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### Anna Road Head Post Office postal centre redone to up productivity

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The postal department tied up with IIT-M to create a better working environment at its sorting centre at the Anna Road Head Post Office. Photo: M. Vedhan

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In an effort to create a better work environment and increase employees' productivity, the postal department recently redesigned its computerised sorting centre at the Anna Road Head Post Office. The department has tied up with the engineering design department of IIT-Madras for the project.

The centre was chosen for the pilot initiative, as it handles about 40,000 registered and insured articles and mails every day, and is one of the busiest centres in the State. It is here that mails from the city to other parts of the State are sorted and sent.

Officials at the postal department said that nearly 100 employees worked at the centre, in three shifts. The redesigning initiative is aimed at streamlining work flow and increasing the productivity of the employees.

The team from IIT-Madras, headed by Venkatesh Balasubramanian surveyed the deficiencies of the office and implemented a methodology developed at the educational institution for manufacturing industries. Mr. Balasubramanian said the team found the place very cramped and said there was not enough space to even push a carton.

"We suggested better ventilation, lighting in the sorting centre and appropriate furniture for an improved work environment. We also ensured that floor space was aesthetically and optimally used," he said. The redesigned centre now has ample space for movement, a designated space for sorting, placing cartons and even an emergency exit.

Mervin Alexander, postmaster general, Chennai city region, said earlier, employees often suffered body aches after long stints in the sorting and scanning section. This project, which has ergonomically redesigned the office, has also taken into account the health of the employees, he said.

An increase in flow speed from 112 articles an hour to 200 articles per hour is expected in the redesigned office. Individual performance is expected to go up by 27 per cent.

"We expect that errors committed will come down and this will help faster sorting and delivery. The IIT-Madras team will monitor the operations and the project will soon be extended to other post offices for better customer service," Mr. Alexander said.

Keywords: [Anna Road Head Post Office](#), [computerised sorting centre](#), [IIT-Madras team](#)

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