

Press Release  
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**The Asian Banker Excellence in Retail Financial Services Awards 2010**

**State Bank of India wins Best Microfinance Award for the year 2009**

- *For the first time, State Bank of India wins the prestigious Best Microfinance Award for the year 2009.*
- *Over 120 banks and financial institutions from 23 countries across the Asia Pacific, Gulf and Central Asian regions were evaluated as part of the Excellence in Retail Financial Services Programme.*

**Singapore, 19 March 2010** – State Bank of India has won the Best Microfinance Award for the year 2009 in the ninth Asian Banker Excellence in Retail Financial Services Awards Programme 2010. The bank received the award at The Asian Banker Excellence in Retail Financial Services Awards 2010 ceremony, held in conjunction with the region's foremost retail banking event, the Excellence in Retail Financial Services Convention. The ceremony was held at the JW Marriot in Shanghai on the evening of March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2010.

About 120 senior bankers from award winning banks in 22 countries across the Asia Pacific, the Gulf and Central Asian regions attended the formal gala dinner, the industry's celebration of the region's best retail bankers that recognizes their efforts in bringing superior products and services to their customers.

The awards programme, administered by The Asian Banker and refereed by prominent global bankers, consultants and academics, is the most prestigious of its kind.

A stringent three month-long evaluation process, based on a balanced and transparent scorecard, determined the winners and the position of the different retail banks in the region. A full list of winners is attached.

**For the first time, State Bank of India wins the prestigious Best Microfinance Award for the year 2009**

State Bank of India wins the Best Microfinance Award for gaining dominance in the microfinance business in India in 2009, surpassing the other nominees of this category, such as HDFC (India) and Dhanalakshmi Bank (India).

In 2009, SBI doubled its profits through its microfinance business and grew its portfolio at a faster pace than all its competitors. The bank leveraged on its large distribution network of 12000 branches of which 8000 are in rural India. This allowed the bank to provide microfinance all over India. In terms of turnaround times and NPL ratios, the bank outperformed its peers.

SBI actively uses self-help groups as mediators for microfinance, which is a more cost effective channel and allows a bigger geographical reach in remote areas. Judges of Excellence in Microfinance agree that SBI did very well last year, achieving outstanding growth in assets and profitability.

“The bank excelled in its microfinance strategy and increased profitability and market share in a difficult operating environment. It has demonstrated strong leadership in the Indian microfinance market.” said Mr. Chris Kapfer, Head of the Excellence in Retail Financial Services Programme at The Asian Banker.

**Over 120 banks and financial institutions from 23 countries across the Asia Pacific, Gulf and Central Asian regions were evaluated as part of the Excellence in Retail Financial Services Programme**

“This year over 120 banks and financial institutions in 23 countries across the region were evaluated as part of the Excellence in Retail Financial Services Programme. It has become the single most prestigious, comprehensive and anticipated awards programme that recognises the pursuit of excellence amongst retail financial institutions available almost anywhere in the world today,” said Philippe Paillart, Chairman of The Asian Banker Excellence in Retail Financial Services Programme.

The transparent award evaluation process uses a balanced scorecard approach and a comprehensive methodology to evaluate the strength of individual banks’ retail banking businesses that involve extensive research and probing interviews, and taps on the combined experience of a team of experienced researchers.

Philippe Paillart, formerly vice chairman and CEO of DBS Bank and a pioneer in the retail banking industry in the Asia Pacific region, added: “The Asian Banker Excellence Programme was instituted in 2001 on the premise that an outstanding player in the retail financial services industry should build business franchises that are sustainable, competitive and profitable over a period of time.”

**About The Asian Banker**

The Asian Banker is the foremost provider of strategic business intelligence on the financial services industry in the Asia Pacific and Middle East regions. The organization has offices in Singapore, Kuala Lumpur, Beijing and Dubai as well as representatives in Shanghai, London and New York. With a business that revolves around publications, research services, training and forums, the organization is highly regarded in the financial services community for its incisive and independent commentaries on developments in the industry. The company’s website is [www.theasianbanker.com](http://www.theasianbanker.com).

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