



## External Relations Department

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### **PM inaugurates Sohni Dharti Remittance Program – an initiative to promote remittances through formal channels**

The Honourable Prime Minister of Pakistan, Mr. Imran Khan, inaugurated the Sohni Dharti Remittance Program (SDRP) offered jointly by the State Bank of Pakistan, Ministry of Finance and financial institutions today at the Prime Minister House in Islamabad. SDRP is an innovative program designed to incentivize Pakistani workers abroad to send remittances to Pakistan through banks and exchange companies and earn reward points. These reward points could then be used to avail different benefits offered by partner organizations. SDRP can be accessed conveniently from anywhere in the world through a mobile application.

In his address as the Chief Guest, the Prime Minister thanked the Overseas Pakistanis for posing confidence in the bright future of their homeland by sending record high remittances of over USD29 billion in last fiscal year FY21 and continuing the trend in FY22. The Prime Minister noted that his Government has always encouraged and appreciated the efforts of Overseas Pakistanis through various initiatives and programs. He especially mentioned the incentives like making remittances transfer free of cost, providing free airtime for remittances received through mobile wallets and covering marketing cost of remittance service providers.

The Prime Minister congratulated State Bank of Pakistan (SBP), Ministry of Finance (MoF), financial institutions, participating public sector entities (PSEs) and all other stakeholders as without their efforts the launch of this remittance incentive program would not have been possible. He termed the launch of SDRP as a tribute to the Pakistani workers abroad who have been contributing in the development of the country through sending their hard-earned money back to Pakistan. He also appreciated the concept of giving incentives through a digital application for sending remittances via official channels.

Governor SBP, Dr. Reza Baqir in his welcome address expressed heartfelt gratitude to the Prime Minister for his continuous interest and guidance in developing ways to facilitate the Overseas Pakistanis and workers abroad. Dr. Baqir elaborated that Sohni Dharti Remittance Program is another outcome of the PM's vision. Referring to earlier initiatives, he said that [Roshan Digital Account](#) and the [Naya Pakistan Certificates](#) have been huge successes and the PM's support has played an instrumental role in it. Adding further, he said that other initiative like the [Mera Pakistan Mera Ghar](#) scheme providing low cost housing finance for first time home owners is another example where the PM's vision and support has led to a significant takeoff of housing finance in the country, which had otherwise been negligible.

Dr. Reza Baqir said that he was delighted and privileged to announce the launch of SDRP, which is an excellent combined effort of Government of Pakistan, SBP, financial institutions and other organizations. Divulging the details, he disclosed that all home remittances sent from anywhere in the world through legal channels are eligible for inclusion in the SDRP. Besides, funds received in Roshan Digital Accounts which are consumed locally through conversion, and thus become non-repatriable, also qualify for inclusion in the program.

The Governor termed the launch of SDRP another step towards digitalization and financial inclusion that would play a significant role in digital onboarding of Overseas Pakistanis and their beneficiaries in Pakistan. The mobile application of SDRP is available at both Google android and Apple IOS platforms. He took the opportunity to appreciate the participating banks, PSEs and other stakeholders in this regard as it was due to their hard work that this initiative finally saw the light of the day.



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Adviser to the Prime Minister on Finance and Revenue Mr. Shaukat Tareen congratulated SBP, PSEs and other relevant stakeholders for implementing the SDRP as a technology-based solution. He observed that the establishment of [Pakistan Remittance Initiative](#) in 2009 was a decision that has worked quite effectively to integrate country's financial institutions with the ones abroad to help Pakistani diaspora in sending remittance to their families in Pakistan in a very efficient and cost-effective manner.

Under the SDRP, if an individual sends remittance to the limit of USD10,000 or equivalent in one fiscal year, then he/she will be awarded one percent as a reward and allotted a green card category. Similarly, for remittances sent by an individual between USD10,000 and USD30,000 or equivalent, the remitter would be given 1.25 percent as reward and classified into gold card category. Lastly, for remittances of more than USD30,000 or equivalent, he/she will be awarded 1.5 percent as reward and allotted a platinum card category.

The reward points can be redeemed by remitters and their beneficiaries for availing free of cost services from eight (08) participating PSEs at the moment. The services offered include international tickets by Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) and the provision to pay for extra luggage on international flights of PIA. Along with this, Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) has allowed Overseas Pakistanis to pay duty on import of mobile phone and vehicles. The National Database & Registration Authority (NADRA) will provide services related to the renewal of CNIC/NICOP and along with this, they can renew their passports without any hassle. Overseas Pakistanis can avail life insurance premium payment through state life insurance services and a facility to pay schools' fee of Overseas Pakistanis Foundation schools. Moreover, overseas Pakistanis will be able to make purchases through a network of utility stores across the country. Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) will provide preferential services to overseas Pakistanis under the umbrella of this program by installing separate counters and provide priority clearance whereas Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) will ensure the placement of standees and banners for the promotion of this initiative.

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