

## UNEMPLOYED HOPE

Umeshwar Prasad

*DR UMESHWAR PRASAD (1933-1998), a professor in the Department of Post-Graduate Studies and Research in English, Bihar University, Muzaffarpur, was the General Editor of Indian Sensibility Publications, and was for many years the Chief Editor of the **Articulator**, a quarterly journal. His poems and critical articles, both in English and Hindi, have appeared in a number of prestigious anthologies and journals published from important cities of India. His collections of poems include **Confrontation and Other Poems**, **Unemployed Hope**, and **A Nailed Dream**. His poems have the making of urgent intensity. **Virginia Woolf** (criticism) and **Vyawaharik Alochana** (criticism in Hindi) are his other important works.*



### UNEMPLOYED HOPE

My dreams have fallen  
among arching aches  
in deep-levelled bowels;  
Who will fool with them now  
that you really did, father!  
for four secular years  
in an unproviding democracy,  
for the unemployed hope  
of your postgraduate son,

who would often apply,  
and would often discuss  
His fairy salary,  
"I'm getting this job, father  
and with the first month's salary  
I will get for you  
a Maharaja dhoti  
and a silken Kurta";  
and your tears would sing  
a tender prayer,  
and your aged eyes sprang  
a gay gratitude  
for your only son's  
unemployed fancies.

They haven't come his way, father!  
though your hands have gone  
off his head for good.

Wasn't it father –  
my mother would tell me  
oftener in her last hours,  
in her dotted voice,  
knotted and timberless –  
that you so much cherished  
a Maharaja dhoti  
and a silken Kurta  
that proudly sat  
on young labour's limbs  
in your wedding...?

With smouldering lead  
in my eyes now,  
I'm utterly jobless, father;

Even the doting dream  
For a maharaja dhoti  
and a silken shirt  
has lapsed in transaction  
with loyalism for life,  
and with starved protest  
against death.

### LET'S THINK AND DO

1. How does the poem express the frustration of the unemployed youth?
2. Comment on the title of the poem?
3. Do a project work on the employment among educated youths, focussing on its causes and consequences. Also, suggest ways to deal with the problem.

