

## Cash payment method takes over Dhaka restaurants

A Monitor Report

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Dhaka : During the coronavirus pandemic, widespread adoption of cashless transactions across the country had been witnessed. However, as lockdowns have ended and mass vaccination campaign is underway, cashless transactions have taken over restaurants in the capital again.

Debit card transactions dropped by about BDT 850 crore in August from the previous month. Compared to May, debit card transactions dropped by almost BDT 1,518 crore or 6.8 per cent in August.

Even, many of the major chain restaurants and eateries of the capital have stopped accepting digital payments.

According to reports, for accepting cash-only payments, the cashiers or waiters of most restaurants mostly blame it on "a software-related issue."

National Board of Revenue (NBR) officials said, according to reports, VAT evasion could be the actual reason behind this.

However, according to a report, one restaurant owner in Dhaka said, the coronavirus crisis made the restaurants suffer a lot. On top of it, they blame NBR for putting extra pressure during their recession.

"There is no chance of evading VAT or tax on any transactions made through the banking channel. That is why many restaurants have stopped card transactions recently," he said.

Also, in case of card transactions, the banks take extra charge as well, which goes

out of the owners' pockets, he claimed, saying, there is no way they would pay 2-3 per cent more during their business recession.

After the first month of the current 2021-22 fiscal year, August ended with a revenue shortfall of BDT 5,210 crore.

Reports showed that the NBR collected BDT 19,194.65 crore of revenue in August, which was BDT 15,354 crore in July - BDT 5,613 crore short of the monthly revenue target.