



BCS EXAMINEES

Backlog at PSC eating away precious years

ASHIK ABDULLAH APU

Rakib Hasan, a Dhaka University graduate, applied for the 41st Bangladesh Civil Service exam in 2019.

After passing the preliminary and written tests, he took part in the viva voce only last month.

Four years have gone by since the publication of the exam circular, and he is still not sure when the Public Service Commission (PSC) will make the recommendation for recruiting candidates who passed the 41st BCS tests.

The PSC is now conducting viva of 13,000 candidates of the 41st BCS exam.

In the meantime, Rakib sat for the 43rd and 44th BCS preliminary and written tests and came out successful in the preliminary tests. The results of the written tests are not out yet. He will prepare for the 45th BCS preliminary test since he does not know whether he would get the government job through 41st, 43rd, and 44th exams.

Rakib's is not an isolated case. A huge backlog of recruitment work at the PSC has left the future uncertain for several lakh job seekers.

Such a backlog is also having a significant impact on the BCS candidates, who remain unemployed for years. Also, it diminishes the candidates' chances of taking more BCS exams before they reach the cutoff age of 30.

On January 1, 2020, three and a half months after he took charge as the PSC chairman, Md Sohorab Hossain said they were preparing a roadmap to help complete the entire BCS examination process in one year.

However, the PSC is yet to finalise the roadmap. It still takes at least three years to complete a BCS exam process.

The organisation is now dealing with four BCS exams -- 41st, 43rd, 44th and 45th.

The 42nd BCS exam, a special one for doctors, was held in 2021. A total 3,957 candidates of that exam were appointed by the government on February 22, 2022.

"I took the 41st BCS exam for a grade I job. Four years have passed since my graduation, but I am still unemployed. The PSC needs at least one more year to complete the examination process. That means if I am not selected, I have to remain jobless despite all the hard work I have put into the exams," Sohanur Rahman Sumon, a job seeker, told The Daily Star.

The PSC published the 41st BCS exam circular on November 27, 2019. The preliminary exam was held on March 19, 2021, and the written exams were conducted between November 29 and December 7 that year.

The results of the written exams were published on November 10 last year.

The viva, which is now being held, started on December 5 last year.

Speaking to this correspondent, PSC Chairman Sohorab said, "We could not implement our roadmap due to the coronavirus pandemic and the incomplete work of the previous BCS exams. We are now working on our plan to clear the backlog and reduce the time for recruitment. We will be able to implement our plan after clearing the backlog."

WHY THE BACKLOG?

Two incumbent PSC members said the commission has limited workforce and that's why it has to depend on others to carry out majority of the tasks, including preparing and printing question papers, evaluating answer scripts and holding viva.

"The PSC does not have its own press to print question papers. It does

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PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

A refreshing patch of green glittered with royal poincianas (Krishna Chura) in Rayerbazar at the edge of Dhaka city that has lost most of its greenery. This patch is actually a part of the Rayerbazar graveyard, which has not been used yet.

GAZIPUR CITY CORPORATION

Polls on Thursday, yet voters unenthused

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA and ASHIK ABDULLAH APU from Gazipur

If a person travels to Gazipur city, he or she may not realise that the election to the largest city in Bangladesh is on Thursday.

No significant campaign activities are seen, apart from that of the Awami League mayor candidate. Even posters are few and far between in the city's key areas and voters seem to lack enthusiasm. The campaigning ends at midnight.

AL's mayor pick Azmat Ullah is campaigning with the backing of the ruling party's local leaders and his key opponent, independent Zaida Khatun, running with the electoral symbol "table clock" is focusing on door-to-door visits.

The voters this paper talked to in the city said they want to remain silent spectators and see how things turn out on election day.

Biplob, a rickshaw puller, said, "Only the people involved in the election have interest in the polls."

"People have little interest in the election. They doubt whether the polls will be free and fair," Daniel Sarker, a sports gear store owner in Chowrasta area, told The Daily Star yesterday.

He said usually councillor candidates make the atmosphere lively ahead of polls, but this time they were also not campaigning much.

"Basically, people have little interest."

Asked why, Daniel said, "The boat [AL's electoral symbol] is everywhere. People know what will happen and possibly this is the reason."

Amir Uddin Mollah of the same area does not agree with Daniel.

He said even though it seems that the polls will be lopsided, things will not be like this on election day as former mayor Zahangir Alam of Gazipur has a huge following and they are silently working behind the scenes.

"Zaida [the independent and the mother of Zahangir] will surely give Azmat a run for his money. But the election should be free and fair," he said.

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Fresh US sanctions will be unfortunate

Says foreign minister

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen has said it will be very unfortunate if the US imposes any new sanctions.

"I don't have any idea about it. It depends on that country," he said at a press briefing at the foreign ministry yesterday.

The event was organised to inform the media about the prime minister's visit to Qatar from May 22-25.

The minister said there is no reason for the US to impose any sanctions. "We hope good sense will prevail and the US will not impose any sanctions."

The minister made the comments referring to a report run by Bangla daily Kalbela on Sunday. The report said the US is going to impose new sanctions on Bangladeshi officials and politicians over violating human rights and engaging in corruption.

"It was very strange and surprising. The report gave no reference [source]," Momen said.

The relations between Bangladesh and the US strained following the latter's sanctions on the Rab and seven of its current and former officials for human rights violations in December 2021.

The two countries have recently held many bilateral meetings to advance the relations. But the US administration had been critical of Bangladesh's last two national elections, saying that there were irregularities and violence.

The US repeatedly called for a free and fair national election in Bangladesh.

Following her recent visit to the US, Prime Minister

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A GLIMPSE OF DESPERATION

In the sizzling heat, a woman with two children, including a two month old, sits on the ground as she waits to buy essentials from an Open Market Sale truck at fair prices. She had gone to the outlet after 9:00am and was exhausted when this photo was taken around 1:10pm. With high inflation and the cost of living increasing, many in the city have no option but to rely on OMS outlets.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

OBITUARY



Birth: 19.02.1950
Death: 22.05.2023

We deeply mourned that Mr. Mohammad Shahjahan Khan, the former President of the Dhaka Chamber of Commerce & Industries (DCCI), former President of Bangladesh Thai Chamber of Commerce & Industries (BTCCI), former Director of Shippers Council of Bangladesh, Managing Director of S. S. Shipping & Chartering Ltd. and S. S. Shipping and Trading Ltd., Chairman of S. S. Builders & Developers Ltd., Fatema Real Estate & Developers Ltd., former General Manager of Bangladesh Shipping Corporation and former President of Barisal District Association took his last breath on Monday, 22nd May 2023 Bangkok time 12:40 pm (Bangladesh time 11:40 am) at Bangkok Hospital due to Cardiac Arrest. (Inna Lillahi Wa Inna Ilaihi Raziun).

The deceased was 73 years old at the time of death. He left his wife, one son, and one daughter, along with numerous relatives and admirers. We pray for the salvation of the departed soul. May Allah grant Jannatul Firdaus to the deceased.

Family, all officers and employees.