

Army Recruitment

Appeal: Support the Indian youth struggle against the brutal attack and betrayal of « Agneepath » !

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Under Narendra Modi, unemployment reached a peak today. At the very least, even sanctioned government posts are not being completely replaced. An examination of various departments of the Central and State Governments has revealed that at least 30 lakh posts are vacant under the Central Government (including various agencies run by the Center) and another 30 lakh posts are vacant under various State Governments. Currently, there are 1.07 lakh posts in the Indian Army and about 92,000 vacancies in the CAPF. There has been no Army recruitment in the last two years.

In this context, the Modi government has introduced a new contract scheme called « Agneepath » to replace the old army recruitment system. Under the old recruitment system, those who got a military job were entitled to 15 years of service, a regular government salary, and a lifetime pension and medical assistance. Now, under the 'Agneepath' scheme, soldiers are recruited to stay in contract service for only four years. At that time, they will get a regular government salary of Rs. 25,000/-to Rs. 35,000/-in a consolidated amount. After four years, only 25% of those soldiers will be in service. The remaining 75% will be paid in a lump sum of Rs 11 lakh. There will be no other benefits as in the past. About 75% of those who retire after four years in the defence force will have to compete again for employment in the job market.

Military employment is an important resource for youth employment in many parts of rural India ; a life-long pension for retired soldiers is also an important part of the local economy. Young people from the area undergo years of physical and mental training prior to recruitment. Employment in the defence forces is one of the greatest jobs they can expect. In this situation, the new 'Agneepath' scheme is a brutal attack on them. Prolonged job shortages among the lower middle class youth in the country-due to the deteriorating economic situation, today with the announcement of the Agneepath scheme, frustration and anger erupted among them. The government, which is facing fierce opposition from millions of young people across the country, is trying to pacify them with nominal concessions. The government has raised the recruitment age from 21 to 23 ; CRPF announced a 10% reservation in CISF for soldiers discharged from service after four years. Indira Gandhi Open University has announced the launch of a skills-based BA course for these soldiers. All these are just concessions that will seduce the youth.

Like demonitization, corona lockdown, and agricultural laws, this new scheme is also a fascist scheme with the folly of the Modi government regime. It has become the norm of the Modi government to hastily announce such schemes without any discussion with the people of the country, devoted solely to the interests of corporates. The BJP government, however, promotes it as a scheme created by a great genius, but in reality it is the result of a combination of the government's fascist arrogance and stupidity. We need to realise that all such schemes are designed and implemented with a clear class agenda. All of these are aimed at bolstering the large public-private, military-industrial coalition, destroying the few economic opportunities available to working

people, and directly or indirectly serving the rich and corporate interests.

One of the goals of the new scheme is to recruit soldiers on short-term contracts that carry less responsibility and then send them out without any obligation for their future. All working people are entitled to employment and a good income. Also, all retired Indians are entitled to an adequate pension. The Modi government ignores the fact that this should be the main duty of true democratic governments.

Since neo-liberalism became the guiding principle for all governments in India since the 1990s, Central and State Governments have begun to reduce the number of employees employed on general salary and pension benefits. An estimated 60 lakh posts are currently vacant at the central and state governments. While the Modi government, which is expected to create two crore jobs a year, has not filled the 30 lakh vacancies at the Center, it has not filled 11.5% of the total sanctioned posts in all sectors. The number of vacancies increased to 9.10 lakh in 2018-19, which is 22.76% of the total sanctioned posts, doubling the number of vacancies between 2014-15 and 2018-19. Based on this, one can assess the focus of the Bharatiya Janata Party-led central and state governments on solving the problem of youth unemployment.

The unemployment rate in the country in May 2021 was 11.84 per cent. Surprisingly, according to the latest data, urban areas were most affected in April with an unemployment rate of 9.22 percent. The rural unemployment rate is 7.18 per cent, followed by Haryana with the highest unemployment rate at 34.5 per cent, followed by Rajasthan (28.8 per cent), Bihar (21.1 per cent) and Jammu & Kashmir (15.6 per cent). Between 2017 and 2022, the labor force share rate across the country fell from 46% to 40%. The reason for the large number of vacancies is not only an administrative error, but also the fact that despite the large number of unemployed youth, all the posts should not be filled and it is the unofficial policy of the government to impose more workload on the existing employees. This is a natural feature of all capitalist governments.

While the number of vacancies is increasing as these central and state governments are not filling the regular posts sanctioned by them today, while millions of Anganwadi workers, doctors, school-college teachers, safai workers, security personnel, clerical staff are working in the central and state governments as contract employees who can be sent out at any moment. They carry the workload of longer hours for lower wages. Their working conditions are similar to those of private sector workers, and their jobs depend solely on employer profits and happiness. The lives of contract employees in the private and public sectors are hovering in a sea of hardship. In this situation, young people in the country feel that having a job in the public sector - having a good salary and a pension is a guarantee for the future. But, Modi and other state governments in the country are also robbing this limited opportunity.

The Agneepath scheme is nothing more than a 'soldier employment contract' that eliminates the long-term employment service, pension and other facilities of the soldiers recruited. For this reason it is not surprising that young people who have been trained for the Indian Defense Forces and hope for a better future are more likely to become very angry and gone to organise agitations about the scheme.

The Modi government felt that it could deceive the youth of the country by giving a patriotic sounding name to this contract soldiers job scheme. But young people were clearly able to grasp its lies and false promises. It is a shame that the socially irresponsible ruling party and its armed media are misrepresenting the youth's concerns as 'violence' and trying to stifle the growing public support for them and to discredit the youth. In this situation, the democratic forces of the country must stand in solidarity with the anti-Agneepath youth movement, the families of young people who have been subjected to shootings, suicides and arrests. It is the responsibility of the democratic

forces to provide the necessary support and strength to the youth movement until the Agneepath project is withdrawn.

Our country is a capitalist country. In this country, capitalists who own factories, mills, mines and all other means of production are producing goods for sale in the market and for profit through wage labor. This is called capitalism. It is the capitalist class that has put all the resources of the country in the guppies through this policy that is in power in our country today. The countries in which the capitalist class is in power are called capitalist countries. These capitalists compete with each other for sale of commodities in the market, producing goods for profit, through a wage system. Capitalists are always trying to reduce the production costs of their goods by introducing better machines to withstand competition in the market and to get higher profits by using different ways of getting higher output with less labor and to keep the rate of profit from falling. Thereby creating unemployment; this capitalist system needs an « industrial reserve army » (unemployed army) to expand old industries, develop new ones, and reduce wages to a level where production is profitable, thereby creating unemployment; This capitalist policy requires an « industrial reserve army » (Unemployed Army) to expand old industries, develop new ones, and reduce wages to a level where production is profitable. This process of capitalist exploitation of surplus labor of the workers to the maximum extent, drops the purchasing power of the working people. In order to maintain profits for capital, capitalists need to reduce wages. With that reduced purchasing power, people will not be able to buy all the high output caused by increased productivity. Crises arise because of this; this leads to an industrial stalemate and increases the Industrial Reserve Army. Thus, the unemployment problem will get worse.

Unemployment - financial crises are natural features of the capitalist system; They are inevitable. Capitalism does not have the power to solve the problem of unemployment. To that end, capitalist ownership of the means of production must be abolished and social ownership established. We must build a socialist production system that produces for the needs of the people, not for the own profit of the Capitalists. The youth of the country must realize that the establishment of a socialist state under the leadership of the working people is the only solution to all problems, including the problem of unemployment.

The farmers movement proved that only a well-organized people's movement with a clear vision and commitment to the goal could defeat even the most dictatorial and arrogant government.

Let us hope that the youth of India who are agitating against the Agneepath scheme will achieve such social consciousness, commitment, fighting spirit and organized strength that they need to achieve the goal.

Agneepath' should be withdrawn |

The old army recruitment system must be implemented !

Stand in solidarity with the families of Rakesh & Sachin who died and those who were detained !

Stop communalisation of armed forces and society !

POP & CUC appeal

25 June, 2022

