

THE WEEPING APPLE TREE : Summary

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India has a lot of sensitive ecosystems. One of such state to boast about such eco-system is Himachal Pradesh. The land of gods, mountains, rivers. Set on the banks of river Chenab, millions of people survive by the river. These snowfed rivers also support one thing, APPLES.

Due to its topography, Himachal climate can sustain a variety of apple cultivation. These cultivation brought prosperity to the valley as people's earning started to increase as they exported the apple. Government incentives, storage facilities, improvement in roads and setting up of agro processing units, not only helped the apple industry but also any other agricultural product. People even started doing mix-cropping, earning more. Border country of Nepal also benefitted as its people got engaged in these cultivation and saw their condition improving. This ecosystem also had multiplier effect and contributed to the economy at large.

But slowly the things started to change. Within a 20 yr period, the climate became warmer. The belt where these apples were grown shifted for more than 50 km. From Bajaura → Manali is now Seobagh → Lahaul. The place where lot of apple used to grow, is now used to grow plum, cauliflower etc. This is a horrifying incident of global warming making it a painful transition. The temperature is on the rise and at an alarming rate!

The temperature is of ~~grave~~ concern as temperature keeps on rising and in some years even temperate crops would be hard to grow. While some places lost the apples, others gained the advantage of growing apples. They started growing apples, conifer trees were cleared. Apples need at least 6 inch of snow to form adequate climate. With temperature on rise, every area's apple cultivation remain in uncertainty.

The Institute of Agricultural Research, Kullu have studied the climate and within 20 yrs period, the area has become warmer and grave ecological change awaits the valley. First they were confused whether it is due to different microbes on seeds, but global warming and temperature record made it clear. The seed production goes down and flora goes down too.

Places like Bannaut have gained from climate change. By producing apples, they increased their income and prosperity prevailed. Apple trees bind soil and help check soil erosion but the ghost of climate change still lurks around. The change is prominent, real as it gets. The bigger question is what can we do about it?, ~~1~~ Is it too late? or we have time?.

Whatever it maybe, one thing is clear, global warming is a real threat and actions against are required URGENTLY!