

NBP, Baluchistan's Excise, Taxation and Anti-Narcotics Deptt. sign agreement for automation of tax collections.

QUETTA, May 31: The National Bank of Pakistan (NBP) signs an agreement with Baluchistan's Excise, Taxation and Anti-Narcotics department for the automation of tax collection system across the province.

The agreement was signed by Muhammad Farooq, NBP's Executive Vice President, Payment Services and Digital Banking Group and Fateh Muhammad Khajak, Director General Excise, Taxation and Anti-Narcotics Baluchistan. The NBP President, Saeed Ahmad and Baluchistan's Secretary Excise and Taxation, Zafar Ali Shah Bukhari were also present at the occasion. The JazzCash is collaborating with NBP in the tax automation project.

Speaking at the occasion, Zafar Ali Shah Bukhari, Secretary Excise, Taxation and Anti-Narcotics, Baluchistan, said that earlier the taxes were collected manually through NBP's branches, which had its own challenges and complications. Reconciliation of collected money was one of the biggest problem while at times transparency and timeliness were compromised in manual system, he added and said that the implementation of new automated system would make the process much easier for customers and will provide real time validation as well.

Saeed Ahmed, President NBP said that automation and digitization of all government procedures and payments & taxes collections is one of the primary objectives all federal and provincial governments to achieve complete E- governance. The NBP is assisting all the provincial governments in digitalizing their various payments, fee and taxes collection systems. He mentioned that the NBP has already inked MoUs and agreements with various provincial and federal departments for digitally collecting their fee and payments including Directorate General of Immigration & Passports, Bureau of Emigration and Overseas Employment, Public Service Commission KPK, Islamabad Traffic Police, Driving License Sindh and Dealer Vehicle Registration System (DVRS) and collection of e-Tax in Punjab.

He further stated that NBP is playing a major role in enhancing the financial inclusion by aligning with digital banking revolutions in Pakistan. NBP is in process of developing systems for digitization of all G2P & P2G payments. He highlighted that NBP is actively working to digitalize its banking services built on a collaborative model with Telcos and other stakeholders. This will help in promoting Alternate Delivery Channels and enabling the right environment for inclusive growth and achieve the goal of financial inclusion, Saeed said.

Being a public institution, he said, it is our mandate to develop a digital suite of financial services with an access to market players through any available digital channels for enhanced customer convenience with focus on enabling e-governance infrastructure. Our substantial participation in e-credit program, as well as forging links with other stakeholders including telecom service providers is expected to boost formalization of

the economy. He said that Bank's biggest projects recently, was to rapidly grow our ATM network which already grew from 376 ATMs in the year 2014 to over 1,000 ATMs in the year 2016. This exponential growth in our ATMs extended financial services to far flung areas of the country, where previously no other bank had ventured even in the remotest of areas in FATA. He said that his aim is to geographically cover the NBP's services from the peaks of Karakoram to the Arid Zones of Baluchistan.

Regarding the agreement with Baluchistan tax department, President NBP said that the NBP has chosen JazzCash to be its official partner in branchless banking project. People could pay their due taxes and payments from the JazzCash outlets and shops across Baluchistan and they wouldn't need to visit Excise and Taxation department. Through this service, outstanding amounts of the relevant taxes can be extracted and payment options will be available for real time collections through JazzCash. Saeed said that this facility will minimize the operational hassles of the Excise and Taxation Department and also provide convenience, comfort, transparency and fast track options to general public.

Saeed Ahmad said that initially this will be rolled out through JazzCash and gradually other partner mobile money operators as well as ADCs of the bank i.e Mobile App. And ATMs will be added in due course.

The NBP's Head of Central Payment Services and Digital Banking Group, Farhan Durrani, Muhammad Sultan Jaffar, Regional Head Quetta, NBP, Qazi Muhammad Ali/Director IT Excise and Taxation, Faheem Mumtaz, Head of B2G JazzCash, Muhammad Ghufraan Abbasi, Regional Head, MFS JazzCash, Naveed Ejaz, Regional Head, B2G JazzCash, Shakeel Tareen, Regional Head Sales, Balochistan Jazz Cash and others attended the ceremony.