

SEESAWING LABOR JOB REPORTS, A POLITICAL BAROMETER



The 'employment is on the rise' and the 'unemployment rate has fallen' vocal brigade were silenced into submission, by the Labor Department's jobs report for March, released on Friday. According to the report, the country's employers added a below par 120,000 jobs in March. This was around half the gains that were shown in the preceding three months. The unemployment rate, which had been a cause for much optimism and back-patting, took a dent, slipping to 8.2 percent from 8.3 percent. The Republicans had at last got some numbers that would help them tell the voters that the earlier growth was imaginary and a mirage. Republican front-runner, Mitt Romney, described the report as "weak and very troubling." Millions of Americans are paying a high price for President Obama's economic policies, and more and more people are growing so discouraged that they are dropping out of the labor force altogether," Obama's "excuses have run out," he concluded. Meanwhile, President Barack Obama brushed aside the figures calling them the "ups and downs" of the job market. He said, "It's clear to every American that there will still be ups and downs along the way, and that we've still got a lot to do," the president said at a White House forum on women and the economy. He said that even though the rate had "ticked down," America added 4 million private jobs over the past two years and 600,000 jobs in the past three months. There was no change, since January, in California's statewide jobless rate and stayed steadfast at 8.6 percent. The South Bay posted a February jobless rate of 8.7 percent, which was, 2 percent less than in February. Meanwhile, the East Bay's was unchanged at 9.3 percent, while the San Francisco area's was at 7.4 percent. Given that the hype over the growth had fueled expectations of continued growth, the March report comes as a major disappointment and validates chairman of the Federal Reserve Ben Bernanke admonition that the recent "better jobs numbers seem somewhat out of sync with the overall pace of economic expansion." The March decrease is frighteningly similar to the pattern set over the last couple of years, when winter ushered in growth only to see it fall in spring. Bernard Baumohl, chief global economist at the Economic Outlook Group said that this fall could be attributed to the trend amongst employers to get more work done, through lesser number of employees. Paul Ashworth, chief U.S. economist for Capital Economics said that the Friday's job report is a "reminder that the U.S. recovery is not suddenly going to transform into a spectacular success, particularly not at a time when the rest of the world economy is stumbling." With uncertainty brooding over what the next month's report will herald, the labor report has become a political barometer that could change public opinion drastically.

<https://blog.granted.com/>