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Leaders beckon Indian youth to join politics

Staff Reporter

Speakers at a seminar discussing the issue of “Restoring Confidence in Institutions of Governance” said the only solution before the country was for the youth to enter politics.

The seminar which was part of “The Agenda for India” lecture series being organised by Excellence Enablers Private Limited witnessed speakers like CPI (M) leader Sitaram Yechury, former Reserve Bank of India governor Bimal Jalan, Lok Satta Party leader Jayaprakash Narayan, bureaucrat Srivatsa Krishna, and Chhavi Rajawat, a sarpanch of a Rajasthan village with an MBA degree, speak about the crisis of governance and of ways to move forward, to an audience comprising primarily students from top Delhi colleges.

Mr. Yechury said that hardly nine of 100 youth in the country get to attend college. “Just imagine, what if this number is 25? But for that we need Parliament to function so that the Government is forced to discuss these issues.” He also blamed policies for the present condition where 800 million people lived on Rs.20 per day, while 54 billionaires had a one-third share of India’s GDP.

“Unless bright young minds like you come in, we cannot improve the system. It is government policies that decide how many youth will get an education and go to college. If these policies will determine your career, you will have to decide your politics,” the CPI (M) leader said.

Mr. Narayan, an MLA from Andhra Pradesh and a former IAS officer, said the problems in India stemmed from a dysfunctional system and that the first generation of leaders, instead of setting right this system, toiled hard without realizing this. He also faulted the youth of the country for not having a sense of history.

“Without politics there is no solution and the only antidote to bad politics is more politics and better politics,” Mr. Narayan told the young audience.

Dr. Jalan said cynicism towards politics and Government functioning had attracted India’s best talents to other fields.

“Take a long view towards 2025 or 2040. I would ask the youth to launch a young political movement. Give five years of your life to public service,” Dr. Jalan said.

Ms. Rajawat’s address focused on how negativity abounded in India due to its “nuisance value” and how the positive stories about people doing good work was getting lost in the process.

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