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DIGITAL PAYMENTS GAIN FESTIVE MOMENTUM

NRB Bank PLC

During Ramadan managing finances and making secure payments become a top priority. Recently, The Daily Star sat down with a representative from NRB Bank PLC to discuss how customer spending habits are changing during this festive season. He shares insights on the rise of digital payments, exciting new offers for cardholders, and simple ways to pay Zakat or send Eidi.

The Daily Star (TDS): With the holy month of Ramadan approaching, how has your bank observed a shift in consumer spending behaviour over the last few years?

Ans: At NRB Bank PLC, we have observed a clear and consistent shift toward more planned, disciplined, and digitally driven spending patterns during Ramadan over the past few years. Customers are now distributing their expenditures more evenly throughout the month—covering essentials, Iftar and Sehri meals, and early Eid preparations—rather than concentrating spending in the final week.

Additionally, there has been a significant rise in digital transactions through Debit and Credit Cards, our proprietary mobile banking platform “NRB Click,” and integrated MFS channels. This reflects growing customer confidence in secure, cashless payment systems during peak festive periods.

TDS: Could you elaborate on the specific campaigns, discounts, or any offers your bank is structuring for Debit and Credit cardholders this season? How do these initiatives promote “smart spending”?

Ans: During Ramadan and Eid, NRB Bank PLC introduces a range of offers for our Debit and Credit Cardholders, including cashback facilities, merchant discounts, Buy-One-Get-One (BOGO) offers, and attractive EMI schemes. These initiatives encourage customers to plan their purchases responsibly,



ILLUSTRATION: E. RAZA RONNY

reduce dependency on cash, and manage their budgets efficiently.

TDS: How is your bank leveraging its partnership with MFS providers to ensure seamless fund flows during the high-traffic Eid rush?

Ans: NRB Bank PLC maintains strong operational collaboration with leading MFS providers such as bKash and Nagad to ensure uninterrupted fund transfers and real-time settlements during peak Eid periods. Through robust integration and coordinated

monitoring, we facilitate smooth inflows and outflows on high traffic days.

TDS: Are there specific features bridging your Core Banking Solution (CBS) and wallets to facilitate effortless Zakat payments or Eidi transfers?

Ans: Yes. NRB Bank’s digital ecosystem integrates our Core Banking Solution with mobile wallet channels, enabling customers to transfer funds seamlessly from savings accounts or cards to MFS wallets or other bank accounts.

This functionality simplifies seasonal obligations such as Zakat payments and enables effortless Eidi transfers to family members. Our objective is to support both structured charitable giving and informal festive gifting in a secure and convenient manner.

TDS: How have your Deposit Pension Schemes (DPS) or integrated savings products helped customers build a financial buffer for this expensive time of year?

Ans: Our Deposit Pension Schemes (DPS) and structured savings products are designed to instill financial discipline throughout the year. By encouraging systematic savings, these products help customers build a financial cushion that can be utilized during high-expense periods such as Ramadan and Eid.

TDS: As transaction volumes spike during the festival, fraud attempts often rise. What specific technological advancements or security protocols has your bank implemented to safeguard customer data and API integrations during this busy period?

Ans: During Ramadan and Eid, NRB Bank strengthens its cybersecurity and fraud prevention framework to address elevated transaction volumes. We deploy real-time transaction monitoring systems, authentication protocols, encrypted API integrations, and risk analytics to safeguard customer data and ensure transactional integrity.



SABBIR AHMED
Country Manager
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Festive spending in Bangladesh will continue to become more digital, inclusive, and data-driven. Cashless acceptance will expand deeper into tier-2 and tier-3 cities, and real-time capabilities will become standard. Ramadan will increasingly act as a catalyst, accelerating digital adoption across consumers, merchants, and financial institutions alike.

DATA-DRIVEN ROADMAP for the Future of Festive Finance VISA

During this Ramadan, the nation’s payment landscape is undergoing a significant structural transformation. Sabbir Ahmed, Country Manager for Bangladesh, Nepal, and Bhutan at Visa, explores the rapid transition from cash to digital channels. He highlights how evolving consumer preferences for contactless payments, e-commerce, and secure mobile transactions are reshaping the economy across the country.

The Daily Star (TDS): With the holy month of Ramadan approaching, how has your bank observed a shift in consumer spending behaviour over the last few years?

Sabbir Ahmed (SA): Over the last few years, Ramadan spending in Bangladesh has become increasingly digital and convenience-led. We are seeing stronger growth in e-commerce, contactless payments, and card usage at grocery, fashion, and dining outlets, particularly in urban centres. The final ten days consistently see a sharp acceleration in digital transaction volumes.

TDS: What trends are you seeing regarding the transition from cash to digital channels (Cards, Apps, MFS) for Iftar, Sehri, and Eid shopping?

SA: The shift from cash to digital is becoming more structural rather than seasonal. During Ramadan, we observe increased card-present transactions at supermarkets and lifestyle outlets. QR acceptance and contactless payments are gaining traction among SMEs.

Younger consumers are using tokenised credentials and mobile-linked cards.

TDS: How is Visa collaborating with issuing banks and merchants this season to promote secure and smart spending for cardholders?

SA: This year, Visa collaborated with partner banks and merchants for the Visa Ramadan & Eid 2026 Spend & Win campaign. Visa card transactions across debit, credit, and prepaid make cardholders eligible for rewards.

TDS: How does Visa support interoperability between banks and MFS players to ensure seamless transactions during the Eid rush?

SA: Visa supports interoperability by enabling secure credential connectivity across banks, wallets, and digital platforms. Through tokenisation and strong authentication protocols, we help ensure seamless transactions even during peak Eid rush periods.

TDS: Are there Visa-enabled features that facilitate seamless digital Zakat payments or Eidi transfers during Ramadan?

SA: During Ramadan, digital Zakat and Eidi transfers increase significantly. Visa-enabled payment gateways allow secure payments to charity platforms, educational institutions, and family members. Our Ramadan partnerships help participating SME merchants through campaign visibility and digital offers.