



External Relations Department

ERD/M&PRD/PR/01/2019-23

March 16, 2019

State Bank conducts awareness campaign on SME finance in Sialkot, Gujranwala and Gujrat

State Bank of Pakistan has completed its four-day SME finance awareness campaign in Sialkot, Gujranwala and Gujrat from March 13 to March 16, 2019 wherein meetings and interactions were held with over 2,000 representatives of various SME clusters. Over 300 senior bankers including regional & zonal heads of the banks participated in these programmes. Seven separate sessions were held in these cities whereas a large SME Finance Mela was organized in Gujranwala in coordination with Gujranwala Chamber of Commerce and Small & Medium Enterprises Development Authority.

In the inaugural session of the Mela, President Gujranwala Chamber of Commerce addressed the participants and assured full support of the chamber for continuing awareness programmes on SBP's policies for SMEs.

In his key note address, Syed Samar Hasnain, Executive Director, State Bank of Pakistan, informed the participants that the distinct feature of the Mela is that the banks offering various SME products get connected with the SMEs desirous of availing financing facilities. On-spot solutions to the problems being faced by participating SMEs were provided to them in the Mela. Number of banks showed their interest in providing SME finance. Banks also showed their interest in visiting Wazirabad Cutlery market to workout financing solutions for over 900 SME vendors working in that market.

It may be recalled that State Bank of Pakistan conducted the awareness campaign because lack of awareness on the part of SMEs was found as a key reason due to which SMEs could not avail financing facilities available under SBP SME Finance Policy or SBP's subsidized refinance facilities. In order to improve awareness, banks have already been urged to provide details of such facilities to the SMEs in their areas. The unique nature of the four-day awareness campaign was that apart from face-to-face meetings with the stakeholders, each day event was thoroughly covered by both print and electronic media. Day-end media talks were held with local and national level media channels in the three cities for mass media awareness at general public level.
