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Madhya Pradesh: Politics on death of farmer who was in queue for 6 days to sell wheat

Kamal Nath calls for strict action; CM Chouhan claims record procurement



(<https://www.theweek.in/authors.sravani-sarkar.html>)

By *Sravani Sarkar* (<https://www.theweek.in/authors.sravani-sarkar.html>) | May 26, 2020 20:06 IST



Former Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Kamal Nath | PTI

Politics has started over the death of a farmer who had been in a queue for six days to sell his wheat produce at a government procurement centre in Agar Malwa district of Madhya Pradesh, with the opposition Congress attacking the BJP government vehemently over the issue.

Prem Singh, 45, a resident of Malwasa village in Agar Malwa district reportedly died following a heart attack while getting his wheat produce weighed for selling at the Tanodia government procurement centre on Monday. The farmer had been in a queue to sell the wheat since May 19, amidst severe heat conditions.

Former chief minister Kamal Nath on Tuesday attacked the state government on the issue, saying that while Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan was making big claims over procurement of wheat and releasing big statistics, the ground reality was that the farmers were facing immense difficulties in selling their produce.

In a series of tweets, Kamal Nath said that there was lack of proper arrangements at the procurement centres with some not having weighing scales while some facing shortage of gunny bags, transport problems and others.

Despite this, farmers are being sent SMS for procurement and this is causing them to wait for four to five days in kilometers long queues in severe hot weather.

Kamal Nath said that the death of Prem Singh was a result of this mismanagement as the farmer had got SMS for procurement on May 19. Prem Singh was asked to come to Jhalara procurement centre first and then sent to Tanodia centre. His chance came only on May 25 and the farmer who had remained tense about his produce and braved the hot weather in the open for several days, died of heart attack in the evening.

The ex-chief minister has asked the state government to take immediate and strict action on those responsible for this death and also to provide assistance to the family of the deceased farmer.

Former agriculture minister Sachin Yadav and other Congress leaders also attacked the government over the incident.

The district collector of Agar Malwa Sanjay Kumar could not be contacted for comments despite repeated efforts. Earlier, speaking to local media, the collector said that the death of the farmer at the procurement centre was unfortunate. Prem Singh had been admitted to a hospital as his health deteriorated, but he succumbed. The collector said that assistance will be provided to his family.

Meanwhile, Chief Minister Chouhan said that despite adverse situation, the state government had created record of wheat procurement. He said that the farmers toiled to come out with huge produce and the government created record by procuring over 114 lakh metric tonne of wheat. He assured the farmers that each grain of their produce will be procured by the government.

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