

State Bank asks banks to ensure continuous ATMs service during Ramazan and Eid holidays

The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) has advised all banks to meticulously comply with its guidelines and instructions regarding management of Automated Teller Machines (ATMs) operations in order to ensure continuous availability of ATM service during the Holy Month of Ramazan and Eid-ul Fitr holidays.

Heavy penalties under the relevant laws would be imposed on those banks, which fail to comply with the guidelines and instructions regarding management of ATM operations and monitoring of ATM cash/downtime during Ramazan and Eid holidays issued by the State Bank from time to time.

SBP has also decided to depute special inspection teams to carry out surprise inspections of ATMs installed at various cities/towns throughout the country to ascertain the compliance level of its instructions and guidelines by banks, says PSD Circular Letter No. 03 of August 15, 2011.

According to the SBP Guidelines/Instructions, banks are required to take all steps to ensure continued availability of ATM services. They are also bound to ensure that ATMs shall be continuously replenished on regular intervals during Eid holidays.

Banks had already been advised by SBP to make adequate back-up arrangements to ensure availability of ATM service round the clock and put in place comprehensive operating procedures to timely resolve the cases of out of cash, breakdown of ATMs, Systems and Network.

SBP had also asked the banks to deploy appropriate staff to address problems that may cause ATM malfunctioning or cash outage incidents, besides introducing a 24/7 helpline to resolve the day-to-day operational issues at ATMs. The helpline should also be accessible through special phone terminals placed inside all ATM booths/cabins. Banks are required to ensure that these phones are in working order. The helpline numbers should also be widely publicized for the customers' awareness so that they may inquire or timely register their complaints as per their convenience.

Complaints regarding non-functioning of ATMs may be lodged with Consumer Protection Department, State Bank of Pakistan, Karachi at its email: cpd.helpdesk@sbp.org.pk or fax no.92-21-99218160.

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