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# Farmer's suicide 'over sugarcane dues' triggers protest in Muzaffarnagar

The suicide, meanwhile, triggered a protest by farmers who demanded that a case be registered against sugar mill officials for their failure to procure sugarcane from farmers.





By: **Express News Service** | Muzaffarnagar, Noida | Published: June 6, 2020 5:38:47 am



The farmers called off the protest after district authorities announced financial assistance of Rs 10 lakh for Singh's family. (Representational Photo)

The death of a 50-year-old sugarcane farmer, who committed suicide on Thursday allegedly over delay in payment for his sugarcane dues, triggered protests in Muzaffarnagar.

Ompal Singh had hanged himself from a tree at his farm in Sisuali area of Muzaffarnagar, police said. "Prima facie, the farmer had received a note four days ago from a sugar mill. The machine that was supposed to weigh was not working and it appears that he was in dire need of money. Allegedly depressed over the delay, Ompal committed suicide," said Virendra Kasana, Station House Officer, Bhaura Kalan.

Residents told the police that Ompal had been facing financial difficulties during the lockdown and was looking forward to sugarcane harvesting, hoping that it would provide compensation. The crop had been ready for the past 10 days and

Ompal had visited the local mill multiple times hoping to get payment, residents said.

Police, however, said the mill had been functioning and attributed the delay in payment to the dysfunctional weighing machine.

District Magistrate Selvakumari J said that preliminary investigations found that the farmer killed himself due to a family dispute over land. The District Magistrate asserted that there had been no stoppage in the procurement of sugarcane by mills.

The suicide, meanwhile, triggered a protest by farmers who demanded that a case be registered against sugar mill officials for their failure to procure sugarcane from farmers. The angry farmers staged a road blockade and refused to cremate the body till their demands were met.

As the protest continued, leaders of the [Rashtriya Lok Dal](#), including its national secretary Rajpal Balyan and former Uttar Pradesh minister Yograj Singh, joined them. Soon after, Union minister Sanjeev Balyan, who represents Muzaffarnagar in Lok Sabha visited the protest site, along with [BJP](#) MLA from Budhana constituency Umesh Malik, persuaded the farmers to withdraw their protest.

The farmers called off the protest after district authorities announced financial assistance of Rs 10 lakh for Singh's family. The family conducted the last rites in his native Sisoli village.

Congress general secretary [Priyanka Gandhi](#) Vadra took to Twitter to criticise the state's [BJP](#) government, accusing it of not paying sugarcane dues to farmers. Leaders of the [RLD](#) and the [Samajwadi Party](#) separately announced financial assistance of Rs one lakh each to the bereaved family.

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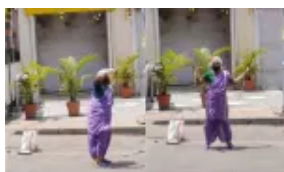
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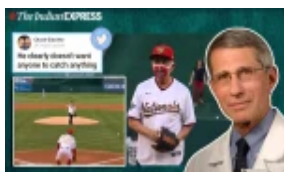
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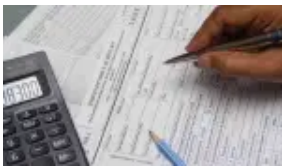


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