure development, and policy formulation aimed at modernizing the sector. Dr. Chea also underscored the vital role postal services play in connecting communities, promoting economic development, and facilitating inclusiveness, particularly in rural areas.

In his opening remarks, Dr. Vinaya Prakash Singh expressed deep gratitude to the Ministry of Post and Telecommunications of Cambodia for hosting the event and acknowledged Cambodia's active participation in APPU, highlighting the long-standing partnership that has driven innovation and cooperation in the region's postal sector.

Mr. Masahiko Metoki, in his keynote address, discussed the strategic significance of the Asia-Pacific region for the UPU, noting its diversity and the region's substantial contribution to global postal volumes, particularly in e-commerce. He outlined the UPU's ongoing efforts to support the region through initiatives such as the Operational Readiness for E-commerce (ORE) project and capacity-building collaborations with the Asian-Pacific Postal College.

Throughout the week, delegates engaged in meaningful discussions covering a wide array of important topics, including the review of the Union's activities, financial updates, and discussions on regional cooperation led by the UPU. There were presentations by the working groups on supply chain, postal financial services, physical services and e-commerce, market development and innovations.

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The council sessions also covered ongoing reforms within the APPU and UPU, CA matters, and strategic positioning of the region in the upcoming Dubai Postal Strategy to be taken up in the next UPU Congress.

Additional discussions included the extension of the RTCAP/Consultancy Section, the establishment of a digital library, and preparations for the 2025 Executive Council meeting.

The 2024 APPU Executive

Council Meeting reinforced the strong ties within the Asia-Pacific postal community and charted a course for continued innovation, collaboration, and sustainability, ensuring a prosperous and connected future for the region's postal sector.



## SECRETARY-GENERAL STRENGTHENS

### TIES WITH MEMBER COUNTRIES DURING APPU EC 2024

During the APPU Executive Council Meeting 2024, Dr. Singh, Secretary-General, held individual meetings with various delegates to discuss key issues and areas of mutual cooperation with the member countries.

In these meetings, Dr. Singh expressed his gratitude for the support from member countries and discussed ongoing efforts to continue regional projects. Key topics included the digital transformation of postal services, challenges from the evolving e-commerce landscape, capacity building of staff, and the ongoing regulatory reform project within the region.

These interactions focused on maintaining strong relationships and coordinating efforts on current and future initiatives within the Asia-Pacific postal community. Dr. Singh's meetings were a part of his broader engagement with member countries during the EC 2024 sessions.



All related EC documents are available on the APPU website <http://www.appu-bureau.org/documents/>



## POSTAL REGULATORY REFORM ROUNDTABLE AT APPU EC 2024

On August 15, 2024, as part of the APPU Executive Council meeting, the Postal Regulatory Reform Roundtable was convened, bringing together key speakers from Cambodia, India, Tonga, Vietnam, China, Fiji, and the Postal Union of the Mediterranean.

The roundtable, moderated by APPU Bureau consultants, Ms. Yu Yan and Mr. Sandeep K.P, was divided into two sessions. The first session highlighted ongoing and recent achievements in postal regulatory reforms across the Asia-Pacific region. The second session delved into the impacts of these regulatory changes

Panel discussions followed each session, providing a platform for participants to share experiences, discuss challenges, and explore future trends. The event was highly productive, offering valuable insights that will guide the continued strengthening of postal regulations throughout the region.



## TREE-PLANTING CEREMONIES AT ANGKOR WAT



During their visit to Cambodia, APPU Secretary-General Dr. Vinaya Prakash Singh and UPU Director General Mr. Masahiko Metoki participated in a specially arranged tree-planting ceremony in the historic Angkor Wat area.



As a farewell activity following the meetings, a separate tree-planting ceremony was held for all delegates in the same area. These activities allowed participants to collectively express their commitment to environmental sustainability while honoring the local ecosystem.



## APPU ENGAGES WITH INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS FROM CHINA



On August 6 and 15, 2024, the APPU, in collaboration with PIM (Panyapiwat Institute of Management), hosted 55 students from 23 Chinese universities and high schools as part of the "Into South Eastern Asia - Excelsior Global Competency Training Camp."



Dr. Singh, the APPU Secretary-General, highlighted the significance of global collaboration in his welcome remarks. The sessions, separately led by Ms. Yu Yan and Mr. Anucha, focused on "Building a Cooperative Platform for Postal Progress." The lectures covered the latest trends and challenges in the postal industry, recent implementations, and APPU's current role and activities. Students engaged in discussions about international collaboration, gaining insights into the evolving global postal landscape. These joint sessions underscored APPU's commitment to preparing future leaders in a connected world.

## TWO BACK-TO-BACK EMS EVENTS IN THAILAND

In late July 2024, Thailand hosted two EMS-related activities, with the goal of advancing express mail service (EMS) capabilities across the Asia-Pacific region.

The first event, the EMS Symposium, took place on July 25-26, 2024, that was organized by the EMS Unit of the UPU International Bureau and hosted by Thailand Post. Dr. Singh, Secretary-General of APPU, delivered the opening remarks, highlighting the Asia-Pacific region's critical contribution to global EMS volumes. The symposium provided a platform for senior management from EMS Cooperative members to discuss business development strategies and address the challenges and opportunities in the express market.

The next one was the Intensive EMS Course at the APPC held from July 29 to August 2, 2024, with 27 participants from 21 member nations. This course, funded by the UPU USPS fund, was led by Mr. Feng Jiang, an expert from the UPU EMS Unit. The intensive course covered a wide range of topics, including EMS business planning, operational standards, customer service performance, and on-site visits to key EMS facilities in Bangkok.

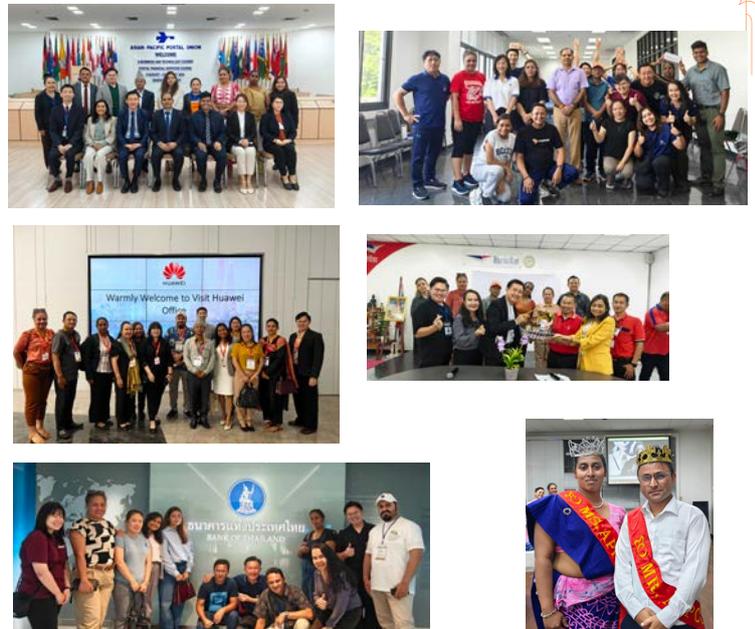
These back-to-back events underscored the commitment of both the UPU and APPU to enhancing EMS operations and fostering collaboration across the Asia-Pacific region.



## APPC COMPLETED EBT AND PFS COURSES

The APPC successfully organized two training courses from August 5 to 23, 2024, focusing on E-Business and Technology (EBT) and Postal Financial Services (PFS).

These programs provided postal professionals with vital knowledge in digital transformation and financial services. In addition to expert-led sessions, the courses featured a variety of activities tailored to the participants' roles, including site visits, team projects, group discussions, and networking opportunities.



These diverse activities broadened the participants' learning experience and ensured the training was highly relevant and applicable to their jobs, enhancing their ability to drive innovation and progress within their respective postal administrations.

## Upcoming APPC Courses/Workshops

**SEPTEMBER 16 TO OCTOBER 4**

- E-COMMERCE SOLUTIONS AND SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT (ESC) COURSE
- INTERNATIONAL MAIL ACCOUNTING (IMA) COURSE

**SEPTEMBER 23 TO 27**

- SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT (SCM) WORKSHOP
- TERMINAL DUES (TD) WORKSHOP



### INTERVIEW WITH MR. TELMEN GERELT, THE CEO OF MONGOL POST

**Introduction:** Telmen Gerelt, took over as CEO of Mongol Post JSC this year. He has earlier held leadership roles including Deputy CEO of Mongol Post, VP at Ard Financial Group, and CEO of Ard Credit NBF. He co-founded MEC Partners LLC, specializing in IT, E-commerce, and Delivery. He holds an MSc in Management from SungKyunKwan University, Korea, and a bachelor's in International Economic Relations from the National University of Mongolia. Fluent in English, Korean, and Russian, he also serves on the boards of the Mongolian Fintech Association, Ulaanbaatar City Chamber of Commerce, and Mongolian Non-Bank Financial Institutions' Association.



**Q1:** Can you share your background and your vision for Mongol Post?

**Mr. Telmen Gerelt:** Certainly. I served as Deputy CEO of Mongol Post from 2016 to 2020, during a transformative period when the government partially privatized the company. My experience spans the private sector, including co-founding an e-commerce platform in Mongolia. When I joined Mongol Post, our revenue was heavily dependent on traditional mail, which was declining. We implemented a strategy focusing on improving mail efficiency, expanding logistics business, and introducing financial services. This approach helped us double our revenue and increase profitability tenfold within two years. I returned as CEO this year, after serving on the board during the pandemic years. My strategy now includes enhancing traditional mail into new services, expanding international mail exchanges, building logistics business lines and integrating financial services to support Mongolia's vast rural areas.

**Q2:** What challenges did Mongol Post face during the pandemic, and how are you addressing them?

**Mr. Telmen Gerelt:** The pandemic severely disrupted logistics, halting inbound mail from key regions like Japan. Posts are still recovering from the backlog. The board of directors decided to review the management, leading to my appointment through an open competition. My focus is on increasing productivity and efficiency, especially in international exchanges. Mongolia, with its small population, relies heavily on international revenue.

Our new international mail processing center at the new international airport is a significant milestone. Additionally, liberalizing air flights will enhance our international exchanges, critical for our landlocked country bordered by China and Russia.

**Q3:** How does Mongol Post balance its universal service obligation with profitability?

**Mr. Telmen Gerelt:** Mongolia is vast, and providing services to remote areas is costly. While our operations in Ulaanbaatar and international markets are profitable, they subsidize the rural areas. About 30% of our volume comes from these remote regions, but they are expensive to serve. To address this, we are building five sub-logistic centers as part of a regional development program. These centers will enhance logistics, leveraging our extensive network to serve both public and private sectors efficiently. Our goal is to diminish the urban-rural divide by ensuring timely delivery of services and products across the country.

**Q4:** What are the strategic directions you're focusing on in the coming years?

**Mr. Telmen Gerelt:** Our strategy has four main directions: enhancing traditional mail with new services, expanding logistics into regional supply-chain, upgrading e-commerce logistics and opening our network to public and private sectors. We recently received a financial inclusion project grant from the UPU, supported by the Japan Fund.



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This will equip 150 remote areas with POS machines, enabling them to offer various services, including financial and online shopping. Our postmen will act as mobile branches, delivering products and services even in the remotest areas. Additionally, we are integrating digital services to improve accessibility for rural populations. This holistic approach aims to increase network usage and collaboration with diverse sectors, driving growth and inclusivity.

**Q5:** *What are the current challenges and priorities for Mongol Post?*

**Mr. Telmen Gerelt:** The main challenge is the lack of government attention and support for the postal sector over the past decade. We are a partially state-owned enterprise, which places us in a unique position, not fully benefiting from either public or private sector policies. This ambiguous status affects our ability to upgrade infrastructure and receive necessary support. Another significant challenge is the outdated postal law, which needs urgent revision to reflect current realities. I am working on advocating for policy changes and legal reforms to create a favorable environment for the postal sector in whole. Engaging with the government and international communities is crucial to highlight the sector's importance and secure the necessary support for sustainable growth.

**Q6:** *How do you see the competition in Mongolia, and what is your approach to customer service?*

**Mr. Telmen Gerelt:** Domestically, we face competition from over 90 licensed private postal companies. Our strategy is to balance profitability in urban and international markets with the cost of serving rural areas. We need government support to sustain this balance. Customer expectations have changed; they demand faster, cheaper services. To meet these needs, we've introduced products like same-day delivery. We also need to upgrade the infrastructure and improve our branding and market presence to be more competitive. Despite the challenges, our network's trustworthiness, especially for remote deliveries, remains a significant advantage.

**Q7:** *How does your background in e-commerce and the financial sector benefit Mongol Post?*

**Mr. Telmen Gerelt:** My experience in e-commerce and financial technology brings valuable insights into modernizing Mongol Post. I aim to leverage this knowledge to accelerate our development, particularly in integrating financial services and enhancing logistics. For instance, securing the Japanese grant for financial inclusion projects reflects how my background helps in achieving strategic goals. The postal sector globally is focusing on financial services and e-commerce logistics, areas where my expertise can significantly contribute to Mongol Post's growth and innovation.



Mongol Post is navigating a period of significant transformation, leveraging new infrastructure and strategic initiatives to enhance service delivery, especially in remote areas. With a clear focus on international exchanges, logistics, and financial services, the company aims to bridge the urban-rural divide and drive sustainable growth.

## POSTAL BUSINESS FORUM 2024



**18TH to 20TH  
NOVEMBER  
2024**

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SUKHUMVIT**

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<https://www.postalbusinessforum.com>

**UPCOMING  
EVENTS**



**UPU PUBLISHED  
“DEVELOPMENT OF PHYSICAL  
POSTAL SERVICES TO BETTER  
REFLECT E-COMMERCE  
CUSTOMER NEEDS IN BOTH THE  
‘BELOW 2KG’ AND ‘ABOVE 2KG’  
MARKETS” RESEARCH**

The UPU has released a new report focusing on the development of physical postal services to better cater to e-commerce customers, particularly in the markets for items both below and above 2 kg.

The study highlights the need for designated operators to adapt their business models to maintain and expand their presence in the growing cross-border e-commerce market.

It addresses challenges such as the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, new regional trade rules, and the competition from private delivery networks.

**For more information, you can access the full report**

<https://www.upu.int/en/publications/physical-postal-services/development-of-physical-postal-services-to-better-reflect-ecommerce-customer-needs-in-both-the-bel>

**THE UPU LAUNCHED THE  
READY TO MARKET  
INTEROPERABILITY GROUP  
(RMIG) INITIATIVE**

Recently, the Universal Postal Union (UPU) announced the establishment of a new working group called the "Ready to Market Interoperability Group" (RMIG). This group aims to strengthen cooperation between designated postal operators and a wide range of postal sector participants, including private sector entities, to accelerate innovation and sustainability in cross-border postal networks.

The UPU describes the RMIG as a groundbreaking initiative, following proposals approved at the UPU's Extraordinary Congress in Saudi Arabia last October. These proposals sought to enhance relationships between the UPU and postal sector participants (WPSPs),

ensuring seamless network interconnectivity and improving global postal service quality. The RMIG will promote deeper collaboration between the UPU and WPSPs, with members including designated postal operators and representatives from the UPU Consultative Committee, fostering effective dialogue among stakeholders.

The UPU states that the RMIG will introduce a new funding model, establish business cooperation, and shape the future of postal interoperability while enhancing financial independence for its members. The RMIG will create opportunities for a broader range of stakeholders and ensure the continued vitality of essential postal services.

**Review the full news at**

<https://www.upu.int/en/newsletter/ready-to-market-interoperability-group-shaping-the-future-of-postal-interoperability>



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Write to us at:



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admin@appu-bureau.org

### AUSTRALIA POST BECOMES E- COMMERCE FULFILLMENT PARTNER FOR IKEA

This October, Australia Post will begin a three-year partnership with IKEA to provide e-commerce fulfillment services for small and medium parcels, which account for 65% of IKEA Australia's total 500,000 parcel volumes.

With 23% of all parcel orders delivered to areas outside the reach of IKEA's 10 metro stores, Australia Post will support the expansion of IKEA deliveries across its network, reaching even the most regional and remote parts of Australia.



Australia Post is projected to deliver over 250,000 IKEA parcels each year under the agreement, offering both Parcel Post and Express Post delivery options for customers across the country.

This partnership highlights Australia Post's growing capabilities in the e-commerce sector and its commitment to supporting major retail brands in Australia.

For more details, you can read the full article:

<https://www.parcelandpostaltechnologyinternational.com/news/e-commerce/australia-post-becomes-e-commerce-fulfillment-partner-for-ikea>

### INDIA POST TAKES TRANSFORMATIVE STEP FOR DIGITAL ADDRESSING

India Post has taken initiative to launch an ambitious project to create a standardized, nationwide geo-coded addressing system called the Digital Postal Index Number (DIGIPIN). This project aims to enable simple, precise, scalable, and consistent addressing across the country for streamlined and easier access for citizens to receive delivery of public and private services. DIGIPIN divides India into uniform 4-meter by 4-meter units, each assigned a unique 10-digit alphanumeric code derived from the latitude and longitude of the location. It is adaptable, and compatible with existing GIS applications. DIGIPIN marks a significant advancement in India Post's digital transformation efforts. A beta version was released on July 19, 2024, to gather public feedback before full implementation.

Source: India Post

### THE ROLE OF IRAN POST IN DEVELOPING HOME- BASED BUSINESSES

Iran Post has been instrumental in supporting the growth of home-based businesses, especially in less developed regions. By providing accessible e-commerce services, Iran Post has enabled entrepreneurs to reach customers nationwide, particularly benefiting women artisans in remote areas.

In Khash, a southeastern city, women involved in needlework embroidery and handmade doll production have used Iran Post to successfully market and distribute their crafts across the country. The cost-effective delivery and reliable service have made Iran Post the preferred choice for many artisans.

This support has allowed a wide range of local products, including spices, medicinal herbs, local food items, and handicrafts, to reach customers nationwide, boosting local economies and providing sustainable livelihoods for home-based entrepreneurs.



Source: Iran Post

