

The Bank of Punjab and Karandaaz Pakistan Signed MOU to Support Digitization of Government Payments

KARACHI, January 07, 2015 – Today, Karandaaz Pakistan and The Bank of Punjab (BOP) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in a strategic step towards achieving greater digitization of government transactions to facilitate the citizens of Pakistan. The agreement identifies areas of collaboration between the two institutions whereby Karandaaz Pakistan will provide technical support for BOP's G2P and P2G projects. The ultimate goal of the partnership is to develop a suite of digital financial services which can be accessed quickly and at the convenience of the users thus facilitating both government and the individuals. Such transactions include timely and auditable disbursement of beneficiary funds, pensions and salaries as well as collection of taxes, traffic challans and other P2G payments.

The signing took place at BOP's office in Karachi, and was attended by senior management from both organizations including Mr. Naemuddin Khan, President; Mr. Mustafa Hamdani, Group Head Investment Banking & Payment Services; Mr. Khawar Ansari, Group Head Treasury & FI and Mr. Latif Ahmad Hashmi, Head Branchless Banking, Mr. Muhammad Arbab, Head Products, Mr. Obaid Ur Rehman, Manager Product & Marketing from BOP; and Mr. Imdad Aslam, Interim CEO and Director Digital Financial Services; Mr. Bilal Ali Qureshi, Associate Digital Financial Services and Ms. Samar Hasan, Senior Manager Knowledge Management & Communications from Karandaaz Pakistan.

Mr. Naemuddin Khan, President of BOP said, "The Bank of Punjab is one of the fastest growing commercial banks of the country and is offering services in all segments of the financial sector. The Bank of Punjab is available at the grass-root level in the Punjab province and therefore has direct access to the underprivileged segment of the society. The bank has been aware of the opportunity and has attuned its products to provide unmatched services to the masses. This partnership with Karandaaz Pakistan will greatly accelerate and enhance the digitization of transactions and seamless delivery of services to the financially vulnerable segment of the society."

Speaking at the event Mr. Imdad Aslam, Interim CEO of Karandaaz Pakistan, stated, "Given BOP's current reach and volume of government payments to some of the most financially vulnerable and marginalized populations in Pakistan, the partnership is a tremendous opportunity for Karandaaz Pakistan to collaborate on in order to drive the country towards greater financial inclusion. We will utilize our technical expertise to facilitate BOP in the deployment of easy-to-use digital financial services for its underprivileged beneficiaries, as part of our overall effort to digitize a bulk of government transactions."

About BOP

The Bank of Punjab (BOP) (www.bop.com.pk) is one of the prominent financial institutions of the country with PACRA Ratings: AA – Long Term and A1 Short Term. Fortified with years of banking expertise and driven by the strategic goals set out by their board of directors and senior management, the bank has invested in revolutionary technology to have an extensive range of products and services. The bank's extensive portfolio encompasses all facets of banking.

About Karandaaz

Karandaaz Pakistan (www.karandaaz.com.pk), a private company established in August 2014, promotes access to finance for small businesses through a commercially directed investment platform, and financial inclusion for individuals by employing technology enabled digital solutions. The Company has financial and institutional support from leading international development finance institutions; principally the United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID) and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. The Consultative Group to Assist the Poor (CGAP), a member of the World Bank Group, managed the start-up phase of the Company and continues to provide technical support.

The Company has three work streams, Digital Financial Services, Corporate Investment and Credit and Knowledge Management and Communications. To realise the potential of universal digital financial services, the DFS line of business works across the ecosystem of various actors including regulators, policy-makers, government departments, businesses and researchers and academics with activities arranged in four key work areas: Policy & Regulation, Seed innovation, Experimentation & Solutions Development, and Scale & Outreach. Karandaaz Pakistan is sponsored and governed by eminent Pakistanis, and is managed by an experienced team with core expertise in international investment management and digital finance.