

UPS: No spike in demand despite TTPost suspension

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While the Postal Corporation (TTPost) is still searching for a solution to the United States' new trade policy that has disrupted small and micro exporters, Universal Package Systems (UPS) says demand for its services remains steady.

Managing Director Wayne Chee Ting told Guardian Media that despite TTPost suspending its parcel service to the US, it is "business as usual" for UPS. Speaking by phone, he confirmed that UPS offers the same small-package service and stands ready to fill the gap, exporting to more than 210 destinations worldwide, but there has been no increased demand.

Last Friday, TTPost announced a temporary halt on shipments of goods to the US after the American government ended its duty-free de minimis exemption for imports under US\$800. The executive order, signed on July 30, means all goods entering the US are now subject to customs duties. The change has significantly raised costs for small and micro exporters who depended on the exemption to ship duty-free.

Postal agencies across the globe have suspended or restricted US shipments, including those in India, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, New Zealand, Germany, France, Austria, Sweden, Denmark, the UK, Mexico, and several Caribbean nations. They cite unclear customs data requirements, inability to act as US tax collectors, and risks of shipment returns or penalties. While UPS and FedEx continue to operate with new fees, DHL has stopped accepting business parcels to the US from Germany, France, and Austria.

Online platforms such as Etsy and eBay have also suspended label services for affected postal carriers, while major retailers like Shein and Temu now face soaring costs and supply chain overhauls.

Chee Ting said UPS has not promoted itself as an alternative for SMEs, since marketing is handled by its corporate headquarters. However, he confirmed the parent company is monitoring and addressing developments, and the Trinidad operation expects further guidance.

Asked whether TTPost or government agencies or ministries had approached UPS to support small businesses, Chee Ting recalled only one previous request from TTPost earlier this year to assist with moving packages from Canada to Trinidad.

"Subsequent to that, I have not heard from them," he said.

He noted that the situation was not unexpected, given shifting global logistics and trade policies. Even UPS, he warned, may eventually face challenges.

"It is a global arrangement. It impacts the supply chain. It impacts express services because you would have heard that Donald Trump has issued an executive order to retract the de minimis system in the United States.

Shipments that would have entered into the US free of duty and taxes if under US\$800 are now dutiable. So yes, it is going to have an impact."