

15 JAN 2003

SBB-SMEs

SBB SAYS IT'S COMMITTED TO GIVING LOANS TO SMEs, SMALL BORROWERS

KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 15 (Bernama) -- Southern Bank Bhd (SBB) remains committed to serving small-time borrowers, especially small and medium-scale entrepreneurs (SMEs), as they are one of the main areas of focus by the bank, its chief executive director, Datuk Tan Teong Han, said today.

Currently SMEs made up 30 percent of the total loans approved by SBB, he said.

"As far as we are concerned, we serve those markets," he told reporters after the launch of the SBB BlueChip Mastercard here today.

He was asked to comment on Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's statement last Saturday that small-time borrowers usually did not get much attention from local banks.

Tan said SBB had even established a special segment in the bank to deal with SME borrowers.

The latest SBB credit card is EMV (European Mastercard and Visa) compliant smart card with loyalty benefits and is equipped with multi-application capabilities. It contains a 16KB chip and is powered by MULTOS, a highly advanced, stable and secure smart card operating platform.

The credit card is aimed at fulfilling the needs of young professionals who are techno savvy and ICT-literate. -- BERNAMA

NM SHY