

Break the barriers between researchers and ryots

Farmers and agriculture are bartered for the sake of vested interests



Stark reality: Bangalore farmer Jayaram.

For a farmer, the field is office and a good crop means a rewarding salary.

“If he manages to get a little extra then he considers it as a bonus. In a country, where agriculture is supposed to be thousands of years old, isn’t it an irony that a majority of its farmers are not happy financially,” says Mr. P. Jayaram, a progressive farmer in Bangalore growing grapes, tomato, vegetables and mulberry in 15 acres.

Accountability is a must

“There is no use in passing the buck. Accountability is a must, Of what use are all the financial schemes and bank loans, all claiming to be in the farmers’ interest?”

“Most of these are only on paper. Do you know the difficulty in getting a Rs.10,000 small-crop loan from a bank? Ask a farmer and he will tell you. And today we are able to buy a Rs. 5 lakh car in a few hours over the phone. Is this a healthy economy?” he asks.

“I am not disputing the fact that the facilities and comforts are today a necessity, but in the name of new luxuries, farmers and agriculture should not be bartered,” he contends.

Role of media

India being an agrarian country, it is the duty of journalists to identify and suggest solutions to burning problems of villages, instead of only reporting on deaths and suicides, Mr. Jayaram argues, calling on the media to be proactive in this.

A journalist’s report must be like a platform to record, show, inform the society about farming experiences in villages, and their traditional methods of conserving land, water etc. According to him, though farmers are true scholars in their area, in reality they are not treated so.

“Often the brick compound wall and wire fences erected around agriculture research centres keep them away from approaching these places.

“Being shy and reserved by nature, a farmer naturally gets flabbergasted by the security at the gate and the protocols involved in such centres,” he says.

“Till date I have never heard or seen any instance where a farmer treats his guests anything but cordially. But the same farmer seldom receives the same courtesy in agricultural offices or research centres he visits.”

Not be a barrier

“Such a treatment of the farmers is not acceptable. The high walls of the research centres should be limited to safeguard the privacy of research, and must not become a

barrier between the minds of the researchers and the farmers,” explains Mr. Jayaram. In fact it is their knowledge and skills that should be sought after by those in agricultural varities.

Scientific farming should evolve involving “true scholars” – the farmers, according to him.

The fact to be noted here is that though the famine or flood does not seem to affect a politician a beauraucrat or businessman - it is only the farmer who endures the loss and suffers.

Needs money

“Have you ever heard about a person from any other profession committing suicide due to crop failure,” he asks.

Seeds, fertilizers, insecticides etc. do not come free of cost. Even such a basic profession as farming needs money.

And the farmer needs financial assistance. Drawn by the several advertisements, that endorse these financial institutions, a farmer buys the seeds and sows it with hopes of high yields.

“When he fails to get a good yield the company that supplied the seeds does not take any reponsibility, and the agriculture experts keep tight lipped. This is the case prevailing in many villages,” asserts Mr. Jayaram.

Indirect support

By lowering the rate of interests time and again, the government too indirectly encourages them to take such financial assistance, making them lifelong debtors.

The hope of a getting a good yield remains just a dream for a poor farmer.

For more details readers can contact Mr. P. Jayaram, Byrdhenahalli, Devanahalli taluk, Bangalore rural, mobile: 09740963352 and 09591527526.

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