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The cards industry reached pre-COVID levels in November 2020, while the SBI Card reached pre-COVID levels in October 2020, said Rama Mohan Rao Amara, MD & CEO of SBI Card on Monday. He also said that the share of online spends has steadily increased for the company and he expects the trend to continue.

"The only positive outcome of COVID if I say is an increase in digital means by everyone. The share of online spends has increased. It used to be around 44 percent in SBI Card. That has steadily increased to 53 percent. So almost a 900-basis points increase was there. Some of the segments like travel, entertainment, restaurants, etc. continue to be depressed, but other segments did record good growth. The way people chose online means to spend like utilities, groceries insurance payments, etc. they have come handsomely. So, this secular trend of online spend is likely to continue," he told CNBC-TV18.

Rao also said that Q4 spends are lower than Q3. However, he said that Q3 spends were elevated as it was the festive season. Rao said that the credit costs will remain elevated in the short-term. "The credit cost for the short term will remain elevated, like last quarter. We made Rs 1,100 crore of management overlay which is much beyond the Rs 940 crore of base provisioning. We were very prudent in terms of categorising the 30-day delinquency RBI RE on par with NPA and making stage 3 provisioning. So, this is a journey, and this has been the focus area for the company. So, the credit cost trajectory will be co-related to the decline in the contribution of RBI RE"