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Out of food and money, 22-year-old hangs himself in Panchkula

As the family handed over the deceased's body to the police on Tuesday, they had no money to perform his last rites.

Written by [Pallavi Singhal](#) | Panchkula | Updated: May 28, 2020 5:57:49 pm



As the family handed over the deceased's body to the police on Tuesday, they had no money to perform his last rites. (File)

A daily wager residing in Panchkula's Rajiv Colony, Sagar Singh (22) had been hit hard by the lockdown. His ailing-handicapped mother, a teenage brother and his newly-wedded wife relied on him for care, but he had recorded no earnings for more than a month. Out of money and food, and pushed to the brink, Sagar took his life on Monday.

As the deceased's body was handed over to the family by the police on Tuesday, they had no money to perform his last rites. Thrust into reality, with no time to even mourn his brother's death, Gautam (17) says, "We did not have any money to hold his funeral. Me and my uncle borrowed money from our neighbours and friends to arrange a funeral. Even our friends have run out of money."

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Gautam has now shouldered his brother's worries. "I do not know how will I repay those, who we have borrowed from. We do not even have food. I guess, now, I will have to leave school to earn," he says.

Sagar was only 7-years-old when their family moved to Panchkula from a village in Karnal and he was 14, when his father passed away in an accident. "Bhaiya was in school then. Our lives initially went on, depending on savings and the widow pension that my mother received, but soon enough he had to leave school and start working," says Gautam.

"Sagar had since been the caretaker of the family. He wanted his brother to study hard and become a teacher," says their uncle Krishan Lal, who is a resident of adjoining Buddanpur village.

On January 15, Sagar had got married to an 18-year-old resident of Panchkula's Raily village. He had dropped her off to her maternal house on Saturday and had his room to himself when he took the extreme step.

"I had seen him at night when I went to sleep. He had come late at 2.30 am and closed his door. We did not knock at his door till noon as we thought he must be tired. However, by the time I went to wake him up, he had hung himself," said Gautam. "I cannot believe it, he was laughing with me the night before," he added.

A police official, privy to the investigation, said, "We asked around to ascertain the reason for his death but what everyone said had even us in tears. The lockdown made him a victim of hunger and poverty. He did not have any bad habits. All he cared about was feeding his family."

According to the family, no government help reached them amid the lockdown. The only aid they received was provided by NGOs distributing food packets or ration kits, that did not last too long.

Speaking about the victim's wife Aanchal, who has been thrown into despair with her whole life in front of her, Krishan Lal said, "We will let her do what she chooses to. She can stay here or go to her parents' house. We will encourage her to re-marry. She is just a child."

Even though Sagar has left, the problems of the household remains. Still in shock, Gautam has already assumed his role to scramble for daily bread.

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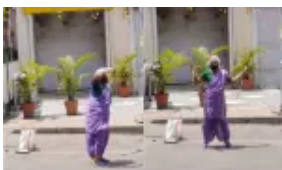
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