

POSTAL NEWS

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1. Gov't considering scrapping cap on postal savings: Kamei Tuesday, January 19, 2010

TOKYO, Jan. 19, 2010 (Kyodo News International) -- The government is considering scrapping or raising the 10 million yen limit on postal savings as sought by the Japan Post group, Shizuka Kamei, state minister in charge of postal reforms, suggested Tuesday.

"Whether the current upper limit is appropriate...such an issue is surely a matter we need to discuss," Kamei said at a regular press conference, referring to the ongoing discussions among the government, Japan Post Holdings Co. and other related parties on postal reforms.

Noting that discussion is under way, Kamei declined to provide details, but suggested that the government is also considering lifting the 13 million yen limit to postal insurance claims.

A conclusion over those matters would be reached by the end of this month, after examining whether such steps hinder private-sector financial businesses, he said.

If a change in those limits is deemed necessary, the revision is expected to be included in a postal reform bill for which the government plans to compile an outline by the end of this month, he added.

The Japan Post group has called on the government to remove the 10 million yen cap on postal savings at Japan Post Bank and the 13 million yen limit for claims on insurance policies at Japan Post Insurance Co., saying the group needs to raise profitability to provide universal banking and insurance services across the nation.

The Democratic Party of Japan-led government is currently reviewing the postal privatization process that was implemented by the previous government led by the Liberal Democratic Party, with an intention to stipulate that the postal financial service companies provide universal services, including to sparsely populated areas.

(Source: iStockAnalyst)

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2. Postal services still viable, says boss of African body

By Zephania Ubwani, Arusha

Postal services in Africa are still viable platforms for communication despite onslaught from the electronic super highways.

Because of its large network, it can effectively facilitate access of populations to ICT-based products and services and thereby significantly contributing to the digital divide.

This was said here yesterday during a press conference by Mrs Rodah Masaviru, the director general of the Pan African Postal Union (PAPU), ahead of its 30th anniversary celebrations this week.

The organisation was established here in January 1980 where it is headquartered, as a specialised agency of the African Union during a conference of African ministers responsible for postal services.

She said despite competition from new players in the communication industry, postal services in Africa were still crucial because of its vast network which extends to the remote districts and villages.

Currently, Africa has 30,300 post offices out of 660,000 worldwide and that they not only reached large populations without access to electronic communication, but now served as cyber-cafe modes in many areas.

She said internet users in Africa were five times less than those in North America and that the situation was worrying in sub-Saharan Africa where only three per cent of populations are connected to the internet.

She quoted a United Nations study which indicated that more than half of the internet users in the continent were in North Africa and South Africa, effectively cutting off the majority of Africans from digital communication.

"At national level, there are glaring disparities between rural and urban populations and even within urban populations in the under-served areas," she said, adding that the digital gap negated the building of a fully integrated society.

The UN study released in 2008 showed that 51 million people in Africa compared to 248 million in North America were connected to the internet. Africa is three times more populated - 955 million people - compared to 338 million in North America.

Mrs Masaviru, however, said conscious of the necessity to bridge the gap and have an efficient and modern postal network in Africa that meets changed needs of the customers, PAPU is embracing some ICT-based products.

In partnership with the African Telecommunications Union (ATU) and the Regional African Satellite Communication Organisation, the organisation is implementing a project known as E-Post Africa project.

Through the initiative, whose aim it to contribute to bridging the digital divide between Africa and the industrialised world and within Africa, PAPU and its partners aim to install multimedia terminals in all post offices in the continent.

The minister for Communications, Science and Technology, Prof Peter Msolla, said Tanzania would not be left behind in modernising its postal services through ICT-based technologies.

He told journalists that the Tanzania Postal Corporation (TPC) has been computerising some of its services in order to improve the quality and efficiency of its services.

Furthermore, TPC intends to turn all post offices in the country to be communication centres offering postal communications and ICT-based products.

"With more than 500 post offices countrywide, community communication centres will enable many Tanzanians to access the internet and demonstrate that the post is a veritable means of bridging the digital divide," the minister added.

President Jakaya Kikwete is expected to open the three-day conference at the Arusha International Conference Centre (AICC) immediately after launching the new postcodes addressing system to replace mail boxes in the long run.

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2010-01-18 09:26:00

3. New postal delivery system to be launched today

By Zephania Ubwani, Arusha

A new postal address system for Tanzania to replace the old mail boxes will be officially launched here today.

Under it, mails and parcels transported through the normal postal networks will be delivered to residential and business premises which will have post codes. President Jakaya Kikwete is expected to officially launch the New National Addressing and Postcodes project which has been piloted in Arusha since 2008.

The minister for Communications, Science and Technology Prof Peter Msolla told reporters here yesterday that implementation of the project would take five years.

Phase One slated for 2010 and 2011 will cover the municipalities, towns and district headquarters while the second phase will be implemented in villages and informal settlements in urban areas.

The multi-billion shilling project pioneers the implementation of a street-type addressing system with postcodes and the creation of a national address database.

"It will involve naming and identification of streets and numbering all houses in accordance with new addressing standards," he said. The street-type postal addressing system has been initiated at a time the use of traditional mail delivering system through the post offices has gone down steeply.

Messages related through letters have now been replaced by different forms of electronic communication such as e-mails, SMS and telephones.

While an average Tanzanian writes less than one letter a year, the rate of telephone penetration in the country has gone up to 33 per cent.

Competition from the electronic communication as well as declining financial support from the government has also dealt a blow to the state-owned Tanzania Postal Corporation.

The country of 40 million people has only 173,000 mail boxes in 250 post offices, meaning communication through the system has little significance now unlike in the past.

According to Prof Msolla, implementation of the project was estimated to cost Sh.18bn when its pilot phase started in Arusha two years ago but now likely to have gone up. He allayed fears with a new postal address system, the existing post offices would become redundant.

"Postcodes will also be allocated to specific post office establishment and major customers," he pointed out. He added, however, with the introduction of the new system the traditional postal services must be improved.

Introduction of the new postcode system, which is already in operation in some African states, will principally involve TPC and the Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority (TCRA).

"The country will be divided into postcode areas a five digit postcode system will be used in identifying areas up to the ward level,"he said. The minister implored on stakeholders in the communication sector to cooperate in developing the system, saying it would have significant positive impact in the society.

It would also enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of universal postal services in the country such as movement of letters, packets, parcels and financial services.

Mr Deos Mndeme, the acting post master general admitted that the postal sector in Tanzania, just like elsewhere in the world, was facing genuine challenges. These have been precipitated by, among others, the liberalisation of markets, advancement of technology and competition from other players in the market.

But he insisted that the basic and traditional postal services will continue and that it was not gravely threatened by other players in the industry. He said the postal service would embrace electronic technology in money transfer services and in tracing and tracking letters, packets and parcels sent through its network.

"In all our postal network would be improved and modernised to catch up with the rest of the world," he added. Globally there are 660,000 post offices, among them 250 in Tanzania.

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4. The future for intelligent mail is bright

Kevin Conti, director-communications intelligence, Pitney Bowes Business Insight
Story posted: January 18, 2010 - 10:42 am EDT

By now, many mailers are familiar with the basic structure and objectives of the United States Postal Service's Intelligent Mail program and new postal barcode. This has been augmented by the Full Service program, which began Nov. 29, 2009, requiring participating mailers to use unique Intelligent Mail Bar Codes on mail pieces, trays and containers, and to electronically submit postage statements and mailing documentation, among other requirements.

The benefits to those adopting the program are real, providing discounts on first-class and standard mail pieces, as well as flats.

Many mailers have also graduated to electronic mailing document submission via the Postal Service's PostalOne! system, which provides a streamlined, Web-based process for mail entry, payment, tracking and reporting.

For the future, the Postal Service is planning additional service enhancements, collaborating in work groups under the Mailers Technical Advisory Committee to support those efforts.

Many mailers pursuing all these aspects of the Postal Service's Intelligent Mail program have focused on the Intelligent Mail Bar Code element, and others on the PostalOne! processes. Beyond this are other opportunities for many mailers in leveraging Intelligent Mail visibility services, such as

CONFIRM, which provides near real-time tracking information of mail pieces, and Address Change Service, a notification of address changes, which is free with the Full Service program.

For many, these optional services provide great business value, justifying their investment and changing the game for mailing communications. The Address Change Service alone can easily increase the response rate of direct mail marketing efforts.

But what really matters is actionable information that can be leveraged for marketing, financial and operational scenarios. For example, mail-based intelligence can be used to optimize call center staffing, marketing windows and triggered events.

Forward-thinking mailers will view all these Intelligent Mail programs as a competitive advantage to grow their businesses while reducing operating costs. Progressive list processing and mailing services companies have developed business cases around new Intelligent Mail Bar Code-based products and services, such as “virtual returned mail,” that may expand their market shares, differentiate their services and create substantial savings by eliminating time and material waste.

The following is a best practices checklist that may provide some considerations for mailers:

Work to understand potential business opportunities or problem solutions and build the business case for Intelligent Mail.

Leverage outbound CONFIRM tracking and Address Change Service to maximize business benefits.

Convert appropriate remits or business-response applications to leverage inbound CONFIRM services.

Coordinate the “undeliverable as addressed” process with Address Change Service and work flow applications.

Provide your vendors with Intelligent Mail Bar Code data connected to the customer and document, if some of your marketing mail is produced by third parties. This allows tracking and dashboards on this mail to be consistent with in-house mail.

Develop automated reporting and query applications to ensure postal data get leveraged by your entire organization or your customers.

Develop Address Change Service-based mail quality reporting dashboards by application to reduce postage costs and ensure compliance.

These practices, and continually evolving approaches to Intelligent Mail, will help organizations be prepared to manage challenges and opportunities in their mailing communications for 2010 and beyond.

Kevin Conti is director-communications intelligence for Pitney Bowes Business Insight. He can be reached at Kevin.Conti@pb.com.

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5. JS gives legitimacy to courier services

Staff Reporter, Jan 19, 2010.

The Jatiya Sangsad yesterday passed a bill providing legitimacy to courier service institutions and their activities considering their contribution to the public life.

Post and Telecommunications Minister Rajiuddin Ahmed Raju piloted the Post Office (Amendment) Bill, 2009, which was passed through voice vote with four amendments proposed by independent member Mohammad Fazlul Azim.

Provisions on ensuring quality control of services of private mail operators and courier services as well as the postal department have been proposed in the bill.

It also includes provisions allowing postal department to lease out some of its services to other operators by collecting fixed charges and also permitting the department to work as an agency of other operators.

The bill also proposed the provisions empowering the postal department to rent out its resources and facilities and take up various activities for adopting different technologies and computerisation.

The Post Office Law was enacted in 1898 for providing postal service to the people. The new bill will improve the services of private mail operators and courier service with provision of punishment in case of violation of rules, Raju added.

According to the bill the postal department will be able to introduce new services on receiving fees to compete with other private services. The bill will enable the Postal Department to provide new services like Electronic Money Transfer and other revenue earning programme by using the information technology.

According to the bill, the Post Office shall be the designated national public postal operator responsible for providing the Universal Postal Service all over Bangladesh and for international communications.

The Post Office may modify, rearrange or adopt new technology for securing speedy services to the people as it deems fit.

The Post Office may enter into new business ventures like Post Shops, e-Commerce, address data or other data base as it deems fit and can also exchange or inter-change business transactions with other domestic or international organisations for the purpose of commercial benefits.

It may provide remittance transfer services, banking services and postal life insurance services either individually or may enter into contract with other organisations for providing services to the people.

Lone independent lawmaker Mohammad Fazlul Azim proposed for public opinion on the bill, sending it to select committee and its amendment. His four amendments were later accepted in voice votes, but the rest of the proposals were rejected.

January 18, 2010 15:15 PM

6. Pos Malaysia Going Automated And Mobile

KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 18 (Bernama) -- Pos Malaysia is going both automated and mobile.

To reach out to more customers and for their convenience, it is launching two new services, namely the country's first-of-its-kind Post-Automated-Machine (PAM) and Pos-on-Wheels or mobile post office.

Pos Malaysia chairman Tan Sri Aseh Che Mat said a pilot project of PAM had been carried out at the Kuala Lumpur General Post Office and was expected to be expanded to other locations nationwide, in stages.

"PAM is similar to a bank's ATM (automated teller machine) but the first of its kind that is integrated with postal service.

"The response from the public has been very encouraging and we plan to deploy another 30 units of PAM this year.

"Our target is to have a PAM in every post office nationwide. It will run round-the-clock in due course," he told a news conference here Monday.

PAM services include purchase of stamps, posting of non-standard letter (up to 2kg), posting of domestic PosLaju items (up to 2kg), posting of domestic PosParcel and PosDaftar items (up to 2kg) and top-up for Standing Order Deposit Account (Soda).

Customers can also make bill payments via the machine to Tenaga Nasional Bhd, Telekom Malaysia Bhd, Syabas, Indah Water Konsortium and Maxis, said Aseh.

As for the Pos-on-Wheels service, he said the service would be available at mostly crowded and strategic places.

Pos-on-Wheels would have wider customer coverage as the mobile unit could visit a few places within a day, he said, adding that its services were similar to those of a normal post office, such as purchase of stamps, money order and postal order, payment of bills, international money transfer, renewal of road tax and driving licence.

"Pos-on-Wheels will also be able to conduct online transactions. This is due to the usage of satellite connectivity," he said.

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