

An unending tryst with Climate Change to secure life and livelihood

The plight of small and marginal farmers amidst climate vagaries



Harprasad, a smallholder farmer from Panari village in Moth block, Bundelkhand, UP has been hit hard by the recent natural calamity. He borrowed Rs 20,000 to cultivate groundnut on his 8 bighas (less than 2 acres) of land, which is his family's only source of income. Last year, their sesame crop was destroyed by drought, and this year, the untimely rainfall destroyed their groundnut yield. Groundnuts are known as the "cashews of the poor" in this region, and the loss is a devastating blow for Harprasad and his family.

Another farmer, Ghanshyam, has also suffered a loss of approximately Rs. 2L due to the damage of crops. The region is infamous for farmers' suicides, and the recent natural calamity has added to the stress of small and marginal farmers who are struggling to make ends meet. The loss of crops has left at least 200-250 bigha land covered with groundnut cultivation in distress and debt. A bigha of land yields at least 4 quintals of groundnut, and the loss is colossal. The farmers in this region are hardworking, but the notoriety of the climate has made things worse for them. As small and marginal landholders, they plead with the government to assess their losses and compensate them accordingly.



Pravesh Devi, a poor widow and resident of Badera village in Moth block of Jhansi district, has suffered a great loss. Her sesame crop on 5 Bigha land has been destroyed, and she is demanding the government to assess the damage and compensate her for it. Even clearing the field of the destroyed crops will require farm workers, for which she'll need to pay. It seems grim for her and other farmers to figure out how to manage in such a situation. Pravesh Devi says, "My son is an agricultural worker, and my husband's death left us in huge debt. We spent a lot of money but couldn't save his life. We're a family of four, with a loan of about Rs 1.5 lakh, some of which is from Kisan Credit

Card, and some from the villagers. Now, how can we repay that loan? We do not get enough wages

in the villages to survive. The only support left is to earn our living by farming, and even that has been destroyed!"

They need urgent help to recover from this crisis and get back on their feet. The government needs to take immediate action to prevent another wave of farmers' suicides in Bundelkhand. These farmers have been through enough, and they need support, not just in the form of compensation, but also in terms of long-term solutions to the problems they face.