An Overview of Credit Card Usage Pattern Within and Outside Bangladesh

March 2024

Comments and suggestions may be sent to:
Mohammad Abu Sadat, Director (Statistics) (abu.sadat@bb.org.bd)
Mohammed Rabiul Islam, Additional Director (mrabiul.islam@bb.org.bd)
Hossain Md. Alhelal, Joint Director (hossain.alhelal@bb.org.bd)
Md. Tamimul Islam, Assistant Director (tamimul.islam@bb.org.bd)
Sanchita Basak, Assistant Director (sanchita.basak@bb.org.bd)

The Big Data Analytics and Data Science Unit of Statistics Department is actively collecting extensive data on credit card transactions from 44 (forty four) schedule banks and 01(one) non-bank financial institution in Bangladesh. This comprehensive data collection aims to form a robust database that encapsulate the vast volume of transactions; deemed as Big Data due to its diverse nature, rapidity and variability.

In the analysis of credit card transactions for March 2024, it is evident that domestic transactions within Bangladesh witnessed an increase of 16.78%, amounting to Taka 29,875 million compared to Taka 25,581 million in February 2024 (Table-1). Concurrently, international transactions outside the country totaled Taka 5,035 million in March 2024 (Table-3), showcasing an increase of 0.87% from Taka 4,991 million in February 2024. On the other hand, transactions made with credit cards issued by foreign entities but utilized within Bangladesh showed a decline to Taka 2,266 million in March 2024 from Taka 2,400 million in February 2024, indicating a decrease of 5.59% (Table-6).

Domestic credit card usage

Credit card transactions at Departmental Stores saw an increase to Taka 13,811 million in March 2024 from Taka 12,690 million in February 2024. Similarly, Retail Outlet Services, transactions related to Utilities, Cash Withdrawal, Drug and Pharmacies, Transportation, Fund Transfer, Professional and Government services noted a slight increase in March 2024 from that of February 2024. In addition, Clothing category experienced a substantial increase to Taka 3,441 million in March 2024 from Taka 1,500 million in February 2024 due to Eid-ul-Fitr festival purchasing. On the other hand, there was a reduction in Business Services transactions, with Taka 520 million in March 2024 and Taka 523 million in February 2024.

Table-1: Category-wise Breakdowns of Credit Card Transactions (Domestic) in February 2024 and March 2024

(million taka)

Merchant Categories	Feb-24			Mar-24		
	Amount	Percentage	No. of Transactions	Amount	Percentage	No. of Transactions
Departmental Stores	12690	49.61	1565777	13811	46.23	1574812
Retail Outlet Services	3300	12.90	875341	3919	13.12	988324
Clothing	1500	5.86	306567	3441	11.52	668300
Utilities	2254	8.81	220552	2513	8.41	227004
Cash Withdrawal	1877	7.34	210511	2034	6.81	216931
Drug and Pharmacies	1345	5.26	280887	1402	4.69	283211
Transportation	918	3.59	74465	981	3.28	74682
Fund Transfer	905	3.54	31516	965	3.23	32822
Business Services	523	2.04	75306	520	1.74	73265
Professional Services	181	0.71	18630	191	0.64	18454
Government Services	87	0.34	13848	98	0.33	19810
Grand Total	25581	100.00	3673400	29875	100.00	4177615

The analysis indicates precise shifts in transaction percentages across various categories, with some experiencing significant increase while others saw marginal increases. It shows a massive increase in Clothing transactions, a slight decrease in Business Services transactions and minor fluctuations in other categories. Overall, the percentages showcase an increasing trend in consumer spending patterns among different categories of transactions between February 2024 and March 2024.

Chart-1 illustrates the spending pattern for different sectors within the country in March 2024. Apparently, it shows that nearly half of the domestic credit card transactions were took place in Departmental Stores. It is mentionable that credit cards were utilized across other sectors including Retail Outlet Services, Clothing, Utilities, Cash Withdrawal and Drug & Pharmacies during this period.

Chart-1: Credit Card Spending Pattern for Different Sectors (Domestic) in March 2024

(million taka)

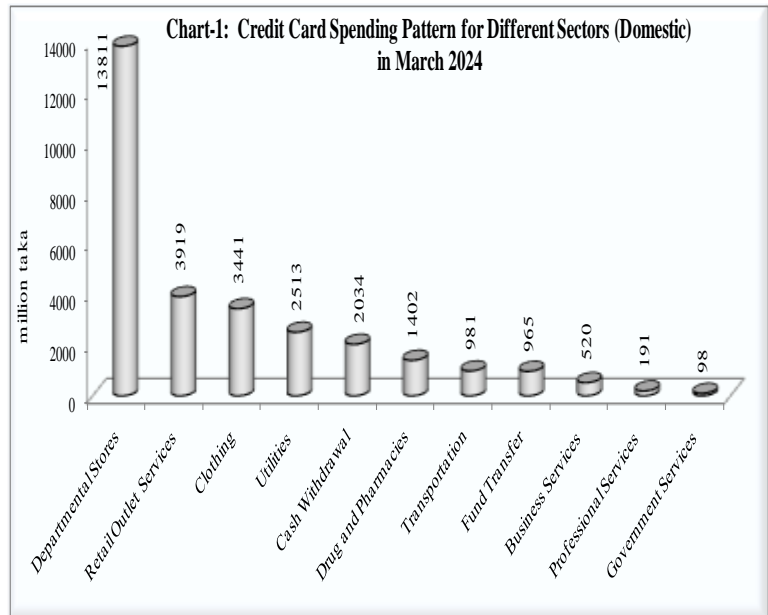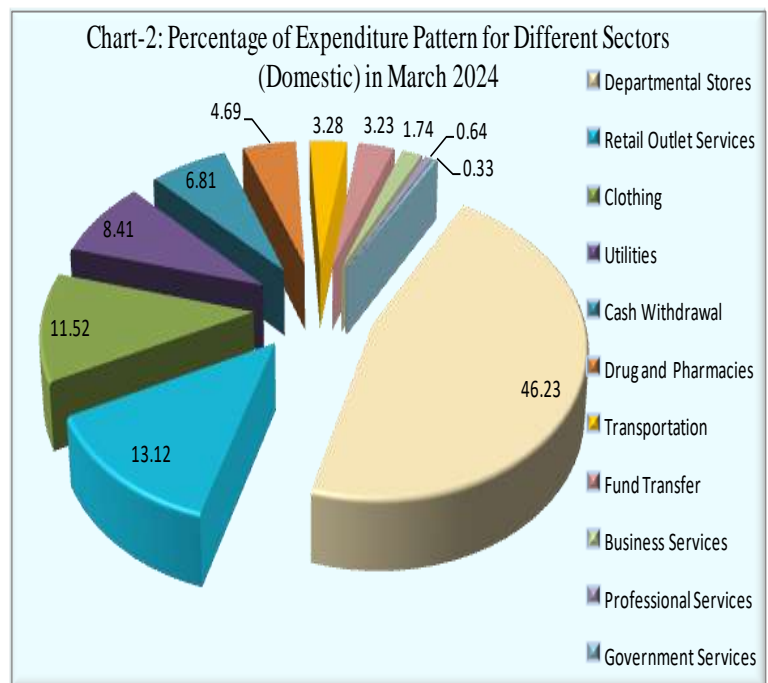| Sector	Value
Departmental Stores	13811
Retail Outlet Services	3919
Clothing	3441
Utilities	2513
Cash Withdrawal	2034
Drug and Pharmacies	1402
Transportation	981
Fund Transfer	965
Business Services	520
Professional Services	191
Government Services	98

Chart-2 illustrates the clear and comparative view of the proportional expenditures of each sector based on the total credit card transactions within the country in March 2024.

Chart-2: Percentage of Expenditure Pattern for Different Sectors (Domestic) in March 2024

Sector	Percentage
Departmental Stores	46.23
Retail Outlet Services	13.12
Clothing	11.52
Utilities	8.41
Cash Withdrawal	6.81
Drug and Pharmacies	4.69
Transportation	3.28
Fund Transfer	3.23
Business Services	1.74
Professional Services	0.64
Government Services	0.33

Analyzing the credit card usage pattern, it reveals that a significant majority, approximately 71.16% of the credit card transactions took place using VISA card, around 17.53% of transactions utilized Mastercard while about 11.11% of transactions were made with AMEX card. The remaining transactions occurred through other type of cards in March, 2024.

Table-2: Card Type Breakdowns of Credit Card Transactions (Domestic) in February 2024 and March 2024

(million taka)

| Card Type	Feb-24			Mar-24		
	Amount	Percentage	No. of Transactions	Amount	Percentage	No. of Transactions
VISA	18303	71.55	2636489	21260	71.16	2973802
Mastercard	4536	17.73	647210	5238	17.53	738003
AMEX	2695	10.54	376837	3320	11.11	450489
Diners	22	0.09	9848	31	0.10	12165
QcashProprietar	12	0.05	2101	14	0.05	2184
JCB	9	0.03	403	10	0.03	410
Unionpay	5	0.02	512	3	0.01	562
Grand Total	25581	100.00	3673400	29875	100.00	4177615

Outward credit card usage

The spending habits of credit cardholders engaging in cross-border transactions mirrored the domestic pattern in March 2024. In March 2024, these cardholders predominantly utilized their cards in abroad at Departmental Stores, accounting for approximately 24.21% of transactions. Other notable categories included Retail Outlet Services (15.46%), Drug and Pharmacies (13.65%), Cash Withdrawal (12.07%), Clothing (8.35%), Business Services (7.48%) and various other categories (18.78%).

Table-3: Category-wise Breakdowns of Credit Card Transactions (Outside the country) in February 2024 and March 2024

(million taka)

Merchant Categories	Feb-24			Mar-24		
	Amount	Percentage	No of Transactions	Amount	Percentage	No of Transactions
Departmental Stores	1380	27.64	202291	1219	24.21	186995
Retail Outlet Services	800	16.02	136597	778	15.46	135810
Drug and Pharmacies	690	13.83	45054	687	13.65	43921
Cash Withdrawal	395	7.92	19573	608	12.07	25754
Clothing	471	9.44	47400	420	8.35	41352
Business Services	324	6.49	74064	377	7.48	93199
Transportation	354	7.10	45779	364	7.22	43291
Professional Services	217	4.35	18410	238	4.73	19743
Government Services	214	4.28	44658	225	4.48	40664
Utilities	146	2.92	37697	118	2.35	39134
Grand Total	4991	100.00	671523	5035	100.00	669863

Chart-3 illustrates the diversity of usage of credit cards (outside the country) across different sectors in March, 2024.
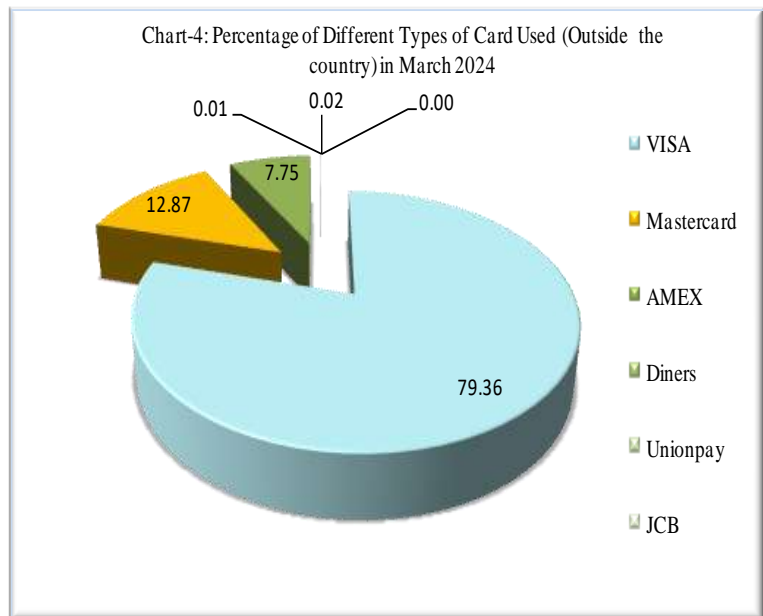

Chart-3: Diversity of Usage of Credit Cards in Different Sectors (Outside the country) in March 2024
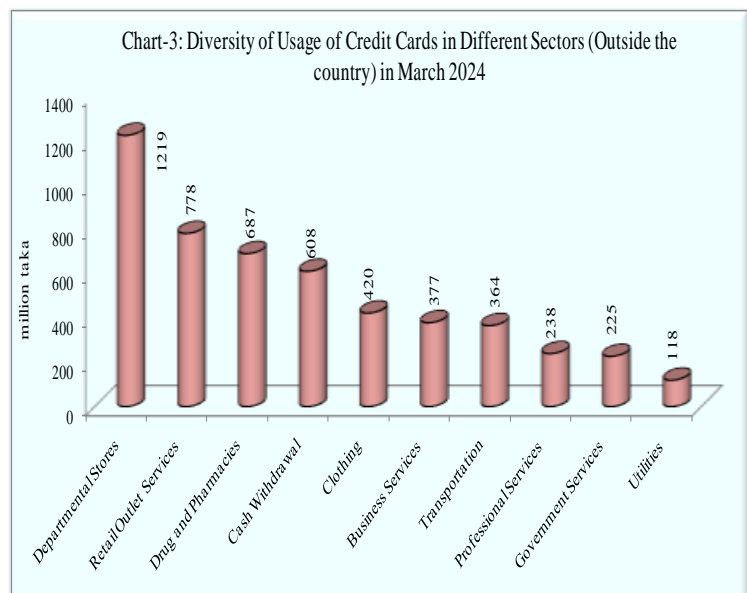
Table-4: Card Type Breakdowns of Credit Card Transactions (Outside the country)
in February 2024 and March 2024

(million taka)

Card Type	Feb-24			Mar-24		
	Amount	Percentage	No of Transaction	Amount	Percentage	No of Transaction
VISA	3910	78.34	525429	3995	79.36	532554
Mastercard	671	13.44	97637	648	12.87	87310
AMEX	409	8.19	48292	390	7.75	49873
Diners	1	0.01	81	1	0.02	73
Unionpay	0.71	0.01	81	0.29	0.01	50
JCB	0.15	0.003	3	0.01	0.00	3
Grand Total	4991	100.00	671523	5035	100.00	669863

Table-4 depicts that VISA and Mastercard were the prime choices for cross-border transactions in March 2024.

Chart-4 represents the distribution of various credit card types used in cross-border transactions during March 2024, showcasing the percentage breakdown of each card type.

Chart-4: Percentage of Different Types of Card Used (Outside the country) in March 2024

Analyzing country-wise breakdown of cross-border transactions, it is evident that the majority of credit card transactions occurred in India, accounting for approximately 21.06%. The rest of the cross-border transactions were distributed across various countries: USA (12.58%), UAE (9.89%), Saudi Arabia (6.98%), Thailand (6.92%), Singapore (6.57%), UK (6.33%), Canada (5.07%), Malaysia (3.85%), China (3.08%), Ireland (2.92%), Australia (2.49%) and other countries (12.26%).

Table-5: Country-wise Breakdowns of Credit Card Transactions (Outside the country)
in February 2024 and March 2024

(million taka)

Countries	Jan-24			Feb-24		
	Amount	Percentage	No of Transaction	Amount	Percentage	No of Transaction
India	1084	21.72	121599	1060	21.06	113142
USA	609	12.20	114961	633	12.58	129207
UAE	529	10.59	32816	498	9.89	28723
Saudi Arabia	235	4.71	42784	351	6.98	43158
Thailand	611	12.23	59222	349	6.92	28187
Singapore	341	6.83	37454	331	6.57	38595
UK	296	5.93	41971	318	6.33	47106
Canada	230	4.60	34932	255	5.07	36951
Malaysia	145	2.91	26156	194	3.85	26712
China	29	0.57	4293	155	3.08	11727
Ireland	127	2.54	35047	147	2.92	44842
Australia	131	2.63	21148	126	2.49	19937
Other Countries	625	12.51	99140	617	12.26	101576
Grand Total	4991	100.00	671523	5035	100.00	669863

Chart-5 shows the diversity of usage of credit cards in different countries in March, 2024.
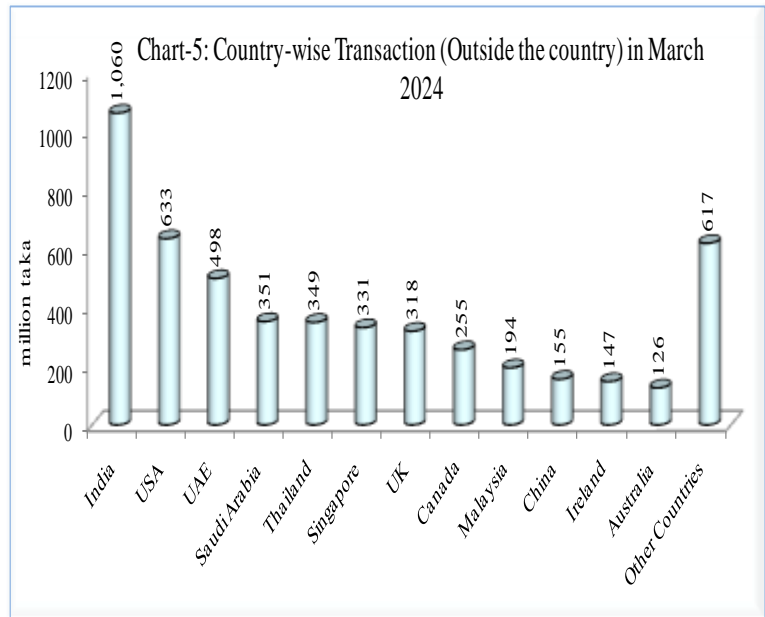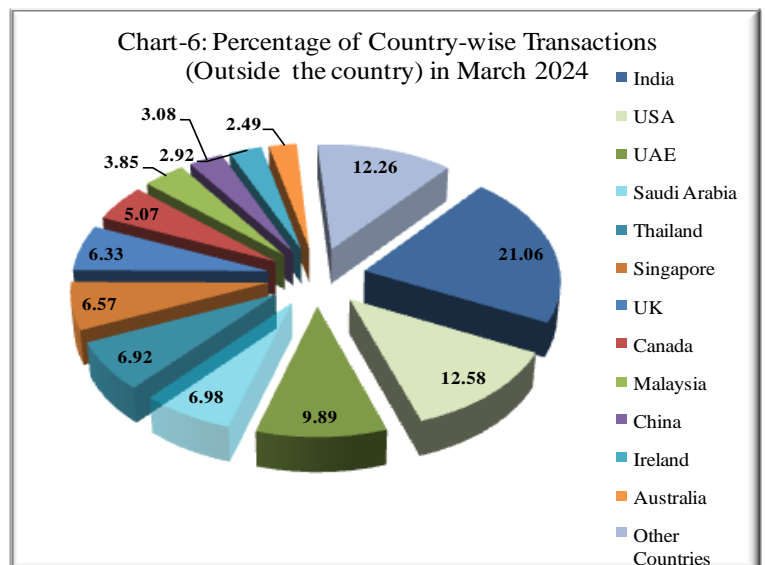
Chart-6 shows the percentage of country-wise cross-border transactions in March 2024.

Inward credit card usage

It is observed that inward credit card usage witnessed a decrease in March 2024 compared to that of preceding month. Credit card issued by other countries but used in departmental stores within Bangladesh recorded maximum amount of transactions which was roughly 36.84% of all transactions in March 2024. Additionally, cash withdrawals made up approximately 22.55%, while transactions in transportation constituted 20.14%. The remaining sectors collectively contributed around 20.47% to the total transactions.

Table-6: Category-wise Breakdowns of Credit Card Transactions (within the country by foreign nationals) in February 2024 and March 2024

(million taka)

| Merchant Categories	Feb-24			Mar-24		
	Amount	Percentage	No of Transaction	Amount	Percentage	No of Transaction
Departmental Stores	905	37.71	96447	835	36.84	87068
Cash Withdrawal	593	24.71	39543	511	22.55	33192
Transportation	412	17.16	16222	456	20.14	14810
Clothing	213	8.86	24864	199	8.80	23801
Retail Outlet Services	115	4.81	33394	109	4.81	32895
Business Services	55	2.29	5292	47	2.06	4613
Utilities	33	1.38	29528	41	1.83	31895
Drug and Pharmacies	40	1.68	4990	37	1.64	4470
Professional Services	22	0.91	1589	21	0.92	2169
Government Services	12	0.50	1820	9	0.41	1410
Grand Total	2400	100.00	253689	2266	100.00	236323

Table-7: Card Type Breakdowns of Credit Card Transactions (within the country by foreign nationals) in February 2024 and March 2024

(million taka)

Card Type	Feb-24			Mar-24		
	Amount	Percentage	No of Transaction	Amount	Percentage	No of Transaction
VISA	1437	59.88	156966	1320	58.25	143901
Mastercard	938	39.09	95124	923	40.74	90674
Unionpay	12	0.51	853	9	0.41	866
AMEX	7	0.29	452	8	0.37	370
Diners	4	0.18	222	3	0.14	164
JCB	1	0.05	72	2	0.09	348
Grand Total	2400	100.00	253689	2266	100.00	236323

Table-7 indicates that in Bangladesh around 58.25% of the transactions were conducted using VISA cards while approximately 40.74% of the transactions were executed using Mastercard issued by foreign entities.

Chart-7: Category-wise Credit Card Transactions (within the country by foreign nationals) in March 2024

Chart-7 illustrates the diversity of usage of credit cards (within the country by foreign nationals) in different sectors in March, 2024.
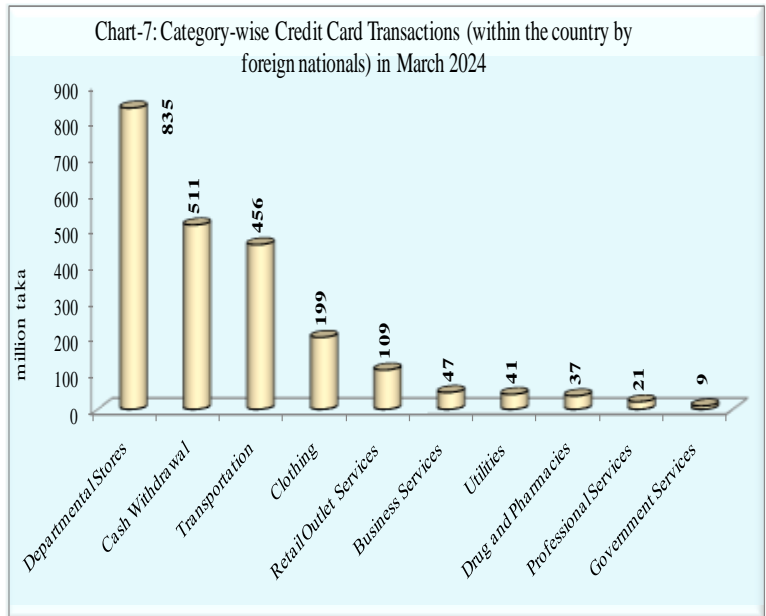
In March 2024, the majority of transactions among foreign nationals were conducted by individuals holding credit cards issued by the USA, accounting for about 24.93% of the total transactions. Other significant contributions were made by UK nationals (11.81%), individuals with cards from India (10.27%), Singapore (3.90%), Canada (3.88%), Japan (3.84%), China (3.51%), UAE (3.11%), Germany (2.66%), Australia (2.64%), Italy (2.02%), South Korea (1.85%), Hong Kong (1.76%) and various other countries (23.81%).

Table-8: Country-wise Breakdown of Credit Card Transactions (within the country by foreign nationals) in March 2024

(million taka)

Countries	Transaction Amount	Percentage	No of Transaction
USA	565	24.93	45419
UK	268	11.81	32105
India	233	10.27	28412
Singapore	88	3.90	5585
Canada	88	3.88	9188
Japan	87	3.84	7023
China	79	3.51	5085
UAE	70	3.11	11842
Germany	60	2.66	4241
Australia	60	2.64	8062
Italy	46	2.02	3745
South Korea	42	1.85	3187
Hong Kong	40	1.76	3930
Other Countries	539	23.81	68499
Grand Total	2266	100.00	236323

Chart-8 visually displays the utilization of credit cards by foreign nationals within Bangladesh in March, 2024 based on their respective countries.
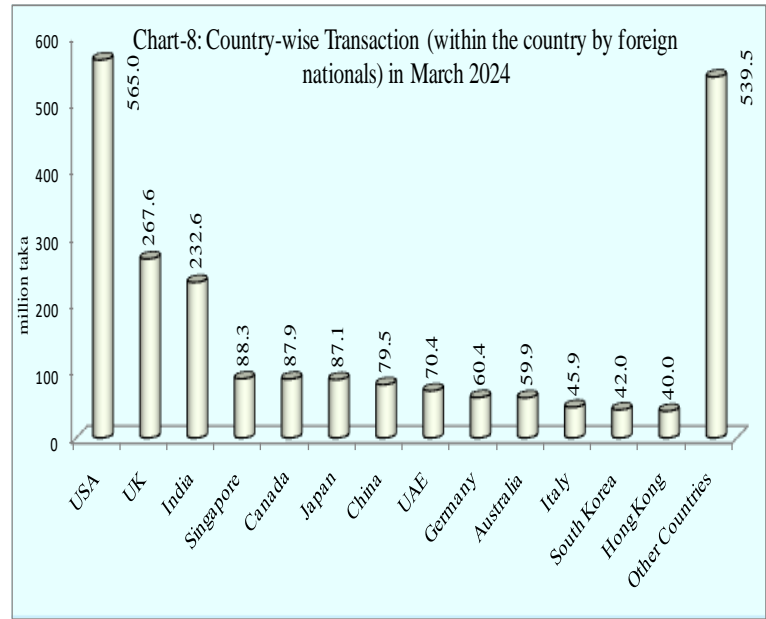

Chart-8: Country-wise Transaction (within the country by foreign nationals) in March 2024

Table-9: Movements of Credit Card Transactions over Time

(million taka)

Month	Domestic Transactions	Outside the Country Transactions	Within the Country Transactions by Foreign Nationals
Mar-23	23747	4262	2367
Apr-23	25294	3684	1704
May-23	23690	4847	2101
Jun-23	24133	3883	1955
Jul-23	23419	5118	1914
Aug-23	24376	4179	2184
Sep-23	22493	4368	1904
Oct-23	25964	5386	1993
Nov-23	25399	4874	1938
Dec-23	26744	5793	1841
Jan-24	26784	5321	1816
Feb-24	25581	4991	2400
Mar-24	29875	5035	2266

Table-9 shows the credit card transactions from March 2023 to March 2024 within and outside the country.

Chart-9 depicts that domestic credit card transactions displays periodic fluctuations, yet overall, it indicates an increasing pattern during the period under review. Similarly, cross-border transactions follow a little bit ups and down trend. On the other hand, the credit card spending by foreign nationals within Bangladesh remains relatively flat throughout this period.

Chart-9: Movements of Credit Card Transactions over Time

7
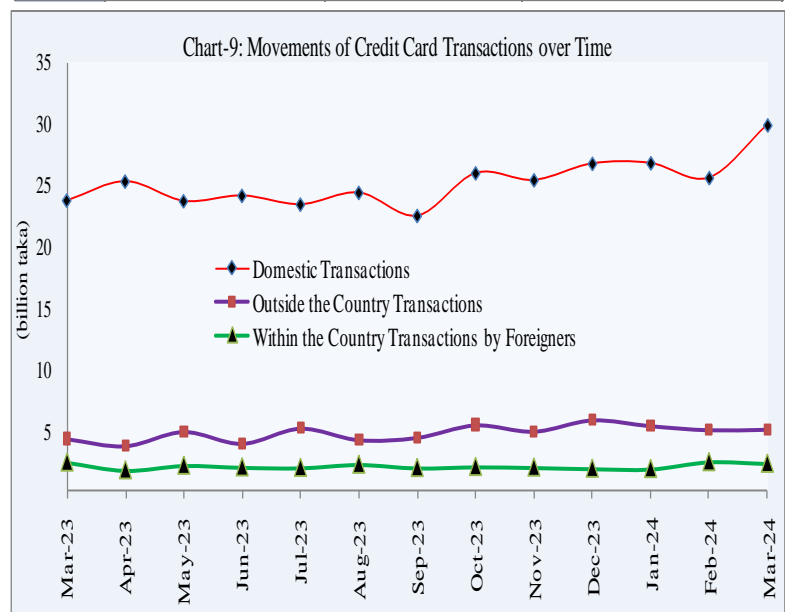
In summary, the analysis of credit card transactions portrays an increase in total transactions within the country by 16.78% in March 2024 compared to that of previous month, amounting to Taka 29,875 million against Taka 25,581 million in February 2024. Similarly, transactions made by Bangladeshi nationals outside the country showed an increase of 0.87% rising to Taka 5,035 million in March 2024 from Taka 4,991 million recorded in February 2024. On the other hand, credit card transactions within Bangladesh by foreign nationals declined to Taka 2,266 million in March 2024 from Taka 2,400 million in February 2024, showing a decrease of 5.59%. From the above data, it can be said that in terms of amount Bangladeshi credit card holders did around 2.22 times transactions outside the country compared to that of foreign nationals did within Bangladesh in March 2024.