State Bank directs all banks to ensure
basic banking facilities for IDPs

The State Bank of Pakistan has directed all commercial banks to provide basic banking services including cash withdrawal facility to internally displaced persons (IDPs) as a result of the current situation in Swat and other adjoining districts.

It is mandatory for all banks having branches in affected areas to arrange their presence in each relief camp through all or any means as provided in the Branch Licensing Policy and ensure access of IDPs to their bank accounts through opening of booths, temporary shifting of Branch(es), installation of ATMs, temporary ATM facility/Mobile ATM and Mobile banking facility.

It may be mentioned here that a large number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) displaced from Swat and other adjoining affected districts have been compelled to seek shelter mainly in the relief camps located in Districts of Mardan, Swabi, Charsadda, Nowshera and Peshawar. Many of them are account holders of various banks branches located in these areas and some of them are in possession of their cheque books/ATM Cards etc. but could not withdraw money or avail other banking facilities due to dislocation and non-availability of banking facilities in the relief camps.

In this backdrop, the State Bank has advised all banks to immediately arrange for provision of basic banking services which, interalia, include cash withdrawal facility to IDPs.

Commercial banks have also been advised to display banners/posters in the relief camps about the banking facilities arranged for IDPs, wide spread publicity of such arrangements should be made through Electronic and Print media for maximum awareness of IDPs enabling them to get full benefits from the banking facilities arranged for them.

The concerned banks have been advised to immediately take necessary steps and report compliance to the State Bank, says BPRD Circular No. 8 issued to the Presidents / Chief Executives of all banks / Islamic banks / microfinance banks today.

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