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“Citygem combines dedicated lounges, wealth managers and curated lifestyle partnerships to deliver personalised banking and measurable ROI through deposit growth, cross-sell and lasting client loyalty.”



ELITE BANKING, THE CITYGEM WAY

City Bank PLC.

The Daily Star (TDS): How does Citygem differ from standard retail banking in service, pricing and eligibility?

Mashrur Arefin (MA): Citygem is our flagship priority banking wing for High Net-Worth Individuals (HNI), and Sapphire represents our exclusive value proposition for Ultra High Net-Worth Individuals. These propositions offer personalised banking with an unparalleled combination of services that provides a superior experience compared to standard retail banking.

Citygem members can avail themselves of dedicated Citygem lounges that offer optimum comfort and privacy with virtual office facilities, extended-hour locker services and reserved parking. Each client is supported by a dedicated wealth manager, ensuring access to investment opportunities, expert financial advice and tailored solutions.

The proposition also includes curated lifestyle facilities, premium merchant benefits, concierge support and airport lounge access. Eligibility for Citygem and Sapphire membership is determined based on specific relationship criteria aligned with each segment.

TDS: Approximately how large is your premium client base in Bangladesh? What membership criteria and minimum balances or salary thresholds apply for Citygem and Sapphire?

MA: Citygem operates as a dedicated priority banking department and was awarded by Asiamoney as the “Best Bank for Premium Services” in Bangladesh. Citygem has received this prestigious accolade in 2023, 2019, and 2018.

Today, our priority client base includes 14,000-plus Citygem members, while Sapphire remains highly exclusive with only more than 250 HNI clients. Citygem deposit book stands at more than BDT 7,500 crore, making it one of the fastest-growing and strongest portfolios in the country’s priority banking landscape.

We have different eligibility criteria starting from BDT 10 lac to BDT 75 lac for Citygem and BDT 2 Crore to BDT 5 Crore for Sapphire. We have another eligibility criterion for salaried professionals where the minimum eligibility criterion is a BDT 5 lac gross monthly salary with a BDT 15 lac deposit relationship with City Bank.

TDS: What wealth-management and advisory services are offered exclusively to premium clients?

MA: Citygem offers exclusive wealth management and advisory services tailored for premium clients. Members have access to dedicated relationship managers from City Bank Capital Resources Limited (CBCRL) and City



Broking Ltd., providing personalised capital market guidance. Through this, clients benefit from portfolio management, investment strategy advisory, share trading, and a full suite of capital market instruments aligned with their financial goals.

TDS: How do you select lifestyle partners (hotels, travel, retail, wellness) and measure the tangible benefits to members and to the bank?

MA: Citygem selects lifestyle partners that cater to HNI clientele’s unique needs and preferences. This can include luxury hotels, exclusive merchants, and high-end retailers. The goal is to offer value-added services and experiences that match their lifestyle and expectations.

To onboard a partner, we assess their market reputation, service excellence, and relevance to our clients’ lifestyle, ensuring partnerships deliver meaningful benefits and unique experiences.

Impact is measured for the bank based on incremental card spending, portfolio growth, cross-sell and customer acquisition and for the Citygem member on usage rates, redeemed benefit value, member satisfaction and engagement for clients. Well-chosen partnerships strengthen loyalty, deepen relationships, and reinforce Citygem’s holistic priority banking proposition.

TDS: How is personalised relationship management integrated with your digital channels to ensure seamless, secure service?

MA: At City Bank, we ensure HNI clients experience seamless, secure, and personalised service through our digital channels. Through Citytouch, clients can open and close FD and DPS accounts, invest in the capital market, initiate BO accounts, and purchase insurance, reducing the need for branch visits. In our branches, we have CityQ – an electronic queue management system where priority customers get preferential queues. Similarly, in our call centre, Citygem members get priority queues to avail any services.

We are expanding capabilities to include Treasury Bills, Bonds, Government Savings Certificates, and other long-term investments, allowing clients to manage diversified portfolios in a single platform. The system also adapts to each client’s preferences and behaviour, providing a curated, highly personalised digital experience that complements their relationship with their dedicated wealth manager.

TDS: What preferential fees or waived charges are included in the Citygem Schedule of Charges compared with the standard retail SOC?

MA: Citygem members benefit from a dedicated Schedule of Charges, offering preferential fees and waivers

across a range of banking services. These include account-related charges, statements and certificates, fund transfers, pay orders, foreign currency services, card fees, and loan-related charges – ensuring a smoother, more rewarding banking experience compared with standard retail clients.

TID: How do you balance attractive interest/insurance features for premium clients with liquidity management and the bank’s risk appetite?

MA: At City Bank, we focus on value over rates for our priority clients. Beyond attractive interest, we offer lifestyle privileges, concierge services, wellness benefits, and advisory support that enhance the overall proposition.

Insurance features are bundled into products like Seniors’ Savings and City Alo deposits, providing financial returns and meaningful coverage without affecting the bank’s liquidity. Lending products also include embedded insurance, balancing customer security with the bank’s risk appetite. Standalone bancassurance solutions are available through Citytouch, which gives the client the option to choose while allowing the bank to manage pricing, liquidity, and capital responsibly.

TDS: Are there premium products that let clients align wealth with ESG goals? How do you measure ROI on premium services – customer satisfaction, deposit growth, product cross-sell, or lifetime value?

MA: City Bank, as a leading sustainable bank, offers products that let clients align wealth with ESG goals. These include green and hybrid auto loans, fully digitalised lending to reduce paper consumption, financing for women entrepreneurs, and the country’s first Green Savings Account, which channels funds into sustainable projects while planting a tree per account.

For Citygem, ROI is measured across four pillars: customer satisfaction, deposit growth, product cross-sell, and lifetime value. Exceptional service drives satisfaction, which strengthens balances, expands cross-sell opportunities, and enhances long-term client value. These metrics, alongside operational factors such as cost-to-income ratio and deposit stability, ensure the proposition delivers meaningful return for both the client and the bank.

TDS: Which near-term innovations will most influence City Bank’s premium proposition over the next 2–3 years?

MA: Citygem continues to innovate to drive growth and enhance client experience. Over the next 2–3 years, key developments will focus on new propositions, enhanced digital platforms, card services and strategic partnerships across our banking channels.

These initiatives will strengthen relationships with existing clients, attract untapped segments, and improve operational efficiency. The future of City Bank’s priority banking will be defined by deeper wealth expertise, smarter digital experiences, and affluent lifestyle offerings, setting a new benchmark for priority banking in Bangladesh.

