



Bank of Baroda Media Conference for Quarter ended 30th September 2023

4th November 2023

Participating members from the Management Team of the Bank

- *Mr. Debadatta Chand, Managing Director & CEO*
- *Mr. Ajay Kumar Khurana, Executive Director*
- *Mr. Joydeep Dutta Roy, Executive Director*
- *Mr. Lalit Tyagi, Executive Director*
- *Mr. Lal Singh, Executive Director*
- *Mr. Ian Desouza, Chief Financial Officer (CFO)*

Moderator: Good afternoon, everyone and welcome to Bank of Baroda's financial results for the quarter and half year ended September 30th, 2023. Thank you all for joining us. We have with us today, Shri Debadatta Chand, the Managing Director and CEO of Bank of Baroda and he's joined by the Bank's Executive Directors and the CFO. We have a short presentation, followed by brief opening remarks by Mr. Chand, and then the Q&A session. And sir, over to you.

Mr. Debadatta Chand: Good evening, all. I'm D. Chand, I'm MD and CEO. So along with me, Mr. Ajay K. Khurana, the Executive Director, he looks after the MSME vertical, including Recovery and some of the platform function. Then we have Mr. Joydeep Dutta Roy who is the Executive Director, he is looking after the retail asset, the retail liability and some of the platform function. Then we have Mr. Lalit Tyagi, he's the Executive Director looking after the corporate credit, international banking and Treasury and also, I have pleasure to introduce our new Executive Director, Mr. Lal Singh. He looks after most of the platform function including the HR and the IT. And with us again, you will know Mr. Ian Desouza, who is the CFO of the Bank and has been interacting with you for quite a many quarters now. So, with this over to Ian.

Mr. Ian Desouza: Thank you, sir. So, in this quarter happy to report that our global advances grew 17% year on year, supported by domestic growth at almost 17%, international grew at around 21%. In terms of our segment wise growth in domestic, retail organic grew close to 23%, Agri grew 13.7%, MSME continued with the trend of going 12 to 13%. Corporate has picked up growth at 16.5%.

In terms of our segment-wise retail book, our mortgage book grew around 13 to 14%, home loan grew 16%, education loan at 18% and auto loan at 21%. While we'll continue to see strong growth in personal loan, this may stabilize or moderate as we go forward. Next slide, please.

On the deposit front, our total deposits grew close to 15% supported by growth in our domestic book at around 12%. Domestic CASA deposits growth was little softer than usual at 4.4% year on year. Term deposits, domestic term deposits were strongly supported at close to 18%. One highlight of the domestic term deposit growth is the moderation in the sequential quarter growth of bulk deposits, which was sequentially growing at 11% last quarter. It is now growing substantially lower in single digits. And we've seen sequential growth of around 3 to 4% in the normal retail term deposits. Our CD ratio, though, elevated as compared to a year ago, is more broadly in line with the CD ratio we saw last quarter that is the end of Q1. Can you go ahead please.

In terms of our net interest income for the half year, we saw net interest income growth of close to 15%, NII growth close to 15%. Our operating profits supported by NII and other income grew at close to 50%. Our profit after tax for the half year grew 51% as compared to the same period a year ago. And ROA is a metric that we like to emphasize for tracking our performance, which we had said more than a year ago will be 1% and higher, continues to trend at 1.12% for the half year as compared to a little below 1% for the same period a year ago. Can we go ahead please.

If you look at the same metrics for the quarter comparing it to a quarter a year ago, the NII grew at around 7%, operating profit grew at 33%, profit after tax at 28%. And ROA, the metric that I spoke about earlier, is very smart at 1.14%. Can you go to the next slide.

In terms of the yield on advances, you would see on a half year basis, yield of advances have gone from last year for the first half of 6.91% to 8.42%. Yields have been flattish in terms of sequential quarter moving in just about 3 bps higher. Cost of deposits have expectedly caught up and are around 24 basis points higher than the same a quarter ago. But if you see the NIMs, the net interest margin, which is interest income minus the interest expense that has sustained for the half year at around 3.17%. The sharp pressure on cost of deposits due to the prolonged situation on the liquidity

front. We had expected the liquidity to start improving by quarter three, but due to various regulator and geopolitical tensions, it looks like the liquidity scenario is unlikely to loosen up very soon. So, we've seen on a Q-on-Q basis a 20 bps compression in, but that has been supported by other income, and we've had our ROA higher than the previous quarter.

Can we go ahead please. In terms of asset quality, we'll see asset quality continues to improve. Our GNP ratio has declined by almost 2% and is at 3.32% this quarter. NNPA also is 0.76% as compared to 1.16%, a year ago. A provision coverage ratio including TWO accounts remains strong at 93%. Our slippage ratio looks elevated here, it's at 1.81%. But this includes one large aviation account of 1,773 crores, if we exclude that account, then our slippage would have just been 1.08%. On the credit cost, credit cost looks a little too elevated at 0.92%. But if we normalize this credit cost or the fact that we took a full provision on the aviation account, it's 100% provided for, on an INR 1200 crore exposure. And we've taken in additional provisions to strengthen our balance sheet ratios. If we exclude that our credit cost would just be 0.52%.

Please go ahead. On the CRILC SMA for loans above five crores that continues to improve. We have just 0.22% of our loans above five crores which are in SMA 1 and 2. Collection efficiency continues to improve and is currently at 99%.

Please go ahead. In terms of our capital ratios, our capital ratios are significantly strong and are significantly better than a year ago period at 11.57%, on CET-1, tier one is 13.19% as compared to 12.81%. And our overall capital adequacy is 15.3% which is better than 15.25% reported a year ago. These numbers do not include the profit for the half year. And if you consider the profit for the half year 'x' is a portion that we have to set aside for proposed dividend. Our CET-1 would have been 12.47% as of 30th, September, and CRAR would have been 16.2%, which is comparable to the CRAR we had at the end of March of the financial year ended 23 of 16.24%. You can just quit.

Now I'd like to talk a bit about the festival schemes. We have for the first time launched a festival scheme both on the liability side as well as asset. We have launched schemes that have a lot of features. We have a BOB LITE scheme, which requires lesser or no minimum balance but a lot of features as you start to transact with the bank. We have a BOB BRO for new gen students. We have a new salary account. We have a systematic deposit plan which is rebranding or kind of a SIP for term deposits. We have an NRI package and we have a family account taking off from the family accounts proposed by utility companies. A family plan as it is called.

On the advances side, the retail asset side we have attractively priced loans, both from the home loan which starts as low as 8.4% to car loans priced at 8.7%. Special offers for women, salaried, government salaried and Defense salaried and again we have a Parivar account. That brings us to the end of the presentation.

Back to you Phiroza.

Moderator: Thanks Ian. Chand sir - If you could please give us your opening remarks.

Mr. Debadatta Chand: Yeah, thanks Phiroza. See, media friends, it's already said that this quarter has a strong top line and also bottom line. Our asset growth has been in excess of 18% whereas, the net profit has grown by 28.4% YoY. The operating profits has grown by 33% YoY. So, in terms of profitability and the business growth we have had a very strong numbers this quarter. Let me give some of the outlook that we have going forward. So, as you have seen that the loan book grew by 3.4% sequentially and 17% YoY, with the retail growth of 22.2% YoY and 5.2% sequentially. We continue to maintain our guidance that we will be growing above the industry by 1 to 2% where the overall book is concerned. At the same time, the retail growth would be 4 to 5% higher than the

market. Our overall guidance is that, on the overall loan book, we will continue to grow above 15%, the corporate growth would be something 12 to 13%, retail would be in excess of 20% and international growth would be aligning to the domestic growth of 15% going forward. On the loan mix again, we articulated earlier also, current retail book is 27%. We intend to take it to 35% in two to three years' time and a corporate book although grew very strongly but would come down as a mix to 35%.

The NII of the bank grew by 6.5% YoY led by a strong loan book growth in spite of a margin compression. The NIM outlook which we had given last time, at 3.3% for the full year, we're revising the new outlook now. So, the current guidance we're going to give is 3.15% with plus minus 5 BPS going forward. This is because of the change in the cost matrix for the Bank, depending on the market scenario. Although we have a very tight control on the cost to income in terms of not adding much on the branch side or the manpower side.

As we articulated last time, we declared a strategic initiative of the year of fee and flows. We have seen a significant increase in the fee side. We have been pursuing concepts like account planning, relationship management, share wallet and that has given a good increase in a fee as you would have seen in this quarter. Cash Management is also a very important area as far as the Bank is concerned. So, we are pursuing the cash management services not only for the corporate sector, but mid corporate accounts, and also MSME accounts. We are trying to have a culture of sales. We are moving from the transactional banking to the engagement or relationship banking.

On the profitability side, as I've already said, this is the first time like not only the first time, consistently three quarters we're posting, in excess of INR 4,000 crores of net profit. And our full half year profit has been INR 8323 crore, which is a growth of YoY 52%. We have been consistently delivering on the ROA. So, for last five quarters the ROA has been excess of one. We are maintaining our guidance of having ROA more than 1% going forward. There's a good increase in the asset quality, and NNPA improving to 0.76%. The GNPA improving by 199 bps YoY in the H1 of FY2024. We have a dedicated collection vertical that works both for retail and other segment. That's also unique amongst the PSB space.

On the deposit side, clearly for last couple of quarters, not only in the entire banking industry but Bank of Baroda also, the growth has been lagging behind asset growth. So going forward, although we have posted 14.6% YoY on that deposit, but we are projecting a 12 to 13% guidance on the growth on the deposit front. One clear thing you would have noticed this time that we have given the breakup of term deposit. And the growth in the wholesale term deposit is 3.4% sequentially, which has been lower than almost 11 to 15% growth we have seen in many of the quarters in the past. So clearly, we're trying to optimize on the bulk deposit front, moderate that growth so that we can maintain margin and revert the strategy going forward.

As Ian rightly said, this is the first time in the festival time we have both on the asset side and also on the liability side different offerings for customers. We've seen in market a good traction on all these offerings. And going forward with this offering we wish to improve our CASA higher than the current percentage at the same time moderating on the bulk deposit. Thank you very much for all of you for joining today. We're open to question & answer now.

Moderator: Thank you, sir. We will discuss the two questions per person. Please raise your hand before asking the question, please announce the publication before asking the question. We will wait for five seconds for the lineup to populate.

The first question is from Siddhi Nayak from Reuters, please unmute yourself and ask the question.

Ms. Siddhi Nayak: Hi, Sir. Siddhi here. I just wanted to ask you.

Mr. Debadatta Chand: Please go ahead.

Ms. Siddhi Nayak - Reuters: So, your CASA growth is around 4%, wanted to get your sense of you said you're going to see it moving. Also wanted to understand how you would do that. Would you prefer raising rates or what how would that be? It's my first question.

Mr. Debadatta Chand: Siddhi, slightly I could not hear the full part. Can you just repeat that?

Ms. Siddhi Nayak: The CASA growth, I wanted to understand how are you planning to tap the CASA growth? How would you grow that that particular segment and would you prefer raising CASA rates?

Mr. Debadatta Chand: No. If I answer your second question first, there is no plan immediately anything on the CASA on the rate side. But if you will see the festival campaign, the offerings have been many as far as targeting CASA is concerned. So clearly, one structural change that we have made in entire banking in terms of CASA that on the retail liability also now we're going to have relationship manager. Typically, we had the relationship manager concept typically for large corporate and mid corporate.

Now going forward, we're trying to have the relationship manager for the retail liability also. We had a segment of Radiance customer having a balance as more than 25 lakhs now we're trying to have that concept below INR 25 lakhs also. So that typically will improve the CASA and same time the offerings and the tie ups we have made like all this product that we have said there are a lot of tie ups at the back end supporting all these product. So, the moment customer goes for that you will be getting multiple benefits out of those accounts. So, in that sense, we are thinking of slightly improving the CASA. Actually, the current CASA percentage is 39.6% but the aspiration is to reach around 41% in near future.

Yes, Siddhi are you there or...

Moderator: Siddhi, do you have another question?

Mr. Ian Desouza: You can go to the next person in the queue.

Moderator: The next question is from Ajay Ramanathan of Financial Express, please unmute yourself and ask the question.

Mr. Ajay Ramanathan: Good evening, sir. Am I audible?

Mr. Debadatta Chand: Yeah, you are audible, Ajay.

Mr. Ajay Ramanathan: A couple of questions that I had, first is of course, we heard the news about the Chief Digital Officer having resigned. So, are you on the lookout for a new person in that post and what would be your strategy on digital going ahead?

Mr. Debadatta Chand: Okay, you said that the CDO, see, as we have said earlier, also a couple of things came in the media also, we have taken action on the large set of people in the field. So, as far as the CDO is concerned, it is a cessation of service induced by the Bank and that's termination right. And currently, we are putting somebody as a CDO. So, if time comes, then we will look out for any new CDO.

Mr. Ajay Ramanathan: Okay, also on your recovery from write offs, I see that it has improved sharply in this quarter. Are you taking any specific steps to improve recoveries, and also is there any large account that you have been able to recover.

Mr. Debadatta Chand: Mr. Khurana, can you take up this question?

Mr. Ajay K Khurana: Yes. Our recovery campaigns are going on continuously. That is for smaller recoveries below one crore. But as far as, this good recoveries in write off accounts are there, there are certain big accounts where we got recovery and few other accounts are also lined up in next two quarters. So, this whatever our half year, whatever we have we recovered in written off accounts similar to that we are going to recover in next half year.

Mr. Ajay Ramanathan: Okay. Sure. Thanks.

Moderator: The next question is from Dhiraj Tiwari of Economic Times, how much recovery you have done from written off accounts in the last two quarters, please give breakup. Are you working on any strategy to attract large size bulk deposits? Thank you.

Mr. Debadatta Chand: I will take the second question then I'll hand it over to Mr. Khurana. See the bulk deposit it's a large size so anything currently deposit above two crore is bulk deposit. So, we do have slabs there in bulk deposit which start from anything from 2 to 20, 20 to 50. So, lot of slabs over there. So, the Bank is always in all the slab so that depends upon the level of, what you can say, the level of all these bulk deposit rates. And that's an ongoing, all the banks do. So, as we also on the bulk deposit. So, Mr. Khurana, could you take the first question with regard to the recovery of written off in the last two quarters?

Mr. Ajay K Khurana: Recovery in written off accounts in last two quarters. First quarter, it was INR 663 crores and in the second quarter is INR 1231 crores.

Moderator: Thank you, sir. The next question is from Abhijit Lele of Business Standard. Please unmute yourself and ask the question.

Mr. Abhijit Lele: Good afternoon. Are you able to hear me?

Mr. Debadatta Chand: Yeah, I can hear you please go ahead.

Mr. Abhijit Lele: Now, taking ahead from this 'bob World', now one was there is a RBI curb on you. What steps you have taken for the correction and what time that have you committed to RBI, to complete it and be open for its audit, so that you get permission to resume the work.

Mr. Debadatta Chand: Yeah, as far as the 'bob World' is concerned, all of you know that there is a regulatory action and the regulatory action, we need to comply on some of the action points which the regulator has given. Already, we also clarified at that we have started working on some of the action points long back. And there is substantial compliance on all those parameters. It's a regulatory action. We have been engaged with the regulator in terms of compliance of all these action point. And I can't give a timeline, but then obviously, we hope that the ban is revoked and we need to satisfy to the RBI, the regulatory requirement of all these at some point, we're working sincerely on that a lot of compliance has happened. About going forward, we hope that we will fully comply with the action points of the regulator, we are a regulated entity and we need to comply fully on the regulatory action and thereafter hope that the ban will be revoked.

Mr. Abhijit Lele: Sir, one thing is what RBI gives a clearance that I understand we can't give a timeline, but what timeline you have set for yourself to correct yourself and present to RBI's audit, that part I'm asking?

Mr. Debadatta Chand: See as far as the processes are concerned, all the processes have been rectified, corrected, strengthened, made robust, there are multiple checks now. So, these are all cured and this is what we need to satisfy the regulator with regard to the robust mechanism. See the RBI action is on the customer onboarding process. So, already we are in process and we are curing data, we are complying and we will present. We need to satisfy the RBI, so they will give the comprehensive review on the matter and that RBI, the regulator has to be satisfied thereon, right.

Mr. Abhijit Lele: Okay, another question is about, yes, that one airline account you have made a full provision what is the outlook for that industry of Bank of Baroda because not that all of them are in bad shape.

Mr. Debadatta Chand: No, as far as outlook is concerned, we have a positive outlook, we do have exposure in other accounts. So absolutely, this is specific account only. The Airline, if you look at their profitability outlook, everything is improving. So, absolutely, no issue with regard to any other account that exposure we do have. The outlook is quite positive on that but the specific account is on the legal process. So, that has to be cleared in the legal process itself. So, we can't comment further on that.

Mr. Abhijit Lele: Okay, I'm through with my queries. Thank you.

Moderator: The next question is from Mayur Shetty of Times of India. Please, unmute yourself and ask the question.

Mr. Mayur Shetty: Yeah. Thank you, Sir. My question was also on bob World. I wanted to know what impact has it had on your customer acquisition, both on the liability and the asset side? And also I wanted to understand whether this RBI action prohibits you from launching any new apps, whether you can launch any app other than bob World?

Mr. Debadatta Chand: No, on the first question with regard to the impact. See, bob World is the service in terms of customer on boarding into bob World, in terms of account opening the percentage was very less earlier. It was less than 3%-4% because I do have multiple channels like branch banking, the tab banking; multiple channels to on board customer. So, in terms of impact, normally it so happens that because of any technical reason or a regulatory action one channel goes down, other channels do pick up significantly and that is what we are seeing now that in terms of business it's as usual for us but definitely for new customer some of the services we wish to provide through bob World is not available at this point of time but they can do the same activity that was being done in bob World through different platforms, different channels and they get the same seamless service. And that precisely in terms of customer acquisition, we are tracking the numbers. The numbers are looking all pretty good rather more than what it was the day the ban was done.

At the same time with regard to any further app, we do have all the apps at present. This is a very robust platform, bob World. It has sound, secure system, active users seeded with unique number. So, absolutely no plan to have any new app and I don't think that's a requirement at this point of time. The app is a robust, secure platform that's the bob World and we had issues in terms of regulatory action on the customer on boarding process, please read that regulatory action clearly,

and there we had some gaps and that we have strengthened and that's the process which we need to satisfy to the regulator with regard to our strengthening process and with the satisfaction, obviously, the regulator is going to have a view on that.

Mr. Mayur Shetty: Thank you, Sir.

Moderator: The next question is from Gopika from Mint. Please, unmute yourself and ask the question.

Ms. Gopika: Hi, Chand Sir. Can you hear me?

Mr. Debadatta Chand: Yeah, I can hear you, Gopika. Please, go ahead.

Ms. Gopika: Okay. I wanted to ask you, so with respect to this particular aviation account now you're the second bank which is classified it as an NPA, could you tell me what is the general COC outlook on this account? Is there a potential to turn around this account since it has a major economic impact? Or are you seeing this going into liquidation mode?

Mr. Debadatta Chand: See, as a management of a Bank, I can't pre-empt the COC decision. COC decision is COC where multiple banks are there. But clearly as far as the account is concerned, it's under a legal process. There are again litigation outside the legal process also and there is also a viability issue that needs to be vouched. So, it would be the COC decision based on the all the factors which will be presented before the COC by the administrator. So, we can't give you any directional outlook in this account. Khurana Sahab, anything further you want to add on this?

Mr. Ajay K Khurana: No, you are right, Sir. It is difficult to tell because bidding process was on and there were bidders. So, as of now, it's difficult to say whether it will go for liquidation.

Ms. Gopika: Sure. Sir, one question on the festive demand, how are you seeing the festive demand both on the Retail and Deposit, Sir?

Mr. Debadatta Chand: On the Retail deposit?

Ms. Gopika: Both Retail Loan and Deposit.

Mr. Debadatta Chand: Yeah, the demand is very strong. Actually, schemes that we have announced also for the festival campaign is generating a good number therein. Overall economic scenario is pretty good, there are demands both happening on the consumption side and also on the festival purchase side. I think the industry is also doing pretty well on both on the demand side for Retail Loan and at the same time also on the cash flow coming in terms of deposit form. So, if you look at the outlook, we are very optimistic and the impact would be, I mean, known in this quarter and we're very, quite positively, what you can say, see this outlook or the current demand translating into more business and more profit for the Bank.

Ms. Gopika: And one more question, if I could squeeze in, your outlook on the whole unsecured loan portfolio? How much a percentage of your retail book is your unsecured loan book? And also below 50,000, which is potential risky portfolio if you can say, how much that is?

Mr. Debadatta Chand: See, already CFO in the initial presentation outlined that we as a Bank slightly would be moderating on the unsecured and personal loan, precisely for the reason that now we do have the aging of almost 2.5-3 years of data now and this data will be analysed and then we'll figure out the next strands of our personal loan. The growth was almost like 60%-70% year-on-year but the outlook that the growth we are targeting for this year is 35% because the base is quite small. So, we are just moderating the growth.

As far as the portfolio is concerned, portfolio is still very strong. The NPA percentage is very low at this point of time. There are cash flow happening as far as Bank of Baroda is concerned, these are all my 95%-96% is my existing customer, any new customer bringing a salary account and then taking a personal loan only allowed to be on boarded into that. So, portfolio quality is fairly good. But because a lot of issues are being talked about in the market, so we have decided to slightly moderate the growth. In the meantime, we'll put a new strategy, do a portfolio analysis and then articulate to the market going forward. Growth would continue to be strong but then slightly will be moderating in terms of the YOY or quarter to quarter growth we had in this particular segment.

Moderator: The next question is from Dipankar Kumar from PTI. Please, unmute yourself and ask the question.

Mr. Dipankar Kumar: Sir, good afternoon.

Mr. Debadatta Chand: Yeah, good afternoon.

Mr. Dipankar Kumar: Sir, on the recovery side, I just wanted to understand what is the H2 target for recovery and...

Moderator: Sorry, Dipankar, but you are breaking. Can you please...?

Mr. Dipankar Kumar: ...talking which ARC sale that you are planning in H2? Is it audible now?

Moderator: I am sorry, Dipankar, your network is pretty shaky. Can you please repeat the question?

Mr. Dipankar Kumar: In written off account recovery, what is the H2 target for recovery? And how much ARC sale that you are planning in H2?

Mr. Debadatta Chand: Khurana Sahab, can you take this question?

Mr. Ajay K Khurana: Yeah, H2 target is similar to what we have got earlier. That is around INR 6000 crores but as far as ARC sale is concerned, we do not have any plans so far as of now. That, of course, it keeps on changing whenever there is a demand and then, you know, the Bank takes a call but as of now we do not have any plan.

Mr. Dipankar Kumar: And can I squeeze in one? Sir, on bob World side...Hello?

Mr. Debadatta Chand: Yeah, please go ahead.

Moderator: Please, go ahead.

Mr. Dipankar Kumar: What is the loss that Bank is anticipating with regard to bob World manipulation?

Mr. Debadatta Chand: No, first of all, let us be clear that the issue is with regard to customer on boarding where some SOPs were not followed. So, there's no manipulation per se. It's an issue with regard to adequacy of document or the data errors or some wrong feeding of data. So, currently it's a regulatory action. We are, I mean, engaged with the regulator. So, I won't share any data. It's between when the issue being discussed with the regulator on the matter. But as we clarified also, there is a disclosure in the notes to account that very insignificant and immaterial, not very material at this point of time and maybe very, very less at this point of time.

Moderator: The next question is from Shilpy Sinha of Economic Times. Please, unmute yourself and ask the question.

Ms. Shilpy Sinha: Sir, I have two questions. One is on your fresh slippages, if I see the investor presentation you have said that some INR 4331 crores you had fresh slippages. If you can tell us where exactly did this come from like the sectors and if there is any particular account?

And the second one is on your fund raise, earlier this year we actually got the Board approval to raise some foreign currency funds. So, if there is any progress on that?

Mr. Ian Desouza: Sir, can I take that first question?

Mr. Debadatta Chand: Yeah, you take the first question. Yeah-yeah, please.

Mr. Ian Desouza: So, in terms of the slippage, mainly it has happened in two big chunky places. One is an international account of around INR 500 crores and the second one was the aviation account, which was in stress last quarter itself, but it slipped this quarter INR 1773 crores. So, this put together is almost to INR 2000 crores of the slippage. If you normalize for this, you would see the slippage in line with the slippage that we've reported in earlier quarters and is in granular accounts across Retail, MSME and Agri. So, if you discount for this, it's in line with past quarters.

Ms. Shilpy Sinha: Okay.

Mr. Ian Desouza: And to your second question on the capital raise, it is more in terms of either sub debt which is Tier 2 capital or AT-1 bonds. It is not equity capital raising that we are taking permission for. It's likely that we'll do some part of it this quarter and some part of it next quarter. We will make a Stock Exchange notification before we take a final decision.

Ms. Shilpy Sinha: Okay, thank you.

Moderator: The next question is from Vishwanath Nair of BQ Prime. Please, unmute yourself and ask the question.

Mr. Vishwanath Nair: Hi, Mr. Chand. Vishwanath here. I just wanted to clarify something you mentioned earlier about your CDOs exit. Did you say that there was a termination from the Banks end? Is that what happened?

Mr. Debadatta Chand: See, as I said, we have given an exchange filing with regard to cessation of service and that was Bank induced. Obviously, bank induced is like the termination of the contract for the matter and this is a larger action that we initiated both at the branch and also at the corporate office level, right.

Mr. Vishwanath Nair: Okay. Because the way the problem has been described in other news reports, I know you have not clarified as to what exactly happened but the way it has been described it seems like a branch level issue. So, I'm not sure why the CDO is facing an exit?

Mr. Debadatta Chand: No-no, it's comprehensive. First of all, actually, currently because there is a regulatory action and we are engaged with the regulator on multiple counts on this, I'd not like to discuss further on that. Actually, once the entire process is over, we can clarify to the market. But then these are the due process followed and everything and the actions have been initiated.

Mr. Vishwanath Nair: Okay. One other question with regard to the aviation account that you mentioned, I understand that you can't really decide for the COC but you are a significant lender and there seems to be just one bidder at least according to market reports and it doesn't seem to be very serious. So, I'm not entirely sure what is the hesitancy in calling it a case of liquidation?

Mr. Debadatta Chand: No, it's a legal process. Actually, the COC would decide based on all the facts. Actually, it's not like taking a directional call at this point of time. Things are evolving and there are pending litigation therein, we are getting news of that. So, appropriately, we'll take a call on that actually. I'm not telling that any action is out of the table. All actions are there but the action would be taken based on the appropriate timing of that. So, let us not prejudge with regard to what is going to happen to this account.

Mr. Vishwanath Nair: Fair enough. One last point on the unsecured, if I can squeeze that in. You said that you'll undertake a portfolio analysis and see if there are any issues but are you seeing any signs of stress at this point in time?

Mr. Debadatta Chand: No-no, my idea of portfolio analysis is to put a new strategy therein. Absolutely, we're not talking about the issues therein. Because a lot of concern is being expressed in different forum with regard to the growth of unsecured for the country as a whole, the banking system as a whole, so then it's always what you can say prudent for the Bank to have analysed the portfolio and that is what we're trying to do. Absolutely, as far as the Bank of Baroda portfolio is concerned, absolutely the portfolio is sound, the percentage of NPA is very, very less, and these are all my existing customers, cash flow. So, absolutely no concern with regard to Bank of Baroda portfolio. Just because there is a hygiene discussion happening in the market, we thought it fit to go for a portfolio analysis.

Mr. Vishwanath Nair: Thank you. Thank you.

Moderator: The next question is from Harsh Kumar of Money Control. What is the Bank's strategy to open branch network ahead by the end of this year?

Mr. Debadatta Chand: See, that's a very fair question. We intend to open branches but then in this financial year I can't quantify because we have gone for a comprehensive segmentation of all branches in terms of branches which are predominantly Agri, MSME, Corporate, and Retail. So, once that exercise is over, we'll go for opening of new branches. We have planned to open new branches to cater to segment where the business profile has shifted like in most of the metro the outskirts is now a very good market for doing business. So, it would be more of rearranging the branches in terms of location and also expanding the market. So, we have planned to open new branches but then we can't say how many would be in this year. But directionally, yes, we are inclined to open new branches.

Moderator: Thank you, Sir. The next question is from Ekta Suri of Zee Business. Please, unmute yourself and ask the question.

Ms. Ekta Suri: Am I audible?

Mr. Debadatta Chand: Yes, Ekta. Please, go ahead.

Ms. Ekta Suri: Sir, actually, I wanted to ask that after this RBI regulation, is the Bank facing a kind of issue where the customer has lost the trust? And also on certain platforms RBI Governor did mention that how banks are basically misusing technology and kind of showing inflated numbers for the same and that's why governance is very important these days in the banking system. So, yes, the name of Bank of Baroda wasn't taken at the platform but since because the news happened very recently and then this comment was made. So, I wanted to take your comment on the same and also on the mistrust from the customer side.

Mr. Debadatta Chand: Let me clarify, there is absolutely no mistrust or lack of trust or any dilution of trust. As far as Bank of Baroda is concerned, this is an organization of 117 years having full trust of customer. And I have also said earlier, in terms of business, the financial transaction, it has gone up significantly high because other channels are doing. So, it's a wrong narrative anyway to put any trust issue here. The bank is very strong, the platforms are very strong. The issue with regard to regulatory action is mostly with regard to customer onboarding processes, not with regard to the platform per se, right. So, absolutely, we have a sound platform. The bob World itself is a sound and robust platform seeded with unique mobile number. Absolutely, no concern at all at any point of time and customer trust has gone up in terms of our action to improve the system. That is what when any such issue comes, the reaction is to improve the system.

Let me tell you one thing very clearly, I'm growing at 17% YOY and in case I have to grow for next 5-6 years I'll be doubling the business of the bank. So, in that scenario if I improve my processes, system, make it more robust that would be a huge comfort. So, that is what the direction that we are moving at.

Ms. Ekta Suri: And on the regulator's comment, Sir?

Mr. Debadatta Chand: No-no, always we are a regulated entity and regulators comments always we look into our system, processes. So, we respect any regulator comment on the matter but then as

far as we are engaged on the particular piece with the regulator, that's why some of the data points people asked and I didn't provide because we are engaged with the regulator on the issue. So, absolutely, no issue with regard to that.

Ms. Ekta Suri: Okay. Sir, my one more question was on Go Air. Would you be open to give more funding, additional funding to Go Air right now at this point? There was some media reports which said that, so would you clarify on that?

Mr. Debadatta Chand: So, no, it's a COC call based on the information they do have with regard to the litigation piece, the viability piece. So, COC would take appropriate calls. So, I would not like to react to any media news with regard to funding or no funding.

Ms. Ekta Suri: Okay, Sir. Thank you.

Moderator: The next question is from Amol Dete of Economic Times Online. Please, unmute yourself and ask the question.

Mr. Amol Dete: Hi, Sir. Good evening. Amol here.

Mr. Debadatta Chand: Yeah, good evening.

Mr. Amol Dete: Yeah. So, initially you spoke about the new CDO is in the pipeline, specifically for the BoB after whatever has happened. So, could you please tell us by any chance will you reveal the name who's going to be the next CDO? And if not the name, perhaps you could tell us whether he will come from inside or he will be an outsider? How do you look at it?

Mr. Debadatta Chand: No-no, currently the exchange filing that we have given and the new CDO name is already, it's not a CDO role now, it's the Head of Digital Banking and the Digital Business, right. So, already we have disclosed the name. She's an internal candidate, quite capable, qualified to run the process. Going forward if need be, then we need to further scale up the digital business of the Bank and then we can look for a CDO maybe from outside or maybe from inside. But, currently, there is no immediate plan for anything of that sort. The Bank has internal capacity to handle all this responsibility and precisely what we have done that particular exchange filing.

Mr. Amol Dete: Okay, sure. Sir, in a couple of quarters previously specifically the BoBs growth in the road and infrastructure segment was quite robust. So, currently, if you could give me an outlook specifically for the next 2-3 quarters? Which are the sectors that you are betting on heavily?

Mr. Debadatta Chand: Yeah. Mr. Tyagi, can you take this question up?

Mr. Lalit Tyagi: Yeah. So, as the country is also witnessing a significant investment from the government side in the infrastructure, so we are also riding that. Of course, there is no such aggressive plans to grow higher than the industry. There are good traction in the renewable sector, road sector and some of the associated infrastructure and we believe that the kind of growth we have witnessed in the past and the project pipelines are there and the monetization of the existing assets also. So, there are decent opportunities and we believe the growth will remain what we have witnessed in the past.

Mr. Debadatta Chand: See, just to add to what Mr. Tyagi said, that if you look my segment growth that we published along with the analyst presentation, I have a very balanced growth in all segments. There is no excessive growth in one segment. It's a very balanced growth. Somewhere it may be 6%, somewhere it may be 10%. So, that you have the portfolio, what you can say, construct in the strategy that we normally follow to diversify the risk.

Mr. Amol Dete: Yeah, sure-sure. So, you already clarified a lot on bob World but, you know, since the regulator has come into the picture and earlier also every Bank has pitched their app so aggressively. You know, if you could highlight one more point here is this that the BoB branches and specifically the bob World, you know, allowed people to route their loans or maybe loan generation and all the loan related activities through the through the bob World app, so do you think by any chance it will have some or minimal impact at least on the digital lending side because all the digital loans were routed through the bob World, if I'm not wrong?

Mr. Debadatta Chand: No-no, actually we do have a digital lending platform independent of above bob World, point one. Secondly, bob World was a sourcing point and also some kind of end-to-end to sanction for personal loan. So, in terms of sourcing of leads for digital platform, bob World has a small percentage therein, right. And typically most of the loans, again, existing customer do apply. So, the sourcing is as robust as it was earlier.

The second aspect with regard to the personal loan, which was end-to-end digital and was through bob World other than the branch channel or any other channel, as such I said that based on the discussion we have in the entire economy slightly while moderating the growth still is very strong. Suppose, I say on the personal loan we intend to grow at 35%, the growth is still strong but considering the earlier growth of 60%-65% on a low base anyway, this would be slightly in moderation. In that way it is not going to impact me in terms of my strategy on the personal loan vis-a-vis the issue of bob World that we are discussing.

Moderator: We will take last two questions. The second last question is from Anil Pandey of Jagran. Out of the INR 1.89 lakh crores of international advances, could you please give a breakup of the type of loans including the ECB loans and other type of loans from foreign offices? Thank you.

Mr. Debadatta Chand: So, we have loans and local assets. ECB is not a very significant percentage therein. We do have trade asset, high-quality asset, assets in local market like U.S., Australia and these are well balanced, well structured, well diversified. But, Mr. Tyagi, anything further you want to add on this?

Mr. Lalit Tyagi: Yeah. So, our international loan book comprises of ECBs, as MD said, local corporate book as well as the trade assets. It's a fairly balanced book and we time to time continue to diversify our loan book. We have wholesale market presence in various geographies and all these branches are doing well in terms of the loan acquisition and the disbursals.

Moderator: Thank you. The last question is from Pragatti Oberoi of Bloomberg. Please, unmute yourself and ask the question.

Ms. Pragatti Oberoi: Yeah. Hi, Mr. Chand. I have a couple of questions. One is that, again, on Mr. Akhil Handa's termination of the contract, so just getting a clarity on this. That was in response to the bob World app fiasco that entirely went down and the Bank took a call to end his contract, right?

Mr. Debadatta Chand: See, Pragati, normally we don't discuss employee specific issue in a platform like this but then there was an exchange filing. I just clarified that exchange filing that's it. Like beyond that, I would not like to discuss further because normally we don't discuss employee specific because actions have been initiated against the set of people both at the branch and at the supervisory level. So, these are all part of that. Actually, we can't exclusively identify one individual against any other. It's a group action being initiated, right.

Ms. Pragatti Oberoi: Okay-okay. Fair enough, Mr. Chand. Actually, my question just stemmed from the fact because after the call was taken and after the news that broke out, there was from the employee side or from the particular person side of narrative as well that said that, you know, 'I am stepping down from the role'. So, there was something that was not joining the dots and hence I thought I would seek the clarity from you.

Mr. Debadatta Chand: Okay. That's correct.

Ms. Pragatti Oberoi: Yeah. Yeah, okay. Second thing, Sir, I wanted to ask, I understand that the Bank has not yet given us a clarification on what exactly happened and you have reiterated that the issue was in the customer on boarding process there. But, Sir, there are rules in place, there are compliances in place and that's exactly what the Bank is trying to do now, from what previous reports have come in it was basically one SIM or like one mobile number being linked to several accounts or what is it? How is that exactly possible that one mobile number can be linked to five different people? Like something has to be a problem in the app, right?

Mr. Debadatta Chand: Actually, let me again, because that is what when there is a regulatory action and we are satisfying the regulator, I would not like to discuss further on that. The only issue that I'm telling is that the customer on boarding process that we refer to is for deactivated users, right. So, there are gaps in terms of adequacy of documents, data error, and wrong data feeding. That is what all that and this process has been strengthened further. So, when a particular customer having a deactivated user status and there is an on boarding process which was not followed by branches then we have strengthened the system. Materiality impact is very less. If you talk about percentage of this on the overall customer on boarded, the percentage is very, very less. But there are instances where there was compliance gap and that's where the actions have been taken by the Bank on a group action basis. So, this is all but once the regulatory action is through then when we meet next, possibly we can clarify further on that because see the current action is on a regulatory action and we are satisfying to the regulator with regard to the compliance and all those action part. So, further details, I'll not be in a position to provide to you.

Moderator: The last question is, what is the percentage of bulk deposits in your total deposits? And has it increased in the last two quarters or stayed the same?

Mr. Debadatta Chand: See, that's again as a strategy. I very clearly articulated, there is a percentage, the data also we have provided in the analyst presentation, and you can very well make it out. As a strategy going forward, the bulk was increasing at a faster rate as compared to the growth in Retail term deposit. This is not only specific to Bank of Baroda, the entire industry has a similar trend but

we as a Bank decided that going forward let us not grow on the bulk segment like the same rate at which the bulk was growing. So, if you look at this quarter, the sequential growth is only 3.4% and if you multiply 4 into that, it is almost like 15% which will align with my deposit growth in the entire like the grow sequentially on the deposit growth that we have given. So, it is aligning to the deposit growth.

So, there are two advantages also like bulk also get repriced very quickly. That's a scenario where there is a rate reversal happening, then the benefit would come to bulk more quickly whereas in Retail, normally, the tenure will be longer than the bulk.

So, all this, our ALM aspect which are duly taken in terms of a strategic input in the ALCO as done in all the banks and adequate care taken in terms of managing the book so that we grow in a very, what you can say, the pace of the growth is very steady and robust in that.

Ms. Pragatti Oberoi: Thank you, Sir.

Moderator: That is the last question that we'll be able to take today. Thank you all for joining us. Have a great evening ahead.

Mr. Debadatta Chand: Thank you very much and I thank all media friends. This is on a Saturday we called all of you. So, thank you very much for that.
