

# POSTAL NEWS

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Monday, 18 July 2011

## 1. E-postal service in offing

Chamikara Weerasinghe

The Postal Department in a ground-breaking modernization drive will introduce electronic and online postal services. . “The Department will soon launch what will be Sri Lanka’s first E-postal service,” Deputy Post Master General R D P Gamini told the Daily News yesterday.

“New services will be introduced with the help of Moratuwa University,” he said. “Necessary hardware and software for implementing the new postal services, have been developed by University of Moratuwa , “ said Gamini.

”The service network will be handed over to the University, he said.

Explaining features of the new service, Gamini said, the public will be able to pay their cell phone bills to relevant phone companies, do instant electronic money orders and track postal information on express and international shipments, among other things, through post offices once the new services are operative. The Postal Department is planning to introduce 17 new postal products. There will be special online mailing facilities for customers, he said. Postal Department sources said they are taking steps to modernize the postal service and its network islandwide together with 3500 sub post offices.

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## 2. YDR Opinion: Postal service must change

Ending Saturday delivery is an idea for the cost-saving list.

Daily Record/Sunday News staff editorial

Updated: 07/15/2011 11

York, PA - Anything standing in the way of change in the U.S. Postal Service must change.

The web, among other things, has hobbled the giant letter and package carrier.

The post office has lost a big part of its business in the past five years -- shipments decreased from 213 billion to 170 billion pieces.

A spokesman has noted that the postal service has, in turn, pared its workforce to about 600,000, down 120,000 people.

The service is operating at a deficit -- \$8 billion last year -- but spokesmen contend its business model is profitable.

The service has billions tied up in prepaying its retirement system, which already has a surplus. Its hands are tied by a federal law in this regard. The postal service wants to pay enough into its pension system to cover current employees, not those who might be on the payroll decades from now.

Sounds reasonable. The law must change.

But such accounting changes might provide only temporary relief.

Long term?

The web seemingly is going to undercut the postal service's business in the foreseeable future.

OK, the postal service says, let us eliminate Saturday delivery.

Five-day-a-week delivery would be a significant cost savings.

The postal service might be right about that. The time has come to eliminate that day. Allow that change.

But that's not going to fix the problem.

For one thing, it will lead to additional loss of business.

It will drive more people toward paying bills on line.

Or sending an electronic thank-you note rather than waiting that extra day for it to arrive to a prospective employer.

But the ending of Saturday delivery represents a major change -- the type of shakeup that can unseat entrenched ideas that no doubt permeate this venerable quasi-governmental agency.

Even if the savings were not great, it would underscore a new day at the post office.

If a business would see a product reduction akin to the 43 billion pieces the postal service has lost, it would address any pension liability and other stilted accounting practices.

But it would quickly move to operations and address the most significant savings options available.

"We think there is a future for a robust Postal Service," the spokesman said. "But it will be lean and smaller."

Sounds like the sentiments of a determined and energized business exec.

So, if that means ending Saturday delivery considering web challenges, well, that's an idea whose time has come.

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Updated: 9:28 AM Jul 22, 2011

### **3. 27 Investigates: What would a smaller Postal Service mean for you?**

The United States Postal Service is losing billions each year. To help stop the loss, they're looking to possibly get smaller with its Lexington operations.

Posted: 6:53 PM Jul 21, 2011

Reporter: Dave Spencer

Email Address: dave.spencer@wkyt.com

27 Investigates: What would a smaller Postal Service mean for you?

Story 22 Comments

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When was the last time you mailed a letter? According to the Postal Service, it's been a while.

The Postmaster General says the volume of mail, 213 billion pieces in 2006, was the highest volume in the U.S. ever.

In 2010, that number dropped to 170 billion pieces.

According to David Walton, a USPS spokesperson from Louisville, the Internet can be blamed for some of the loss.

The Postmaster General says 50 percent of Americans pay their bills online. Ten years ago, that number was five percent.

The General also says the Postal Service as a whole lost \$8.5 billion, which equates to \$23 million a day.

Walton says, "We have about 32,000 post offices and 80 percent of those don't make enough money to cover expenses."

The answer the Postal Service is hoping for is in consolidation.

Across the country, 54 mail sorting plants have already consolidated.

Right now, the Postal Service is conducting a study to see if the sorting plant in Lexington will be the next to be consolidated.

Walton says the Postal Service is considering "taking some of the mail operations out of the Lexington because of declining mail volume, and moving it to Louisville."

On Saturday in Lexington, Walton says that is exactly what is happening already.

In London, Kentucky it's happening on a full-time basis, and has been for a year now.

A letter mailed in London to another person in London, or any other address, will first go to Lexington or Louisville, be sorted a facility in one of those cities, before being sent off to its final destination.

To a business owner like Chris Corum, who owns and operates Allegra Printing in London, time is money.

Corum says it could take added time for his mail to reach his clients.

Corum says, "It's crucial that our mail goes out on time."

He says if there is chance of delay, it can cost him.

"You start looking at overtime because you're spending this amount of time on the job and it has to go out this day," says Corum.

As for the possibility that consolidation in Lexington could mean a loss of jobs, Walton says the Postal Service has never laid-off an employee in the 235 year history. However, he did say some employees in Lexington could be relocated or reassigned.

According to the Postal Service's website, a consolidation typically takes place one year after the study begins. In Lexington, the study started this month.

Sunday, 24 July 2011

#### **4. 2,500 to be recruited to postal service**

by Mohammed NAALIR

Moves are underway to appoint 2,500 persons to the Postal Department. There are 4,500 vacancies in various sections in the Postal Department.

The cabinet has also granted permission for the new appointments, Postal Services Minister Jeewan Kumaratunga said.

He said an employee works 240 hours every month in addition to his normal duty hours. Due to the lack of sufficient employees, Minister noted. There are 647 main post offices and 3,410 sub post offices in the country including in the North and the East, according to Minister Kumaratunga.

Eventhough attempts were made to fill the vacancies in the past, the Trade Unions obstructed granting new appointments on the grounds that the Department is experiencing financial difficulties, the Minister added.

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