

UNITES we stand

Info-tech companies' union takes up the fight of 212 BPO workers who were left jobless when city firm shifted operations to Vijayawada

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MORE than 200 employees of APEX Advanced GeoSpatial had found themselves jobless when their company announced that it would shift operations to Vijayawada. The employees were given the option of either joining the company at Vijayawada or losing their jobs and their money.

To the rescue

The peeved employees protested against the company, but did not make much headway. That's when they decided to approach the Union for ITeS (UNITES) for help. UNITES, which had handled similar cases earlier including the BelAir case, settled the issue with APEX

Advanced GeoSpatial.

"We had a six hour meeting with the company's board of directors, which resulted in the decision to pay the employees their salaries for February and a month's notice period compensation along with the bonus for the year-end. Narendra Kumar, executive director of APEX, agreed that neither he nor the employees would talk to the media, and that only we would do the talking on their behalf, as some sections of the media had made it into a Kannada versus Telugu issue," said Karthik Shekhar, general secretary, UNITES.

Unwilling to move

The employees had been hired for data entry and back-end jobs. They were earning Rs 6,000 to Rs 12,000 a month.

Less than 10 percent of the company's employees were willing to move to Vijayawada. These include employees who were with the company throughout the three years of its functioning.

BEL AIR CASE

Five months ago, 93 employees working for BelAir had not been paid their salaries for two months. UNITES took up their case, which is still pending in the court. Most of the employees are now working in different BPOs in the city.