

Powering Depositor Growth Through Broad, INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS

SHEIKH MOHAMMAD MAROOF, Managing Director & CEO, Dhaka Bank

The Daily Star (TDS): What is the current state and trend of bank deposits in the country?

Sheikh Mohammad Maroof (SMM): As of May 2025, total bank deposits in Bangladesh stood at approximately Tk 18.32 trillion, marking a 7.73% year-on-year increase from Tk 17.01 trillion in May 2024. Growth has slowed from earlier highs—8.51% in March, 8.21% in April, and 8.28% in January. While inflation has remained elevated at around 9%, eroding people's capacity to save, and confidence has been shaken by past banking irregularities, recent central bank interventions have helped stabilise the situation. Although growth remains below the 10-11% levels seen in late 2023, the steady upward trend reflects gradually recovering depositor confidence. The slowdown in demand deposits, offset by modest gains in time deposits, indicates a shift towards longer-term savings instruments.

TDS: What major deposit schemes does your bank currently offer, particularly those tailored to specific customer segments?

SMM: Dhaka Bank offers a broad portfolio of deposit products customised for various groups:

- General Savings Accounts, Student Accounts, and Women's Savings Accounts (the latter with lower minimum balances and specific benefits)
- Fixed Deposit Receipts (FDRs), Monthly Benefit Plans, and Double/Triple Benefit Schemes, including Structured Deposit Schemes (SDS) offering enhanced monthly returns
- Recurring Deposit Plans such as DPS, child education and marriage schemes, and pension-style savings
- Senior Citizen Savings Plans that offer higher interest rates, often bundled with insurance coverage
- Shariah-Compliant Deposit Options under Islamic banking, including Mudaraba savings and term deposits
- NRB-Targeted Products geared toward remittance-linked savings
- Digital-First Solutions for tech-savvy customers, including mobile-based deposit accounts and app-driven savings planners

Two illustrative schemes:

- EduSavings Plan bundles savings with basic insurance: in case of a parent's accidental death or disability, the full maturity value is guaranteed; normal death also triggers a payout.
- Students' Ledger (for school and university levels) aims to cultivate financial literacy from an early age by promoting saving habits and financial awareness

TDS: What innovations has your bank introduced in terms of technology, payments, and security to benefit depositors?

SMM: Dhaka Bank leads with a suite of innovations:

- Digital Platforms: Go Plus, EzyBank, and the Self Banking Portal allow secure remote account opening, DPS/FDR setup, fund transfers, bill payments, mobile top-ups, and balance checks—all protected by password and OTP authentication
- Robotic Process Automation (RPA): Streamlined digital onboarding and incentive payouts without branch visits
- Payment Integrations: Bangla QR code support, NFC enabled contactless cards, and e-commerce partnerships enabling seamless online payments
- Security & Compliance: Certified under PCI DSS, ISO 27001, and TIA 942-B:2017; data centre resilience with intrusion prevention and automated failover
- Lounge Access Innovation: Dhaka Bank introduced the LoungeKey facility for the first time in the Bangladesh market in 2019, enabling our cardholders to access over 1,500 airport lounges abroad without carrying a separate Priority Pass
- Digital Lending via eRin App: Bangladesh's first fully digital, end-to-end lending platform approved by Bangladesh Bank. Users can access unsecured loans up to BDT 50,000 without any hardcopy documentation, with instant

approval—particularly valuable for underbanked segments. Dhaka Bank integrates AI/ML for inclusive credit access

TDS: What are your bank's future plans for developing new depository schemes and enhancing operational modes for depositors?

SMM: Dhaka Bank is developing several customer-centric initiatives:

- Goal-Based Digital Savings Planner: Allows users to set targets, receive reminders, and track progress in-app to encourage disciplined saving
- Green Savings Account: Allocates a share of profits to environmental causes, with annual impact reports for depositors
- Enhanced NRB Savings Schemes: Designed to integrate remittance inflows with tailored savings structures
- Biometric Agent Banking Expansion: Fingerprint-based banking kiosk authentication in rural areas to facilitate financial inclusion
- Bundled Savings with Insurance: New savings accounts combining insurance coverage, especially for low-income and women depositors
- Instant Virtual Cards: Issued via the app for secure contactless and online transactions

These efforts reflect Dhaka Bank's dedication to digital innovation, inclusivity, and customer-focused design, ensuring convenient and secure access for a diverse customer base.

TDS: What role do you believe

the government should play in strengthening public trust and ensuring the safety of deposits in the banking sector?

SMM: The government can enhance depositor confidence and banking integrity by:

- Enforcing Robust Regulatory Oversight: Ensuring transparency and accountability through central bank supervision, anti-fraud mechanisms, and strict enforcement
- Supporting Credible Deposit Insurance: Ensuring the deposit insurance scheme is well-funded and communicated effectively to assure customers
- Mandating Transparency: Requiring regular disclosures and audits by all banks, with prompt action against irregularities
- Reforming Legal & Enforcement Frameworks: Strengthening anti-corruption and financial crime legislation and ensuring independent supervision
- Promoting Financial Literacy: Investing in nationwide programmes to educate the public on banking risks, products, and safety measures
- Ensuring the Right Governance Framework in the banking industry through proper reform of the Banking Companies Act and regulatory structure

Public confidence improves when financial institutions are transparent and stable—and when the government clearly demonstrates its role as a reliable custodian of the financial system.

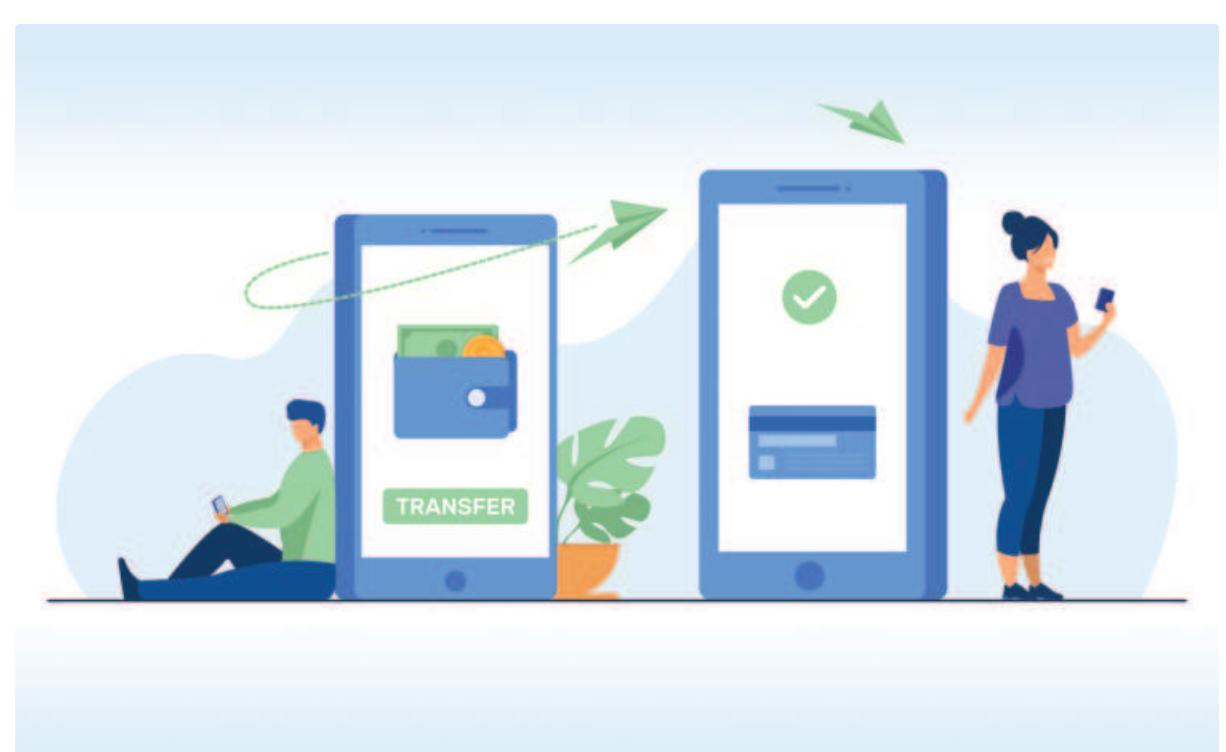


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The digital era of deposits

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NRBC Bank is aiming to change that through nano banking services and micro deposit schemes. "We plan to introduce digital deposit packages where even daily or weekly savings can be made through mobile apps," said Dr. Md. Touhidul Alam Khan, Managing Director & CEO of NRBC Bank.

The bank is also finalising its e-KYC platform, which allows customers to open savings accounts entirely online. "Expatriates, freelancers, and rural communities will benefit the most, as deposits can be made without visiting a branch," Dr. Khan added.

Frictionless, Self-Service Deposits
Eastern Bank Limited (EBL) is making deposits effortless with its digital self-service platform, allowing customers to open accounts, FDs, or DPS from anywhere. "We are focused on making deposit processes as simple as ordering food online; fast, secure, and paperless," said Ali Reza Iftekhar, Managing Director of EBL.

EBL's biometric metal card adds an additional layer of trust by combining aesthetics with fingerprint-based security, ensuring deposit accounts are safer

than ever.
Redefining the Deposit

City Bank's Citytouch platform exemplifies how deposits have evolved into real-time, interactive

Zaman Chowdhury, CEO of Trust Bank.

From digital FDRs and AI-driven savings plans to micro-deposit apps and fingerprint authentication, banks in Bangladesh are rewriting

The future belongs to banks that combine trust with technology helping customers save not just money but time, effort, and worry. With e-KYC, mobile-first onboarding, and AI-powered deposit management on the horizon, digital innovations will continue to shape a future where saving becomes as simple as a swipe or tap.

experiences. "Citytouch is not just an internet banking app; it's a complete digital ecosystem for fund transfers, deposits, and utility transactions," said Mashrur Arefin, Managing Director & CEO of City Bank.

Similarly, Trust Bank PLC has streamlined deposit access with instant debit and virtual card issuance. "Our focus is on ensuring deposits are accessible and secure, backed by multi-layered digital security systems," said Ahsan Iftekhar, Managing Director of Trust Bank.

the rules of deposit banking. As Mr. Arefin of NCC Bank put it, "The future belongs to banks that combine trust with technology helping customers save not just money but time, effort, and worry."

The journey is far from over. With e-KYC, mobile-first onboarding, and AI-powered deposit management on the horizon, digital innovations will continue to shape a future where saving becomes as simple as a swipe or tap.