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## Amit Mitra Questions Credibility of India's Unemployment Data

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Amit Mitra, former West Bengal Finance Minister and Principal Chief Advisor to the Chief Minister, has raised serious concerns over the credibility of India's official unemployment figures. Citing the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS), which reported a 4.9% unemployment rate for the financial year 2023–24, Mitra claims the numbers misrepresent the true extent of joblessness across the country.

Mitra alleges that the Central Government's employment statistics are misleading due to overly broad definitions. According to him, the PLFS includes individuals who perform even one hour of economic activity per week or unpaid family work as "employed," which skews the actual figures and diminishes the perceived scale of the problem. These definitions, he argued, artificially reduce the unemployment rate and create a misleading impression of economic stability.

Supporting his claims, Mitra referenced a recent Reuters survey indicating that 70% of top global economists questioned the accuracy of India's official labour market data. He also highlighted contrasting figures from the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE), which places the unemployment rate at 8.05%, significantly higher than the government's estimate. Mitra noted that India's total unemployed population has crossed 40 million comparable to the population of an entire European nation like Spain.

The situation is even more concerning for India's younger generation. According to data from the International Labour Organization (ILO), 83% of unemployed individuals in India are youth, indicating a generational challenge in workforce participation and economic opportunity. Mitra called this an urgent issue that requires focused attention and transparent policymaking.

He concluded by emphasizing that trust in national data is fundamental to effective governance and urged the government to be forthcoming about the real employment scenario. Mitra's remarks highlight the importance of credible statistics in shaping sound economic policy and maintaining public confidence