

POSTAL NEWS

No. 15/2008

Formulated by UNI-Japan Post in cooperation with UNI-Apro,
ASPEK Indonesia and SPPI

1. **Remittances could exceed \$7b in 2008 in Bangladesh. Feb 4, 2008.**
2. **Postal Service adds flat-rate box, Sunday Express service. Feb 3, 2008.**
3. **Letter: Postal service complaint included misunderstandings. Feb 3, 2008.**
4. **PPP, PML-N express reservation over process of vote through postal ballot. Feb 3, 2008.**
5. **Big plans for South Station, but don't hold your breath. Feb 3, 2008.**
6. **DSV sells stake in Tollpost to Swedish postal service for 993 mln dkr. Feb 4, 2008.**
7. **Tusk looks to weaken the unions as postal strike looms. Feb 3, 2008.**
8. **United Council post event supports WHEG Indexing Bill. Feb 4, 2008.**
9. **European Postal Sector moves closer to liberalization. Feb 4, 2008.**
10. **Postal services: Commission welcomes the adoption of the EU Postal Directive. Market Opening brings clear benefits for postal us. Feb 4, 2008.**

Published On: 2008-02-04

Business

1. Remittances could exceed \$7b in 2008 in Bangladesh

Says Western Union senior official

Refayet Ullah Mirdha

Remittances could exceed US\$7.0 billion in 2008, according to Anil Kapur, Western Union (WU) Managing Director for South Asia, as the number of Bangladeshis working abroad increases.

Speaking to The Daily Star on a recent visit to Dhaka, Kapur said another reason for the increase was the move to send money through official channels rather than via 'hundi', unofficial networks for transferring cash.

According to official statistics, the country received nearly \$6.0 billion as remittance from non-resident Bangladeshis (NRBs) last year and the contribution of such remittance to the gross domestic product (GDP) crossed 13 percent.

But, Anil declined to say the exact figure that his company transacted as remittance for Bangladesh last year. He only said that WU's share in the global money transfer business is over 17 percent.

Kapur was in Dhaka to sign an agreement with the Postal Department of Bangladesh enabling WU customers to receive money at local post offices.

He said the major competitors of WU in Bangladesh are private and public commercial banks. “I hope we will win in the competition when our postal services come into full operations,” he said.

“As per the deal, we will launch our services through 450 post stations in Bangladesh in the first phase and the number of such postal WU money receiving points will be raised gradually,” he said.

He said Bangladesh is among the top 15 countries in the world in receiving remittance and if the current trend continues the country could soon be among the top 10. China is the number one recipient.

WU has been working in Bangladesh since 1993 with only 100-point locations and at present the number of point location is more than 1400 across the country.

Kapur said at present 30 percent of remittances come from Saudi Arabia, 15 percent from the USA and more than 10 percent from the UK.

About the agreement with the postal department Kapur said Bangladesh will receive 25 percent as royalty from the commission that is received by WU in Bangladesh.

He said train up the people of postal department is not difficult, as both WU and postal department have agreed to carry out the job in partnership basis.

He said WU maintains strong compliances and in the last year the company spent \$ 35 million for compliance worldwide.

“So, there is no chance of losing of money from the post offices,” he said.

He said if the WU starts functioning with full capacity the government will also be beneficiary as the people will send their hard earned foreign through a formal channel.

Now, some NRBs send their currency send money through informal channels like hundi, for which the government losses huge revenue.

000

2. Postal Service adds flat-rate box, Sunday Express service

Sunday, February 03, 2008

Associated Press

Washington — The U.S. Postal Service is adding a larger flat-rate Priority Mail box and a charge for Express Mail on Sunday and holiday delivery, the first changes it has made under a law approved last year governing mail operations.

Previously such changes would have to be announced and go through a lengthy hearing process before going into effect.

The new law smoothed the process. The post office recently said the changes will take effect March 3.

A new flat-rate Priority Mail box will become available at \$12.95 for shipping anywhere in the United States. The agency will discount it to \$10.95 for shipping to military addresses.

The new box measures 12 inches by 12 inches by 5.5 inches, containing nearly 800 cubic inches of space. Two smaller flat-rate boxes still will be available for \$8.95. They are each more than 500 cubic inches.

In addition, the agency said it will begin charging a \$12.50 premium for delivery of Express Mail on Sunday or holidays. Previously the Postal Service has not charged extra for delivering on those days.

000

3. Letter: Postal service complaint included misunderstandings

Sunday, February 3, 2008

In response to the consumer complaining about the postal service; let me inform her of how things work. She “qualifies” as a rural route not due to population, but due to geographic location.

Since her complaint only allots her enough time to “assume,” instead of actually obtaining facts, allow me to expand on her conclusions. Rural carriers are just as “real” as any other carriers. Like many, she is confusing rural carriers with “contract” carriers (who actually do threaten the routes of rural and “real” carriers). Rural carriers are striving to make a career out of what they do.

As a matter of fact, rural carriers offer additional services such as ordering stamps, mailing packages and, if I’m not home when she needs me to sign for something, all I have to do is request for her to redeliver it, and she does, which “real” carriers do not do.

As far as “the level of service” that the writer is receiving, I am sure that this has only happened once or twice. Comparatively speaking, she neglected to mention the numerous

times that her mail has been delivered even though her address was incorrect, and all that was correct was her name. Unfortunately, “perfect people” forget that normal folk tend to make mistakes. They make typos and misdiagnose illnesses. No, my rural carrier is not perfect, but neither am I.

As to the cost of postage, considering that not a single red cent of our tax dollars contributes to the Postal Service, the cost of a stamp is a fair price to pay for the millions of employees who make the system work, man the machines, make the repairs, etc., and, finally, deliver to our mail boxes. One would think people should make more complaints about gas prices than postage.

Amy Magliarditi

000

4. PPP, PML-N express reservation over process of vote through postal ballot

ISLAMABAD: Expressing bitter reservation over the process to cast vote through postal ballots during the elections, the two major Political parties of the country have accused Election Commission of Pakistan for its biased role to make sure the victory of the candidates of Pakistan Muslim League (PML-Q).

Talking to Online, Central leader PML-N Zafar Iqbal Jhagara said that the election commission has printed 1.8 million postal ballots for the elections due on February 18 while the quantity of such ballot papers was 0.4 million during the elections in 2004.

It is ample proof that the fake vote would be cast through ballot papers in the favour of the candidates of Government allied Parties, he said, adding that, the election commission has been informed in this respect but to avail.

When contacted Secretary Election Commission Kanwar Muhammad Dilshad in this regard as saying that he did not know about the quantity of ballot papers published by election commission, however, now it has no link with election commission because the papers have been dispatched to returning officers. Now it is matter of returning officers and voters, he said.

On the other hand, leader Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Shah Mehmood Qurashi told that the senior officers of different Government department s including education department are pressurizing their subordinate officers for postal vote. The employees through a letter have been directed to appear before the high level officers along with national Identity Card, he alleged.

The Jail officers have also been instructed to ask inmates to cast vote to PML-Q, he said, adding that, his supporters are being asked by district contact officer to cast vote to Pervez Elahi.

000

Tracking progress

5. Big plans for South Station, but don't hold your breath

By Sam Allis

Globe Columnist / February 3, 2008

Good news, gentle readers: no Patriots palaver here. There's nothing left to say except, forget the spread, they win in a tight one.

But the past week was traumatic for the Observer. The Internet went down from Asia to North Africa. Recession is stamping its feet on my front porch. Most unnerving, George Bush gave another State of the Union address.

This was simply too much, so I repaired to the Main Concourse of the South Station for some contemplative time. Good train stations provide great urban space and, counterintuitively, remarkable privacy. I sat in a chair, clam-like happy, as the weight of the world rose from my shoulders.

But my contentment was upended by the news that the station is finally going to be transformed, starting very soon. The second quarter of this year, to be precise. This project has not exactly been a sprint. We're talking Boston time. The Boston Redevelopment Authority finished its first study of such a concept in 1963.

For all of us who don't use the South Station, headlines about impending plans there pass across our collective consciousness like bats at dusk. We sort of know that someone is putting up a giant office building above it. Sometime. But, like everything else in Boston, this is a Waiting For Godot kind of thing.

And the US Postal Service is supposed to quit its giant annex adjacent to the South Station for a spot in South Boston owned by the Massachusetts Port Authority. Sometime. Progress, charitably put, has been glacial, but the two sides are getting close, and last Monday, the Postal Service accepted proposals from five developers for the project. That is real.

What's happening first is that Gerald Hines, the huge international developer, is at last on the move. (He is partnered with TUDC, a Tufts University subsidiary.) He is also, by the way, one of the five interested developers in the post office. Hines could end up with the whole thing - maybe 8 million square feet worth.

Hines will break ground in a matter of months on a 40-story glass-and-steel number that will rise over the old headhouse facing Dewey Square. He's also going to enlarge the bus station and connect it with the train station so that people don't have to brave the elements to get from one to another.

What about tenants? Does he have any?

"We're looking now," says David Perry, who's trailbossing the project for Hines. "We'll do it preferably with tenants, possibly without." Either way, this thing is going up this year.

This will be a three-year construction line, which will further amuse the poor drones who trudge off to their happy destiny every morning from the station. Jackhammers, dust. Yum.

Perry says virtually all of the main concourse will remain intact during construction. But its future is up to Equity Office Properties Trust, which has a 30-year lease on it and the current office space above. It was mum when I asked what it had in mind, but you just know Equity will go way up the food chain for stores and eateries to match the Hines glitter.

more stories like this

Next from Hines come a second building housing a hotel and condos, and a third for office space, both stretching above the enlarged bus terminal.

Question: What took Hines so long? Financing? What?

Nine years of permitting, says Perry. This project is among the most complicated that Hines has done, and he's done a gazillion around the world. Perry has been dealing with the MBTA, Amtrak, the BRA, the US Postal Service, the Federal Railroad Administration, the Federal Aviation Administration, you name it. Money has never been an issue.

Separate from the Hines operation will be a huge play where the post office is now. We're talking 16 acres stretching along the Fort Point canal, dwarfing Hines's six. With any luck, this will alchemize the whole Fort Channel area into something grand.

Stay with me now. An additional six railroad tracks will be built to accommodate increased rail traffic. Whoever ends up as the Postal Service developer will build above them. Nothing happens until the Postal Service is out and in its new digs, which should take at least four years.

"That is not for this economic cycle," says Kairos Shen, the newly appointed chief of planning for Boston, about the Postal Service play. "It will be for the next one."

Whenever the post office annex space is developed, the question is this: How will these two behemoths get along? Will Hines and the player yet to be named be happy neighbors, or Montague and Capulet living cheek to jowl?

That is a valid concern, says Shen: "There needs to be a spacing and rhythm and breathing room for this to work well."

We must never forget that, first and foremost, this is a train station. Most important to its future, then, are the new tracks. How long will they accommodate new rail traffic? Commuter rail traffic rose from 5 million in 1976 to 22 million last year.

So what was the planning timeline for the additional six tracks? Twenty years out, 40 years out? There was none, the MBTA tells me. Wow.

It matters, says Shen, because as more people ditch their cars for public transit, he thinks we'll eventually need even more tracks than planned. The question is when. Oh dear.

Sam Allis's email address is: allis@globe.com
© Copyright 2008 Globe Newspaper Company.

000

6. DSV sells stake in Tollpost to Swedish postal service for 993 mln dkr
02.04.08, 6:35 AM ET

COPENHAGEN (Thomson Financial) - Danish transport group DSV AS said it has agreed to sell its 50 pct stake in Norwegian transport company Tollpost Globe AS to Swedish postal service, with an agreed equity value of 993 mln dkr.

The transaction will have a positive earnings impact of 440 mln dkr for DSV in 2008, it added. The profit, which is non-taxable, will be recognised under special items.

DSV said it has operated Tollpost as a joint venture with Swedish postal service, Posten AB, since 2001, when Posten acquired its initial 50 pct stake in the Norwegian company in connection with its takeover of DSV Parcel.

DSV said its existing trading agreement with Tollpost will remain in force, and that it will thus retain access to the company's national distribution network in Norway.

'Ongoing investments in and development of the parcel distribution activities of Tollpost Globe AS have obviously led to greater affiliation with Posten AB than with DSV,' DSV said.

'Management of DSV has therefore found that the disposal of its stake in Tollpost Globe AS is the most expedient way to ensure the continued development of the commercial core areas of both Tollpost Globe AS and DSV,' it added.

The transaction is subject to approval by Norwegian authorities.

gustav.sandstrom@thomson.com

000

3rd February 2008

7. Tusk looks to weaken the unions as postal strike looms

Postal workers could strike at any moment to demand wage increases, while the government is drastically seeking a way to diminish the role of trade unions. Five days ago trade unions of Polish Post (PP) submitted its demands to the general director seeking a wage increase of zł.800 gross on average with today named as the deadline for a reply.

Recently, Prime Minister Donald Tusk admitted that the act on trade unions has plenty of flaws, such as the "extreme multitude" of trade unions, which is diminishing the role of unions' headquarters. A turning point was the strike of miners in the Budryk mine, but the number of strikes in 2007 was high regardless. In total there were 1,736 strikes last year, while in 2006 there were only 27 of them. A road to legal compromise might be difficult, as according to unofficial information the government wants among others to force trade unions to finance themselves with their own contributions or to ban them from having their offices in places of work. "This is an attack on democracy. Work of the trade unions is beneficial to everyone," said Alfred Bujara, head of commercial sector trade unions. Others added that all governments wanted to change the law, but none of them succeeded, however the largest of them will also present some changes to the existing law.

000

Going postal

8. United Council post event supports WHEG Indexing Bill

Natalie Saeger

Issue date: 2/4/08 Section: News

Across UW campuses, blue postcards were handed out urging students to support the Wisconsin Higher Education Grant Indexing Bill. Friday, UW-Eau Claire's United

Council hosted a postcarding event in Davies to inform students of the WHEG Indexing Bill and its affects on students.

Since 1960, it has been the United Council's job to lobby across the state to make education more affordable and accessible for students, according to Eau Claire United Council's delegation leader, sophomore Amber Bretl.

"The WHEG grant is given to students who need financial aid," said Bretl. "When tuition is increasing, the financial aid isn't as equivalent."

The WHEG Indexing Bill benefits all the students who receive the WHEG grant, but ultimately all students benefit because it works against raising tuition.

Many students were unaware that a bill like this was in consideration. Sophomore Jake Skalitzky was among those students.

"I've heard absolutely nothing," Skalitzky said. "I think it's a great idea because it's keeping college affordable on a whole."

The postcarding process will wrap up when the cards end up in the hands of Assembly Speaker Michael Huebsch. Bretl said that after all of the member campuses have the postcards completed, they are hand delivered to Madison where they'll be left on Huebsch's desk. Ultimately, the council wants to make the legislators address their concerns and make a statement, Bretl said.

"Hopefully we can change Speaker Huebsch's mind about this bill," Bretl said. "And get support from other legislators, as well."

John Murray, a spokesman for Huebsch, said if the speaker was presented with a bill like this, he would have to take a look at the physical complications of it.

"I think the speaker would be willing to take a look at the bill ... they are usually dealt with separately in the budget," Murray said.

According to Murray, issues concerning tuition are controlled by the Board of Regents. "Legislature doesn't control tuition increases," he said.

He said Republicans froze tuition at the current level, and holding tuition occurs directly or indirectly. A considerable amount of money has already been put into the budget in support of the WHEG programs, and looking at the dollars to the WHEG programs is important, Murray said.

"It's important to keep cost down any way possible," junior Colin Hall said about the bill. "Honestly, if there was a way to keep it down, why wouldn't they?"

During the postcarding event, Bretl said the turnout was going pretty well. "We've been doing it for about an hour and have had 100 postcards filled out," she said. "We hope other campuses have as much success."

Looking ahead, the council's next event will address the Compassionate Care for Rape Victims Bills. However, Bretl said, the WHEG Indexing Bill was a big one and she hopes the students will be heard.

"Education should be a right to all American citizens," Skalitzky said. "Why are we limiting?"

000

9. European Postal Sector moves closer to liberalisation

Sara Kimberley
04 Feb 2008

The European Parliament has approved a Third Postal Directive, moving the European Postal Sector one step closer to becoming fully liberalised.

The Postal Users Group (PUG), which represents a broad range of associations covering companies that provide postal services to consumers, has welcomed the move that will ensure fair and effective competition, better value for users from existing services and downward pressure of prices.

The Directive also compliments the European Commission, the Council and the Parliament on setting deadlines for the final step in opening the EU letter mail market to competition.

PUG chairman Per Mortensen says: "We now have a legal basis on which to build a truly competitive market for letter post services. The challenge for the 27 member states is to ensure they successfully adopt the Directive's legal framework to local conditions in ways that truly benefit postal users thereby ensuring letter post's future. Therefore, PUG will follow the transposition of the Directive into national law very closely."

000

10. Postal services: Commission welcomes the adoption of the EU Postal Directive. Market Opening brings clear benefits for postal us

Source: European Commission
Published Monday, 4 February, 2008 - 09:26

Today the European Parliament adopted the new Postal Directive, giving its final political approval to EU postal reform. The vote confirms the broad political consensus on the way forward for opening EU postal markets to full competition. The Commission will assist Member States in implementing the new Directive and will take an active role in monitoring closely market developments to make sure that EU citizens and businesses obtain the benefits from high quality postal services foreseen by the Directive.

Commission President José Manuel Barroso welcomed Parliament's vote, identifying it as a clear example of a Europe of Results: "Postal reform arms Europe's postal operators for the challenges and the opportunities of the communications revolution. Postal Services are vital for our citizens and businesses. Since the first Postal Directive in 1997 performance, quality and reliability of postal services in Europe have substantially increased to the benefit of all postal users. This Directive will further stimulate this process. This demonstrates the common commitment of Parliament, the Council and the Commission to reform to meet the Lisbon goals."

Internal Market and Services Commissioner Charlie McCreevy said: "This is a shared political success: there is a strong consensus on the new postal Directive between EU institutions in line with the objectives we set out in our proposal. The European Parliament paved the way for the final agreement. This Directive will further promote innovation, lead to better services and help to reduce cost. Postal operators will have stronger incentives to meet consumer and user needs. The viability of the sector and the high quality of universal postal services will be strengthened for EU citizens and businesses".

Maintaining a high quality universal service

The Commission had adopted its proposal only 15 month ago. The text voted today by the European Parliament reflects the overall political agreement between the institutions and maintains the key elements of the Commission's initial proposal, in particular: the accomplishment of the internal market of Community postal services via the abolition of the reserved area in all Member States; the confirmation of the scope and standard of universal service; reinforcement of consumers' rights and upgrading of the role of national regulatory authorities; the offering of a list of measures Member States may take to safeguard and finance, where necessary, the universal service.

Market opening

The final date for achieving full market opening is 31 December 2010, with the possibility for some Member States to postpone full market opening by two more years as a maximum and the inclusion of a temporary reciprocity clause applying to those Member States that make use of the latter transitional period. The new Directive is the final step in a long reform process that has already seen large areas of EU postal markets opened to competition, with very positive results.

A Lisbon deliverable

Postal services are at the cross roads of the communication and e-commerce sectors, and as such they are a cornerstone of the internal market and account for some 1% of EU GDP. With the removal of reserved areas, users of postal services can expect the services available to them to develop and further improve. Universal service providers will be motivated to become more reliable and efficient and to further increase their customer focus in the light of potential competition from new market entrants. Full market opening will also directly foster the creation of new jobs in new postal companies and in the industries dependent on the postal sector, fully in line with the goals of the Lisbon agenda.

EU postal reform will continue to require close monitoring of the development of competition. The Commission will assist Member States with the implementation of the Directive to secure the high quality of services that EU citizens expect.

Background

Postal Services in the EU are covered by the 1997 Postal Directive (97/67/EC). This created a regulatory framework which guarantees citizens a universal service, while gradually limiting the scope of the reserved area (initially mail under 350 grams, amended in 2002 to 100 grams and reduced on 1/1/2006 to 50 grams). The Directive has aimed at ensuring the best possible service through a gradual opening of the market. As required by the Directive, the Commission had confirmed by the end of 2006 the target of full market opening by means of a further amending Directive. The vote today confirms the wide political consensus to commit to postal reform.

000

Collected by Chairul Anwar, Bandung, Indonesia.

E-mail address : chairulanwar49@operamail.com, uyungchairul@plasa.com.