

ADVERSE WEATHER, FAULTY POLICIES

case studies

RAJ SINGH NAIN, Haryana

No income from crops, he is now a daily wager

Uncertainty looms large for this family of eight after their standing crop was ravaged in a recent hailstorm. Raj Singh Nain, 46, a Jat farmer in Rohtak district's Ajaib village, was still reeling from a dismal kharif harvest when adverse weather destroyed all hopes of a better harvest. With mounting loans from previous seasons, the future looks grim.

"The government gave ₹11,000 per acre as compensation last year... Even the money spent to sow the crop was more than the compensation," he said.

Lack of alternatives has forced Singh to work as a daily wager for his six daughters, two of whom are Class 12 pass but unemployed.

"I try to find work every day. I take whatever small work I get in order to feed my family," he said.

RAMESH KUMAR, Uttar Pradesh

Unable to pay loan, he hanged himself

Ramesh Kumar, 37, a Dalit farmer in Agra district's Pinahat town, had two bigha land, and had leased two more bigha to sow potato and wheat. His standing crop was destroyed in the hailstorm that pounded the area earlier this month. Devastated, Ramesh Kumar hanged himself.

"My uncle had to repay a loan of ₹3 lakh, which he took last year for the marriage of his elder daughter. He expected to repay it with the crop yield but all his hopes were dashed," said Virendra Kumar, nephew of the deceased.

"The family is in distress because the wife of the deceased works as a labourer and has two children, a son aged 11 and a daughter aged 9. No compensation has been received as yet," Virendra Kumar said.

HEMENDRA CHATURVEDI

SAHAB SINGH, Uttar Pradesh

Trauma of crop loss took his life

A hailstorm on March 8 destroyed the wheat, mustard and potato crops 73-year-old Sahab Singh had sown in his 26 bigha land in Kheragarh tehsil of Agra district.

The trauma of seeing the large-scale devastation was too much for the septuagenarian farmer. He complained of chest pain and was rushed to a private hospital for treatment in Agra. He died there.

"He was shattered due to crop loss," said his son, Yogendra Singh. "We owe ₹6 lakh to a bank and ₹3 lakh to the local market, but with the crop damaged, the future is uncertain." The final hope for this family of 14 was compensation, but that too has dissipated. "The lekhpal... said that my father died a natural death, closing all doors for compensation," said Singh said.

HEMENDRA CHATURVEDI

The government gave ₹11,000 per acre as compensation last year... Even the money spent to sow the crop was more than the compensation.

RAJ SINGH NAIN, Farmer

"Three of my girls go to government school, but I don't think I will be able to pay for their fees for long."

Though he did not take part in the recent Jat agitation, he supports their demand. "I am working so hard for the education of my children. They can get jobs only if we get reservation," he said.

HARDIK ANAND

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Wheat harvest under threat from rain



TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

CHANDIGARH, APRIL 2

Weather may play spoilsport as farmers prepare to harvest their wheat in the region.

Rain accompanied by thunderstorm is predicted at isolated places in the region in the coming week due to partial effect of western disturbances.

Chaudhary Charan Singh Haryana Agriculture University, Hisar, has warned farmers of rain and thundershowers from April 3 to 6.

The university's agriculture meteorology department has advised farmers to keep the prediction in mind while planning to harvest and irrigate their crops.

The Indian Meteorological Department has also predicted thunderstorm accompanied by squall/hail at isolated places in the region on April 3. Procurement of wheat officially began in the state yesterday.

Though wheat has not started arriving in the mandis yet, farmers are preparing to start harvesting operations in some parts of the region.

Chandigarh
i/c Newspaper Unit