



ALL INDIA STATE BANK OF INDIA EMPLOYEES' ASSOCIATION

(Affiliated to All India Bank Employees' Association)

CENTRAL OFFICE: TKV SMARAKAM

PB No.157, Pulimoodu, Thiruvananthapuram-695001 Kerala

Phone: 0471 2460569 e mail ~ aisbiea.aibea@gmail.com

Circular No: 11

05 05 2025

To All Members/Units.

Dear Comrades and Colleagues,

URGENT NEED FOR RECRUITMENT OF MESSENGERS IN SUBORDINATE CADRE

Comrades and Colleagues are aware that AISBIEA has been repeatedly bringing to the Management's attention since 2017, the urgent need for recruitment in the messenger cadre. The ban clamped on recruitment in this cadre has led to significant operational challenges across branches and has directly impacted the quality of customer service.

The last recruitment of Messengers in the State Bank of India took place in 1997. That recruitment was specifically for the regularization of temporary employees who had completed 240 days of service. Many of those employees had served in temporary positions for extended periods up to 12 years in some cases before being regularized following a court order. All of these employees have since retired over the last 3 to 4 years. Since then, no fresh recruitment has been conducted in the messenger cadre, except for a few isolated instances of compassionate appointments. As a result, many branches are now operating without any permanent messenger staff. The severely depleted number of Subordinate Staff – Messengers is adversely affecting both customer service and the internal workflow of the Bank.

Why Messengers are needed? The Bank's continued reliance on ad-hoc arrangements, such as engaging contract labour for messengerial services, compromises operational consistency, service quality, data confidentiality, and the institution's reputation. This situation demands urgent attention and resolution from the Top Management. The role of messenger staff has always been vital to the efficient functioning of our branches. Their services are crucial to ensuring smooth day-to-day operations, as they contribute to:

- i. The proper upkeep and maintenance of various records of the branch.
- ii. Supporting daily business operations by assisting the operational staff who manage routine banking activities.
- iii. Assistance to cash department staff for note bundling etc as per CAC norms and thereby enabling to maintain cash balance within retention limit.
- iv. Overall service to the Customers.

With the introduction of the CPS scheme for manpower utilization in the bank, the duties of various abolished posts, such as Daftary, cash hammal, and cash coolie, are now being entrusted to messengers. Moreover, as per Bank level settlement dated

26/11/2020 the services of messengers are to be utilised for marketing and tele-calling for business development and NPA recovery.

Impact of Recruitment Ban: In a Bank with 22937 Branches, 12141 branches do not have a permanent Messenger Staff. Figures speak.

SL NO	NAME OF CADRE	TOTAL NUMBER
1	Messenger/Peon	1075
2	Head messenger	2877
3	Sr. Head messenger	6821
4	General attendant	15
5	Head general attendant	3
6	Sr Head General Attendant	5
Messenger/ General Attendant		10796
Number of Branches		22937
Number of Branches without messenger/General Attendant		12141

AIBEA too concerned: During the recent important meeting conducted by AIBEA with office bearers and Presidents/General Secretaries of Public Sector Banks held in Hyderabad on the 9th and 10th of April 2025, in connection with the residual bipartite discussions and the deferred UFBU strike, we from AISBIEA raised this serious concern affecting the largest public sector bank, supported by facts and figures. The meeting duly acknowledged and noted the serious concerns raised by our union.

The impact of subordinate staff shortage: As the nature and scope of duties performed by the messengerial staff in our Bank consist of regular and sanctioned posts, the shortfall in the strength of messengers at branches poses serious risks and raises several unanswered concerns:

- i. How, by what means, or by which category of employees are routine messengerial tasks executed at the branch level?
- ii. How effectively are our branches functioning, or how can they function, without the services of messengerial staff?
- iii. Are there any security or compliance issues created by this situation?
- iv. How is the shortage of messengerial staff affecting the work-life balance of other employees at the branch?

The Ostrich way of solving the issue: The present situation is being addressed by lower-level functionaries at various levels in a rather adhoc manner. Many of the functions performed by messengers that support counter operations are being shared among the available clerical and supervisory staff. Since their own duties and responsibilities require the completion of these messengerial tasks, they are forced to carry out the messenger duties. Overburden of work load significantly reduces the quality of service provided by these employees. Additionally, the increased workload has a considerable impact on the work-life balance of employees.

Unethical practices: In almost all the branches, housekeeping staff provided by the contractor are entrusted with the duties of messenger, in blatant violation of the agreement that the Bank had entered into with the agencies and also compromising the security norms laid down by the Bank. The house-keeping staff are forced to do additional work which they are not supposed to do. It is quite unethical on the part of

the Bank to exploit these contract employees in violation of the agreement with the house keeping agency.

Unfair practices: Many branches complete these tasks through local arrangements or by hiring people who are desperately seeking employment. As these outsourced or locally hired individuals are employed without proper police verification or background checks, their engagement poses serious security risks to the bank. Important internal and customer data could easily fall into the hands of competitors or other market players. Moreover, such outsourcing practices are fundamentally against the bank's policies and settlements. When these outsourced individuals are assigned duties in the cash department, it leads to numerous problems, including violations of cash department procedures. Additionally, it places additional pressure on the permanent employees of the cash department, as the accountability for proper conduct within the department rests with them.

Exploitative practices: These type of adhoc temporary arrangements engaging contract labour will negatively impact Bank's reputation and data secrecy. Engaging contract labour in permanent and perpetual jobs is violative of the letter and spirit of Contract Labour (Regulations and Abolitions) Act 1970.

These are exploitative practices that curtail legitimate employee benefits, undermine job security, lead to unfair treatment, and erode established labour standards. As a public sector bank entrusted with upholding the principles of fairness and justice, the Bank has an even greater responsibility to avoid such unjust employment practices. As a responsible trade union, we must remain prepared to actively fight against this situation with the urgency it demands.

Whither Customer Service? Excellent customer service at our branches can only be ensured with the support of adequate permanent messenger staff. We once again earnestly urge upon the Management to initiate urgent and adequate permanent recruitment in the messenger cadre to bring a lasting solution to the current precarious situation, in the best interests of the Bank, its Customers, and its Employees.

With Warm Greetings,

Yours Comradely,



**V ANIL KUMAR
GENERAL SECRETARY
+91 82814 01691**