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## **Press Release**

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### **The 7<sup>th</sup> Asian Banker Excellence in Retail Financial Services Awards 2008**

#### **Hatton National Bank wins Best Retail Bank in Sri Lanka award**

- *Hatton National Bank wins the Best Retail Bank in Sri Lanka 2008 award for its performance in 2007.*
- *Fast improving Hatton National Bank chalked up record income and strong profit growth at a challenging time for Sri Lankan banking.*
- *Over 150 banks and financial institutions from 23 countries across the Asia Pacific, GCC region and Central Asia were evaluated as part of the Excellence in Retail Financial Services programme.*

**Colombo, 16 May 2008** – Hatton National Bank has notched up a major accolade at the seventh Asian Banker Excellence in Retail Financial Services Awards: *The Best Retail Bank in Sri Lanka*. The bank received the award at The Asian Banker Excellence in Retail Financial Services 2008 Awards ceremony, held in conjunction with the region's most prestigious retail banking event, the Excellence in Retail Financial Services Convention. The ceremony was held at the Westin Grande Sukhumvit in Bangkok on the evening of 16 May 2008.

About 150 senior bankers from award winning banks in 23 countries across the Asia Pacific, the Gulf region and Central Asia attended the glittering event, the industry's celebration of the region's best retail bankers that recognizes their efforts in bringing superior products and services to their customers.

The awards programme, administered by The Asian Banker, and refereed by prominent global bankers, consultants and academics, is the most prestigious award of its kind.

- *Hatton National Bank wins the Best Retail Bank in Sri Lanka 2008 award for its performance in 2007.*

Hatton National Bank has won the prestigious 'Best Retail Bank in Sri Lanka' award in The Asian Banker Excellence in Retail Financial Services programme for its performance in 2007. The fast improving Hatton National Bank chalked up record income and strong profit growth at a challenging time for Sri Lanka's banks.

- ***Fast improving Hatton National Bank chalked up record income and strong profit growth at a challenging time for Sri Lankan banking***

Unlike its foreign competitors, HNB possesses a wide reaching franchise with 40 percent of its network in areas outside the more developed western provinces and a thriving micro finance portfolio. It attracted an 18 percent increase in deposits through its flagship savings products in a market that sees fierce competition for low cost deposits.

The bank is also making good progress in expanding its channels and distribution beyond the traditional branch. It launched Internet banking and mobile phone banking in the local language, thus reducing the need for customers from less developed areas to travel long distances to make simple transactions.

While it does not have the same retail dynamism of the foreign banks in key business lines like credit cards, HNB's large, loyal, and growing deposit base throughout the country prepares it well for the next phase of growth.

- ***Over 150 banks and financial institutions in 23 countries across Asia Pacific, the GCC region and Central Asia evaluated as part of the Excellence in Retail Financial Services programme.***

"This year over 150 banks and financial institutions in 23 countries across the Asian region were evaluated as part of the Excellence in Retail Financial Services programme," said Mr Phillip Strause, chairman of the Excellence in Retail Financial Services programme and an International Resource Director for The Asian Banker.

The award evaluation process uses a comprehensive methodology to evaluate the strength of individual banks' retail banking businesses that involved extensive research and probing interviews, and taps the combined experience of a team of experienced researchers. The process also incorporates an AC Nielsen customer perception survey to gauge the strength and reputation of retail banks in the different countries.

Mr Strause, who has close to 40 years' experience working with commercial banks, investment banks, brokerage firms, insurance companies and other specialised financial institutions, further added: "The Asian Banker Excellence programme was instituted in 2001 on the premise that an outstanding player in the retail financial services industry should build business franchises that are sustainable, competitive and profitable over a period of time".

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## ***About The Asian Banker***

The Asian Banker is the region's most authoritative provider of strategic business intelligence to the financial services community. The Singapore-based company has offices in Singapore, Malaysia, Beijing and Shanghai as well as representatives in London, New York, Dubai and San Francisco. It has a business model that revolves around three core business lines: publications, research services and forums. For more information, please visit [www.theasianbanker.com](http://www.theasianbanker.com).

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