

POSTAL NEWS

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- 1. Qatar pilots RFID solution for postal services. Oct 7, 2008.**
- 2. Postal pilot project underway. Oct 7, 2008.**
- 3. Postal services set for modernization. Oct 9, 2008.**
- 4. EU rules Slovakia postal law illegal. Oct 8, 2008.**

1. Qatar pilots RFID solution for postal services

By Vineetha Menon on Tuesday, October 07, 2008

Motorola XR480 RFID reader

Qatar Post has piloted Motorola's Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) technology in an initiative to measure the quality of postal services throughout the Middle East.

Through the joint project between Qatar Post, Emirates Post and Saudi Post, Motorola XR480 fixed RFID readers, supplied with Motorola high-performance antennas, were installed in mail processing centers across the three countries to track anonymous test envelopes containing RFID tags.

Addressed and tagged by an independent third party, these anonymous test letters mix with regular letters at the point of posting and are automatically detected by the RFID antennas as they enter the sorting centers. The test letters are detected again as they exit the sorting centers. Detection times and dates helped to measure the quality of postal service.

Qatar Post recently concluded a successful trial of the RFID technology during which it deployed and tested both passive and semi-active RFID systems.

"Now that the pilot is completed successfully, the project results will be introduced to the entire region across the 22 Arab countries, which is expected to revolutionize mail delivery in the area," commented Catina Aghayan, quality and development consultant at Qatar Post.

"Having proved that postal tracking can be successfully managed on a passive/semi-active platform from Motorola that is more cost efficient, we hope to pave the way for countries around the world to demonstrate compliance without the cost," Aghayan added.

2. Postal pilot project underway

Oct, 7, 2008.

Q-POST'S ongoing radio frequency identification (RFID) pilot, involving Qatar, UAE and Saudi Arabia, will help boost the country's postal service in future, communications equipment manufacturers Motorola said yesterday.

Motorola has set up high-performance antennas in mail processing centres across the three countries to track test envelopes, containing RFID tags.

This, the company said, has created a simulated environment of how mail moves through postal system and help authorities better understand the time and route that mail takes on its journey from collection to delivery.

Addressed and tagged by an independent third party, these test letters become mixed with regular letters at the point of posting and are automatically detected as they enter the sorting centres.

Positioned at the sorting centres' gates, RFID readers detect the tags in the letters as soon as they enter the building, without needing 'line of sight' or individual scanning. The test letters are then detected again as they exit the sorting centres. The logging of time and date help build a database measuring the quality of service.

Quality and development consultant at Q-Post Catina Aghayan said the corporation was excited by the outcome of the tests, which she said was the first RFID pilot for the postal sector in the Arab region. "With this technology, we will be able to track our mail at every stage of delivery from origin to final destination and of course could significantly improve Q-Post's quality of service," she said.

Motorola territory official Hozefa Saylawala said RFID solutions, supplied by partner Track IT, would prove effective in improving the quality of postal services.

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3. Postal services set for modernization

ABDULWAKIL SAIBOKO

Daily News; Thursday, October 09, 2008 @20:00

GOVERNMENT is modernising postal services to meet the current world standards, the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Communication, Science and Technology, Dr Naomi Katunzi said in Dar es Salaam yesterday.

Dr Katunzi said the government would provide postal offices with Information Communication Technology (ICT) facilities so that they may turn into information centres.

The Permanent Secretary was speaking in Dar es Salaam on the occasion of the Universal Postal Union (UPU) Day yesterday.

She said the government has identified some regions for pilot studies on postal services modernisation. She listed the regions as Arusha, Dodoma and Mwanza.

"There is need to discover more avenues to expand the usage of ICT especially in rural areas where the majority of our people live," she said.

The PS added that there was need to expand postal network not only to reach the rural areas but to offer innovative services.

She said the challenge to all players in the sector was provision of quality and reliable services to as many Tanzanians as possible. She said the Public Postal Operator has 400 outlets, but most of them were based in urban centres.

Dr Katunzi who was speaking on behalf of the Ministry's Deputy Minister, Dr Maua Daftari, commended Tanzania Communication Regulatory Authority (TCRA) for licensing over 50 private couriers.

"I am told that the postal market in the country has grown; one can speak of universal postal service, international courier services, East African courier services, domestic courier services and intercity courier services." she said.

Dr Katunzi noted that Tanzania was an active member of the UPU and that on August 6, this year the 24th Universal Postal Congress held in Geneva Switzerland, elected Tanzania to the council of administration of the UPU for the period of four years (2009-2012).

Meanwhile, the Chairman of TCRA, Judge Buxton Chipeta said that the postal sector worldwide was faced with numerous challenges including globalization, liberalization and increased competition from new services.

"The current environment calls for the postal sector to be more aware of its contribution to the gross domestic product since there is a direct relationship between economic development and postal services," he noted.

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4. EU rules Slovakia postal law illegal

By Nikki Tait

Published: October 8 2008 03:00 | Last updated: October 8 2008 03:00

Brussels yesterday deployed some of its strongest powers to overrule Slovakia's move to remonopolise part of its postal service. The European Commission decided that a law, brought in by the Slovak government in February, which extended Slovenska Posta's monopoly to so-called hybrid mail services, was illegal and should be overturned.

Hybrid mail competitors had found the law affected their operations.

"To remonopolise a business activity that had already been successfully liberalised is a step in the wrong direction," said Neelie Kroes, EU competition commissioner.

Nikki Tait, Brussels

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Collected by Chairul Anwar, Bandung, Indonesia.

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