

Politics of Indian farmer suicides

If the National Crime Records Bureau of India (NCRB) data is to be taken seriously, on an average over 15,000 farmers commit suicide in India every year and a good number of them for crop failure and many under pressure of high debt burden. The crime records list several other reasons for farmers' suicide. They include ill health, personal and family problems. The NCRB records since 1995 number 2,96,438 cases of suicides by farmers in the country till 2013. The number represents a little over 11 percent of total suicide deaths in the country per annum during the period. Considering the fact that around 45 percent of India's population live directly on farming, the number is anything but too large or alarming if compared with the other 88 percent suicide deaths occurring in the country every year out of the remaining population. Why is, then, the Congress vice president, Rahul Gandhi, suddenly trying to make a huge political issue of farmers' suicides to collect sympathy of this largely impoverished and little educated community?

Politics apart the suicidal death of such large numbers of poor farmers should be a cause of concern in any society. It is more so if they are linked with economic reasons such as crop failure or crop glut, unremunerative prices of crops, competition from GM crops, pressure from middleman, poor storage facilities, high debt burden and unsupportive government policies. Unfortunately, there exist little such records to link causes of many farmers' suicides.

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion and analysis. Read full, original post: Politics over farmer suicides