

The Hindu

Tribal youths on warpath seeking promised jobs

A group of tribal barefoot technicians in the district is gearing up to launch an indefinite agitation in front of the Collectorate here from Thursday demanding that the government honour its promise to provide them jobs.

Talking to mediapersons here on Tuesday, P.M. Rakesh, a trainee, said as many as 32 tribal youths, including five B. Tech. graduates and seven graduates in Arts and Science streams, had completed a three-month training programme for barefoot technicians at the State Institute of Rural Development, Kottarakkara, under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS).

Though the authorities had promised the youths that the trainees would be provided a stipend of Rs.150 a day and a job after completing the programme, the authorities are yet to provide the stipend or job, Mr. Rakesh, a B. Tech.graduate, said.

Pilot project

The barefoot technicians' training programme, a pilot project in the State, began on December 15 to attract educated youths from the marginalised sections to the MGNREGS.

The Union government had launched the programme after it found that the participation of tribespeople in MGNREGS was poor.

Job opportunities

The project was envisaged to take the benefits of MGNREGS to the grassroots and ensure job opportunities to the educated among the section. The project was designed to provide three months' training in preparing estimates, taking measurements of completed works and preparing bills for MGNREGS works.

“Many of us are the breadwinners of our family and we had been engaged in odd jobs in our villages,” said Kannan, a Commerce graduate from Nenmeni. 'Though we had raised our grievances with the Chief Minister, we are yet to get any answer,” he said.