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**Hughes Communications to connect approx 3000 ATMs of State Bank of India, Sep 14 '09**

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*To deploy Satellite Broadband network for its ATM network*

Hughes Communications announced that it has been awarded a contract to deploy a network of 2880 VSATs for State Bank of India to connect its off-site ATMs across the country. Valued at Rupees twenty two crores and fifty lakhs (Rs. 22.5 Crores) spread over 5 years, the contract includes deployment of a turnkey network which encompasses system integration, satellite bandwidth and network management.

As a Managed Network Service Provider, Hughes will offer Secure VSAT based connectivity to State Bank of India with backhaul to the bank's Data Centre and Disaster Recovery (DR) locations. This project is a part of State Bank of India's ambitious Project "25000 ATM" in which the bank envisages to double its ATM based from 12,250 ATMs to 25,000 ATMs by March 2010. In addition to this, approx 2000 ATMs are to be installed by its Associate Banks (AB), and this rollout also forms part of the scope for Hughes in this project. Being selected for SBI project, all associate banks of SBI can now place order directly with Hughes for connecting their ATMs as well. Under this contract, Hughes would provide connectivity to Kiosk machines that would be co-located with the ATMs to provide customers the option to know their SBI account details and book railway tickets through the kiosk machines. Functionality and number of these machines may be enhanced in the coming future.

Speaking about the deal, Shivaji Chatterjee, Vice President, Enterprise- Hughes Communications India, said, "We are pleased to strengthen our longstanding relationship with State Bank of India from providing connectivity for their CBS branches/kiosks to extend its ATM network across the country, today. Satellite Broadband has been the backbone of connectivity for the Indian banking industry and Hughes is proud to have connected more than 6500 CBS branches and approx 4500 ATMs/Kiosk for various banks in the country using this technology. After completion of this project, total banking sites of Hughes would be touching 15000."

In a recent discussion paper by Reserve Bank of India- Satellite Connectivity to facilitate Penetration of Banking Services "Need for Financial Incentives to Banks", use of satellite communication technology has been aptly recommended to facilitate penetration of payment services to the rural areas which have been denied of these basic facilities due to non availability of reliable communication links.