

## **93% banks' branches offering real-time online banking services in Pakistan: SBP**

About ninety-three percent banks' branches are now offering real-time online banking services in the country, according to State Bank of Pakistan's Payment Systems Quarterly Review for the Fourth Quarter of FY12 released today.

The status of 192 more bank branches was upgraded to Real-Time Online Branches (RTOB) during the fourth quarter of last fiscal year (FY12) that ended on June 30, 2012, the Review said and added that currently, 9,291 bank's branches or 92.8% are offering RTOB services out of a total of 10,017 bank branches across country.

The payment systems infrastructure in Pakistan showed continuous upward growth trend as a total of 197 Automated Teller Machines (ATMs) were added during the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter raising the tally of ATMs in the country to 5,745, the Review added.

The value & volume of ATM transactions surged by 5.9 percent and 7.4 percent to reach Rs 438 billion and over 45 million respectively during the fourth quarter of last fiscal year, it said and added that the share of ATMs in overall e-banking transactions also increased to 60.6 percent.

The average value per ATM transaction stood at Rs. 9,693, it said, adding that the volume and value of transactions through Point of Sale (PoS) terminals stood at 4.7 million and Rs. 21.49 billion depicting 4.5 per cent and 2.1 per cent growth respectively as compared to the figures reported in the preceding quarter.

The number of plastic cards also witnessed an increase of 8.03 per cent compared to the numbers recorded in the preceding quarter, the Review said and added that by the end of 4<sup>th</sup> quarter, 17.95 million plastic cards were circulating in the country.

According to the Review, the volume of overall e-banking transactions in the country during the fourth quarter surged by 5.6 per cent to reach at 74.6 million when compared with 70.6 million in the preceding quarter. However, the value of overall e-banking transactions declined by 4.4 per cent to Rs 6.6 trillion when compared with Rs 6.9 trillion in the preceding quarter due to a 5.4% decrease in the value of Real Time Online Branches (RTOB) transactions.

The volume of large-value payments through Real Time Gross Settlement (RTGS) transactions aggregated to over one lakh and in terms of the amount worked out to Rs.28.97 trillion. This showed an increase of 4.8 percent in volume and 3.6 per cent in the value as compared to figures reported during the previous quarter, the Review said, adding that the major portion of RTGS transactions continued to be in respect of settlements against securities followed by Interbank Funds Transfers and settlement of retail cheques through multilateral clearing contributing 53.6 per cent, 34.2 per cent and 12.1 per cent respectively.

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