

# Record job vacancies hurt govt services

BAHARAM KHAN

More than a quarter of the 19 lakh posts in the civil administration are now vacant mainly due to the authorities' reluctance to initiate the recruitment process.

The record 5,03,333 vacancies as of December 2022 in government offices are one of the reasons why people face hassles and delays in getting services at government facilities. This is also depriving the unemployed.

According to the public administration ministry's latest Statistics of Civil Officers and Staff, the number of vacancies in ministries and other government offices rose sharply in 2022, even though vacancies were steadily declining in the four previous years.

There were 358,125 vacancies in 2021.

Creating employment was a priority in the ruling Awami League's January 7 election manifesto. At a meeting with the secretaries on February 5, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina

ordered them to take steps for recruitment for the vacant posts.

As per the statistics that represent the data until December 2022, vacancies in government offices never crossed the 4,00,000 mark.

At the Ministry of Post Telecommunication and Information Technology, there are 9,132 vacancies, which is almost half of its 20,191 posts.

The health ministry has the highest 74,574 vacancies followed by the primary education ministry with 44,790.

There are over 4.41 lakh vacancies for the class-3 and -4 jobs. The total number of jobs in the two classes is over 13.43 lakh, which is 77 percent of all the jobs in the civil administration.

Officials at the Ministry of Public Administration (MOPA) say the unprecedented situation has been created because of delays in recruitment caused by the Covid-19 restrictions.

The MOPA in a circular issued on February 11 urged all ministries and divisions to ramp up the recruitment process.

However, officials say recruitment is not picking up pace because of bureaucratic tangles and lack of initiatives by the recruiting organisations.

YEAR	TOTAL POSTS	VACANCIES
2018	1,784,302	393,247 (22%)
2019	1,821,284	387,338 (21%)
2020	1,885,868	380,955 (20%)
2021	1,913,052	358,125 (18%)
2022	1,900,151	503,333 (26%)

SOURCE : MINISTRY OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

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People walk across the First Buriganga Bridge in Postagola yesterday as the bridge has been closed to traffic since midnight Friday. The Road Transport and Highways Division announced that the bridge would be closed in phases until March 8 for restoration work.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

## US for ensuring workers' rights in Bangladesh

US team meets labour leaders

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Washington wants Dhaka to ensure workers' right to freedom of association, collective bargaining, and living wages.

After a meeting between a US delegation and labour leaders yesterday, the US Embassy in Dhaka said on X, formerly Twitter, "It was a pleasure to meet with labour leaders as they bravely continue to push for freedom of association, collective bargaining rights, and living wages for workers in Bangladesh."

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## Loan default now part of business model

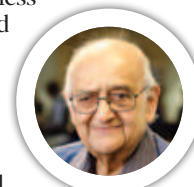
Says CPD Chairman Rehman Sobhan

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Defaulting on loans is progressively becoming part of the business model to stay competitive, said Rehman Sobhan, chairman of the Centre for Policy Dialogue.

"Because, if someone is borrowing money without having to pay interest and someone is borrowing money and paying interest, you are not competing on an even playing field,"

he said yesterday on the second day of the three-day seventh SANEM annual economists' conference.



A class of politically privileged people have gone on multiplying their fortunes by rescheduling and defaulting on loans, he said at the panel discussion styled "The emergence and the rise and rise of dominant party state in Bangladesh: what consequences for democracy and development?"

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