

Unemployment in Assam and ULFA



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Unemployment is a burning problem in the country and Assam is no exception. The ever growing population has made it extremely difficult for the government to provide jobs for every educated youth. Educated unemployed are rapidly flooding the state. Government jobs have become a pipe dream. Here arises the need of introducing vocational training courses in our syllabi from an early stage in schools itself which will help the youth to be self sufficient rather than awaiting for that coveted dream job.

Unlike other states the Northeast and Assam in particular has been deprived of private companies and Multi national Companies who shy away from investing in the region due to extremism. For the proscribed ULFA's questionable activities have left no room for private investments by any companies in the state. Extortion, kidnappings, bomb blasts are not exactly conducive for industrialization or any progressive work. The perfunctory tug of war between the government and the ULFA has in turn victimized the local youth and deprived them of a secure future. If such a trend continues for long then those few companies that have braved the hostile conditions will ultimately be forced to relocate and further aggravate the unemployment problem.

Albeit population explosion is another major factor for unemployment

but terrorism is a direct cause for this growing problem and vice versa. For lack of jobs push the youth to join extremist groups to earn a fast buck which in turn act as deterrent to employment avenues.

There are over 15 lakh unemployed in the state. According to the state's latest economic survey report the number of unemployed per 1,000 people in Assam is 21 in the rural areas against 5 persons at the All India level. Similarly the number of unemployed per 1,000 people in urban areas in the state is 20 against 14 people at an all India level. The government is not sitting idle but has given serious thought to curb this problem which is also the prime cause of insurgency. The government is allegedly going to implement a Rs 11 crore job generation scheme aimed at minimizing the problem. The scheme is said to be formulated on the lines of the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyaan.

We Indians play the blame game really well for whenever things go awry we conveniently blame the next person in this case government. Extremism is definitely a major deterrent but it is not the end of the world.

The social scenario in Assam is a volatile one at least it appears to be so to people in the heartland of our country. The media too is agog with reports of violence and mayhem giving the impression of a prevailing tension in the region as a result of which investments in the region are sparse and far between.

Therefore in such a catch 22 situation the youth can take up self employment avenues such as start small scale industries or take up sericulture, pisciculture, weaving etc. The options are many but there is a dearth of proper vision and attitude among our youth. The Banks are always there to fall back upon provided one is armed with a little patience and forbearance.

Sadly a small step forward proves to be futile when insurgent factors destabilize the development process and take us four steps backwards. The recent kidnapping and subsequent killing of FCI official PC Ram is a dastardly act that should be condemned by all. Such incidents push Assam further into the labyrinths of underdevelopment and the wheel of progress comes to a standstill.

Rituparna Goswami Pandey

editor

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