

# Bank Asia, Chef's Table sign deal on Ramadan privileges for cardholders

STAR BUSINESS DESK

Bank Asia PLC has signed an agreement with Chef's Table to offer Ramadan privileges to its debit and credit cardholders.

Kazi Saiful Islam, general manager for sales and operations at Chef's Table, and Zishan Ahammad, head of cards, ADC and internet banking at Bank Asia PLC, signed the agreement at the former's office in Dhaka recently, according to a press release.

Under the agreement, Bank Asia cardholders will enjoy a 10 percent discount at all Chef's Table outlets throughout the holy month of Ramadan.

This collaboration reflects Bank Asia's continued commitment to enhancing the customer experience by delivering added value and exclusive lifestyle benefits, especially during Ramadan.

Other senior officials from both organisations were also present at the signing ceremony.



Zishan Ahammad, head of cards, ADC and internet banking at Bank Asia PLC, and Kazi Saiful Islam, general manager for sales and operations at Chef's Table, pose for a photograph after signing the agreement at the latter's head office in Dhaka recently.

PHOTO: BANK ASIA

# BRAC Bank launches Monipuripara sub-branch in Dhaka



Tareq Refat Ullah Khan, managing director and CEO of BRAC Bank PLC, inaugurates the new sub-branch at Monipuripara in Tejgaon, Dhaka recently.

PHOTO: BRAC BANK

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BRAC Bank PLC has recently launched a new sub-branch at Monipuripara in Dhaka.

With this addition, the bank's sub-branch network now stands at 116, according to a press release.

Tareq Refat Ullah Khan, managing director and CEO of BRAC Bank PLC, inaugurated the sub-branch at JDPC Bhaban, Monipuripara in Tejgaon, Dhaka, as the chief guest, the press release said.

The area is well known for its Monipuri ethnic community, residential neighbourhoods and growing urban establishments, offering BRAC Bank a strong opportunity to serve a diverse customer base with more convenient and enhanced banking services.

The new sub-branch will offer a range of modern banking services, providing convenience to both individual and business customers.

Customers can avail themselves of services such as account opening, cash deposits and withdrawals, deposit pension schemes, fund transfers using EFTN and RTGS, remittance services, utility bill payments, credit cards, student file processing, consumer loans, debit cards and chequebook processing, Astha App enrolment, school banking and savings instruments, among others, except foreign exchange services.

The bank's expansive network includes 310 branches and sub-branches, 330 ATMs, 446 SME Unit Offices and 1,117 agent banking outlets, making it one of the largest in Bangladesh.

# Uttara Bank opens relocated Kalabagan branch in Dhaka

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Uttara Bank PLC yesterday opened its relocated Kalabagan branch at Green Landmark Tower on Mirpur Road in Dhaka.

Md Abul Hashem, managing director and CEO of Uttara Bank PLC, inaugurated the relocated branch as the chief guest, according to a press release.

Maksudul Hasan, additional managing director of the bank, Md Rezaul Karim and Md Rafiul Islam, deputy managing directors, attended the event.

Madhu Sudan Sardar, executive general manager and zonal head for the Dhaka North Zone, and Md Rabiul Hasan, general manager of the public relations division, along with local businessmen and clients, were also present.



Md Abul Hashem, managing director and CEO of Uttara Bank PLC, inaugurates the bank's relocated Kalabagan branch at Green Landmark Tower on Mirpur Road in Dhaka yesterday.

PHOTO: UTTARA BANK

# Midland Bank organises annual agent banking conference



Md Ahsan-uz Zaman, managing director and CEO of Midland Bank PLC, poses for a group photograph with participants of the bank's agent banking conference at Six Seasons Hotel in Dhaka recently.

PHOTO: MIDLAND BANK

STAR BUSINESS DESK

Midland Bank PLC recently launched its agent banking service, branded "Apar Shathe Apar Pashe", aimed at expanding modern banking services to the unbanked population.

Md Ahsan-uz Zaman, managing director and CEO of Midland Bank PLC, inaugurated the daylong conference as the chief guest at Six Seasons Hotel,

Gulshan in Dhaka, according to a press release.

The initiative particularly focuses on small entrepreneurs, school banking and farmers, in line with the bank's commitment to financial inclusion and wider access to banking services across the country.

The bank continues to provide both conventional and Islamic agent banking services through its agent banking centres. Customers can

access a wide range of modern, technology-based conventional and Islamic banking services.

Facilities available at the bank's agent banking outlets include opening savings and current accounts, cash deposits and withdrawals, fund transfers, and transfers through BEFTN and RTGS to any bank account.

Customers can also receive foreign remittances, apply for cheque books and debit and credit cards, and avail themselves of micro, medium and krishi loans. The bank awarded top performers in different categories with crests and certificates in recognition of their outstanding performance throughout the year.

Currently, the bank operates 142 agent banking centres in 30 districts and 81 upazilas across the country.

Md Zahid Hossain, deputy managing director and CRO; Md Nazmul Huda Sarkar, deputy managing director, head of IT and CTO; and Javed Tarek Khan, head of the institutional banking division, along with members of the Midland Bank agent banking rollout committee, divisional heads, heads of branches and business development officers of agent banking centres, were also present.



Najith Meewanage, chief executive officer of the Commercial Bank of Ceylon PLC Bangladesh Operations, inaugurates the new space for its corporate banking department at the bank's head office in Gulshan, Dhaka recently.

PHOTO: COMMERCIAL BANK OF CEYLON

# Commercial Bank of Ceylon unveils new corporate banking space in Gulshan-2

STAR BUSINESS DESK

The Commercial Bank of Ceylon PLC Bangladesh Operations has opened a new space for its corporate banking department at its head office in Gulshan-2.

Najith Meewanage, chief executive officer of the Commercial Bank of Ceylon PLC Bangladesh Operations, inaugurated the office space as the chief guest.

This move underscores the bank's long-term commitment to Bangladesh's financial sector, according to a press release.

By investing in a high-capacity, tech-enabled environment, the bank is positioning itself to better support

the evolving needs of its corporate partners.

The new facility is designed to enhance operational efficiency and facilitate more sophisticated financial solutions, ensuring that the bank remains at the forefront of corporate banking excellence.

Haily Algewater, deputy chief executive officer and chief operating officer of the bank; Mahmud Hossain, deputy CEO and head of corporate banking; Samantha Ratnayaka, chief risk and investment strategy officer; and Fatema Zohora, senior assistant general manager for corporate banking, along with members of the bank's management committee and heads of departments, were also present.

# Halal certification opens gateway for Vietnamese goods

ANN/VIETNAM NEWS

The rising number of Vietnamese agricultural and food products obtaining Halal certification creates a great opportunity for domestic goods to penetrate rapidly global Muslim market.

As Vietnam accelerates efforts to restructure its export markets, the Halal market is emerging as a promising avenue for deeper trade integration, aligned with the country's long-term vision of sustainable growth.

The nation's export market restructure includes to diversify markets and reduce reliance on traditional trading partners.

According to international organisations, the global Muslim population now exceeds two billion people, accounting for roughly 25 per cent of the world's population. The Halal economy is projected to reach approximately US\$5 trillion by 2030, extending well beyond food and beverages into cosmetics, pharmaceuticals, logistics, tourism and Islamic finance.

Notably, the Halal market is no longer a niche market, but an increasingly comprehensive consumer market, where ethical standards, traceability, transparency and production integrity are prioritised.

**The global Halal economy is projected to reach approximately US\$5 trillion by 2030, extending well beyond food and beverages into cosmetics, pharmaceuticals, logistics, tourism and Islamic finance**

Non-Muslim consumers are also gravitating towards Halal products, viewing certification as a guarantee of quality, safety and sustainability.

With its strengths in tropical agriculture, food processing and deep integration through next-generation free trade agreements (FTAs), Vietnam is widely regarded as having significant potential to develop a structured Halal industry.

However, to turn that potential into a competitive advantage, Halal certification is not just a standard, also must be as an industry-wide development strategy.

Increasingly, firms are engaging with the Halal market in a proactive and strategic manner. HR Essence Co, Ltd has recently announced that several of its product have obtained Halal certification from the National Halal Certification Centre, including coffee, cereals and premium bird's nest cereals.

The significance is not in the number of certified products but in the company's approach. According to Huong Nguyen, chairwoman of HR Essence, entering the Halal market requires a comprehensive restructuring of the value chain, from sourcing raw materials and production processes to quality management systems, branding and market access strategies.

In this sense, Halal is not merely a passport to export markets, but a filtering mechanism that compels businesses to raise governance standards, standardise procedures and invest seriously in intrinsic product value.