HNB Honored by Asian Banker as Best Retail Bank in Sri Lanka for 2022



Jonathan Alles, Managing Director/CEO, HNB.



Sanjay Wijemanne, DGM – Retail and SME Banking, HNB.

Hatton National Bank has been recognized as the ‘Best Retail Bank in Sri Lanka’ by the Asian Banker for the 12th time.

HNB sealed its reputation as Sri Lanka’s undisputed leader in retail banking, having been crowned as the Best Retail Bank in Sri Lanka for the 12th occasion at the International Excellence in Retail Financial Services Awards 2022 hosted by the Asian Banker Magazine.

The awards are designed to showcase regional institutions that establish new benchmarks in stability, innovation, digital enablement, and process re- engineering towards unleashing rapid, sustainable growth.

Commenting on the landmark achievement, Jonathan Alles, Managing Director/CEO, HNB, said: “HNB was founded on the principle that true partnerships built on integrity and service can only lead to progress. Over 134 years, we have carried this legacy forward with an equal sense of pride and responsibility to build upon the progress of generations. These values have led the Bank to constantly transform its capabilities and evolve with the times to serve as many Sri Lankans as possible in

good times and bad.

To be recognized for the 12th occasion as Sri Lanka’s Best Retail Bank is, of course, an incredible validation of this legacy and the dedicated efforts of our entire team. Looking ahead, we face unprecedented challenges, but these issues are the seeds of a better future. The HNB as a whole team remains steadfast in our commitment to serving the people of Sri Lanka as a true partner in progress.”

Retail banking is a flagship segment for HNB, which caters to the needs of over 2.5 million Sri Lankans island-wide. In addition to the Bank’s extensive customer service network of 255 branches and 795 Self Service Machines, HNB has also been a pioneer in leveraging digital banking products, services, and channels to provide customers with convenient, comprehensive, and secured options to transact remotely.

Parallel to these efforts, the Bank has been driving pioneering improvements in its customer service capabilities, which have been scaled up by implementing Robotic Process Automation (RPA) to establish automated chat services. This enables customers to access easy information about HNB’s extensive range of products and services, including extensive assistance and support on any issues they may have.

Over the past year, the Bank delivered another strong and stable performance despite significant challenges, as reflected in the Bank’s strong growth in Current Account and Savings Account (CASA) deposits. Meanwhile, the Bank added three new products to its retail banking portfolio, including a Premier Current Account, Investment Plans for adults and children, and a Teen + savings account with the linked debit card allowing teens to manage and track their finances.

The Bank’s leadership status in tech-enabled banking has resulted in the launch of a series of breakthrough platforms like HNB SOLO – a frictionless, one-stop- shop for digital payments linked through bank accounts, credit, or debit cards that is rapidly gaining popularity – particularly in the context of a post-COVID landscape.

The app functions as a versatile e-wallet to make payments through scanning Lanka QR codes. In addition to giving SOLO users access to a range of deals, gift coupons through merchants, and the option of paying utility bills directly through SOLO. New features have also been added to SOLO recently, including Peer- to-Peer (P2P) transfers, wallet features, and card-less ATM withdrawals.

Meanwhile, HNB’s Digital Banking app continues to gain ground, with more than 300,000 active users now on board, and the app itself is among the highest- rated banking applications in Sri Lanka. HNB is also constantly refining the app’s robust capabilities, including the most recent addition of a new feature for opening and closing fixed deposits.

Moving forward, HNB aims to further consolidate its leadership in digital banking by implementing a multipurpose Digital Layer that allows the bank to launch Digital Banking products swiftly to the market. This has enabled the Bank to work closely with Fintechs to roll out new tech-enabled products and services rapidly.

“With the commencement of our state-of-the-art back-end transformation, HNB is rapidly gearing up to expand our service capabilities. This will also bolster the Bank’s ability to support the revival and rejuvenation of the national economy, empowering our customers to pursue their dreams. The investments we have committed towards technology, and building the expertise of our people, are laying the foundation for a drastically more reliable, responsive, remotely accessible banking experience that fulfills our promise to deliver seamless banking solutions to our customers wherever they are,” Sanjay Wijemanne, DGM – Retail and SME Banking, HNB said.