MOVE TO NETWORK VYSYA BANK BRANCHES UNDER WAY

VYSYA BANK, which has embarked on a major technology drive, has announced that the first **phase** of its **'VysyAmulya'** project lo network 200 of its branches across the country is under way.

The project envisages interconnecting 200 of the bank's 483 branches in two phases. Until now 25 bank locations have been networked. The nation wide rollout will be complete within next one year.

"Interlinking 200 branches will allow inter-city transfer of funds and permit customers to transact business anywhere, anytime and from anyplace", said **Mr Ben Hellemans, Deputy Managing Director**. The Vysya Bank. The 200 branches that are being tied together contribute to 80 per cent of the bank's overall business, he added. "It will take our 70-year-old association with our customers to a higher level and will add to the bank's offering of retail and corporate banking solutions," **said Mr Hellemans.**

"The roll out of the entire project will cost Vysya Bank Rs 60 crore. Prior to this project, the annual IT spend of the bank was around Rs 10 crore-12 crore", he said. "Competitive pressure and regulations are some of the reasons for this move. However, more than that, being tech savvy will help in retaining its ranking as a leading private bank in India", **said Mr Hellemans.**

Profile, a banking software from Sanchez, is being implemented as a core banking solution. As of now, 75 of the 483 branches run ISBS — a branch automation software product from TCS — while over 200 branch run on ALMPS (a hardware/software system which during the 80's were sold as ledger posting machines).

Cisco for supply of networking gear, IBM for hardware and customizing Profile to suit Indian bank-Ing needs, and Bangalore Labs for network design, are some of the partners, who are aiding the bank implement the project.

IdeaSpace, an affiliate of Vysya Bank which manages the bank's IT infrastructure, will run and manage the network. "Through distribution point's branches are linked together via leased lines. Data generated in the branches will also be replicated online at the bank's data recovery centre in Hyderabad", **said Mr Hellemans.**

"The VysyAmulya project involves setting up a 3-tier redundant network architecture for running critical online applications. Cisco's 7500 series core router will be the backbone for the entire network. Cisco's routers will be placed at the distribution centre and at access level", **said Mr B Ashok, Vice President, Cisco Systems India.**

"Vysya Bank has around 10 ATMs to which 25 new ones will be added soon. As the bank does not view ATM as a cost effective channel in India", **Mr Hellemans said** "The plan is to have just the minimum number of ATMs as strategically required. An Internet banking product called NetSavy is being implemented. On the pipeline is also a trade finance software package. Many of the branches do not have minimum level of business and there is also the problem of stable power, which is why linking all of the bank's branches now may not be viable", he said.