

Chilli yard e-trade bandh leaves growers in tears

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Guntur: Scores of hapless chilli growers and workers engaged in the Guntur chilli yard are caught in the crossfire between the government and traders over introduction of e-national agriculture market (eNAM).



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When the department of marketing sought to ensure transparency in mirchi trade and thereby a fair deal to the growers with the help of the e-initiative, the move triggered a flash strike from traders, bringing the trade to a grinding halt for nearly 10 days. Around 1,200 hamalis engaged in unloading the produce from the trucks and weighing it lost daily wage on account of the protest. The growers left their produce to the mercy of nature, hoping against hope resumption of the trade.

The eNAM system was introduced in 23 markets across the state and 585 market yards all over the country as a national policy. The initiative aims to ensure instant payments to the growers and check irregularities in weighing by digitising the whole process of mirchi trade right from weighing to the payments.

As per the conventional method of trading, the chilli farmers were getting payments from traders a week after the sale of the produce. As the eNAM came into force, the traders are obligated to clear the payments within a span of 10 hours. Baddala Yedukondalu a farmer from Gurajala area in Guntur district is eagerly waiting for stalemate to come to an end.

He is in a hurry to dispose his stocks and clear instalments of bank loan. He raised the loan for construction of his house and hoped to clear the pending dues soon after harvesting the crop. The crop was harvested but it could not be converted into cash on account of the trader-government trade-off.

For Chintala Sambhaiha, a worker in the yard, it is more than making both ends meet. He is more worried over admitting his daughter in a polytechnic college in Kakinada immediately for which he requires money than feeding his family. Similar is the plight of hundreds of farmers and yard workers.

The chilli is a principal crop in Guntur district with an area of 61,347 hectares. The market yard is the biggest outlet for growers in Khammam and Nalgonda districts in Telangana and coastal and Rayalaseema areas. Around 12,000 workers directly and 13,000 indirectly are engaged on chilli trade in the yard. It registers around Rs 6,000 crore per year. Chilli is exported from the market yard to Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Pakistan.

Source: <http://www.thehansindia.com/posts/index/Andhra-Pradesh/2017-09-15/Chilli-yard-e-trade-bandh-leaves-growers-in-tears/326737>