

Workers' remittances rise over 23% to \$8.59 billion in first eight months of FY12

Overseas Pakistani workers remitted an amount of \$8,592.79 million in the first eight months (July 2011 – February 2012) of the current fiscal year 2011-12 (FY12), showing an impressive growth of 23.40 percent or \$1,629.51 million when compared with \$6,963.28 million received during the same period of the last fiscal year (July- February 2011).

Remittances received from all countries of the world showed growth during the first eight months of the current fiscal year. The inflow of remittances during July-February 2012 from Saudi Arabia, UAE, USA, UK, GCC countries (including Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar and Oman) and EU countries amounted to \$2,325.98 million, \$1,903.89 million, \$1,525.45 million, \$991.20 million, \$968.91 million and \$244.91 million respectively as compared with the inflow of \$1,563.00 million, \$1,627.09 million, \$1,298.26 million, \$770.91 million, \$820.02 million and \$220.24 million respectively in July-February 2011. Remittances received from Norway, Switzerland, Australia, Canada, Japan and other countries during the first eight months of the current fiscal year (July-February 2012) amounted to \$632.45 million as against \$663.73 million received in the first eight months of the last fiscal year (July- February 2011).

The monthly average remittances for July-February 2012 period comes out to \$1,074.10 million as compared to \$ 870.41 million during the corresponding period of the last fiscal year, registering an increase of 23.40 percent.

Last month, an amount of \$1,156.81 million was sent home by overseas Pakistanis, up 36.86 percent, when compared with \$845.28 million received in the same month of February, 2011. Almost all of this growth in remittances during February, 2012 over the corresponding period of the last fiscal year was through banking channels.

In February, 2012, the inflow of remittances from Saudi Arabia, UAE, USA, UK, GCC countries (including Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar and Oman) and EU countries amounted to \$317.51 million, \$259.55 million, \$197.14 million, \$137.73 million, \$123.50 million and \$29.27 million respectively as compared with the inflow of \$209.60 million, \$190.04 million, \$152.55 million, \$101.21 million, \$98.55 million and \$24.58 million respectively in February 2011. Remittances received from Norway, Switzerland, Australia, Canada, Japan and other countries during February 2012 amounted to \$92.11 million as against \$68.75 million received in the same month (February 2011) of the last fiscal year.

The continued impressive growth in workers' remittances is the result of the efforts made by Pakistan Remittance Initiative (PRI) in collaboration with other stakeholders to facilitate both Overseas Pakistanis and their families back home. Since its inception, PRI has taken a number of steps to enhance the flow of remittances through formal channels which

include: (a) preparation of national strategies on remittances (b) taking all necessary steps to implement the overall strategy (c) playing the advisory role for financial sector in terms of preparing a business case, relationship building with overseas correspondents, creating separate efficient remittance payment highways and (d) becoming a national focal point for overseas Pakistanis through round the clock call centre (021-111-222-774) with toll free lines, separate web site etc.

It may be recalled that in order to provide an ownership structure in Pakistan for remittance facilitation, Government of Pakistan through State Bank of Pakistan, Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Ministry of Finance had launched a joint initiative called Pakistan Remittance Initiative (PRI) in April 2009. This initiative has been taken to achieve the objective of facilitating & supporting faster, cheaper, convenient and efficient flow of remittances.
