

#### **ACCIDENTAL GAMBLERS**

Vidarbha, a major cotton growing region in central India, has been the epicentre of a protracted agrarian crisis. Chronic indebtedness and farmers' suicides continue unabated despite decades of state intervention. Going beyond the contemporary discourse that finds fault in neoliberal policies and integration with global markets, this fascinating book tells the story of how nineteenth-century 'accidents', particularly in the form of events and processes, ushered in institutional transformations that shaped the region's cotton economy.

By drawing insights from the authors' longitudinal study in villages of the region spanning twelve years, *Accidental Gamblers* presents the 'gambles' that farmers are part of in addition to the detailed historical account of the political economy and development of the cotton economy of the region. The novelty of combining a long view of history and evidence based on primary field research results in a book that underscores the importance of investigating roots of agrarian crisis and paying attention to adjustments of farm households, at a crucial juncture in India's economic transformation.

**Sarthak Gaurav** is an associate professor in economics in the Shailesh J. Mehta School of Management at IIT Bombay. He has worked on risk and vulnerability of agricultural households in Vidarbha and Gujarat since 2008 and cofounded the Behavioural Lab and Geospatial Information Science and Engineering (GISE) Hub at IIT Bombay.

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# **ACCIDENTAL GAMBLERS**

### RISK AND VULNERABILITY IN VIDARBHA COTTON

SARTHAK GAURAV THIAGU RANGANATHAN





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## **ABBREVIATIONS**

ADWDRS Agricultural Debt Waiver and Debt Relief Scheme

AERC Agro-Economic Research Centre

AICIL Agriculture Insurance Company of India Ltd

APL above poverty line

APMC Agricultural Produce Market Committee

ASHA accredited social health activist

ATMA Agricultural Technology Management Agency

AWS automated weather station
BJP Bharatiya Janata Party
BPL below poverty line
Bt Bacillus thuringiensis

CACP Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices

CAGR compound annual growth rate

CAIM Convergence of Agriculture and Industry in Maharashtra

CCEA Cabinet Committee for Economic Affairs

CCI Cotton Corporation of India

CIBRC Central Insecticides Board and Registration Committee

CICR Central Institute for Cotton Research

CIRCOT Central Institute for Research on Cotton Technology

CSA Centre for Sustainable Agriculture

CV coefficient of variation



xx ABBREVIATIONS

DAP di-ammonium phosphate
DBT Direct Benefit Transfer

DCCB District Central Cooperative Bank

EIC East India Company
ETL economic threshold limit

FAS Foundation for Agrarian Studies

FAQ fair average quality

FCI Food Corporation of India FGD focus group discussion FPC Farmer Producer Company

FYM farmyard manure GCA gross cropped area

GEAC Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee

GIPR Great Indian Peninsular Railway

GKU Girni Kamgar Union

HAD Hyderabad Assigned DistrictsHDPS high density planting systemHTBt herbicide tolerant Bt cotton

HYV high yielding variety

ICAR Indian Council of Agricultural Research
ICDS Integrated Child Development Scheme

ICRISAT International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid

Tropics

IFAD International Fund for Agricultural Development

IMD India Meteorological Department

INC Indian National Congress

INTUC Indian National Trade Union Congress

IPM integrated pest management IPR intellectual property right

IRM insecticide resistance management

ITI industrial training institute



ABBREVIATIONS xxi

JJAS four monsoon months of June, July, August, and September

JSA Jalyukt Shivar Abhiyaan JSY Janani Suraksha Yojana

KCC kisan credit card

KVK Krishi Vigyan Kendra

LFPR labour force participation rate
MAP mono ammonium phosphate

MCPS Monopoly Cotton Procurement Scheme

MDG Millennium Development Goal

MDMS Mid-day Meal Scheme
MFI microfinance institution

MGNREGS Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee

Scheme

MLA member of the Legislative Assembly
MMBL Mahyco–Monsanto Biotech Ltd

MNAIS Modified National Agricultural Insurance Scheme

MOP muriate of potash
MP member of parliament

MPCE monthly per capita consumption expenditure

MRP mixed recall period

MSCCGMF Maharashtra State Cooperative Cotton Growers Marketing

Federation Ltd

MSP minimum support price

MSRLM Maharashtra State Rural Livelihoods Mission

MVA Maha Vikas Aghadi

NABARD National Bank for Agriculture and Development

NAFED National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation

of India Ltd

NAIS National Agricultural Insurance Scheme

NBFC non-banking financial company

NCAER National Council of Applied Economic Research

NCDEX National Commodity & Derivatives Exchange Limited



xxii ABBREVIATIONS

NCP Nationalist Congress Party
NDA National Democratic Alliance
NEP National Education Policy
NGO non-governmental organization

NHC new history of capitalism

NPK nitrogen phosphorous potassium NPM non-pesticidal management

NREGS National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme

NSSO National Sample Survey Office

NT nomadic tribe

OBC other backward classes
OGL Open General Licence

PARI Project on Agrarian Relations in India

PBW pink bollworm

PDKV Dr Panjabrao Deshmukh Krishi Vidyapeeth

PDS Public Distribution System

PMFBY Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana PMJDY Pradhan Mantri Jan-Dhan Yojana

PM-KISAN Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (Prime Minister's

Farmer's Tribute Fund)

POCRA Project on Climate Resilient Agriculture

RCT randomized control trial

RMMS Rasthriya Mill Mazdoor Sangh RSBY Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana

RWBCIS Restructured Weather-Based Crop Insurance Scheme

RWS reference weather station
SAS situation assessment survey
SBC special backward classes

SC scheduled caste

SEBC socially and economically backward class

SHC soil health card SHG self-help group



ABBREVIATIONS xxiii

SIT special investigation team

SOPA Soybean Processors Association of India

SPNF Subhash Palekar Natural Farming SRC States Reorganization Commission

SRTT Sir Ratan Tata Trust
SSP single super phosphate

ST scheduled tribe

UPA United Progressive Alliance

VDSA Village Dynamics Studies in South Asia
VER vulnerability as uninsured exposure to risk
VIDC Vidarbha Irrigation Development Corporation

VIIDP Vidarbha Intensive Irrigation Development Programme

VLS village-level study

VNSS Vasantrao Naik Sheti Swavlamban Mission
WBCIS Weather-Based Crop Insurance Scheme

WTO World Trade Organization

WTP willingness to pay

WUA Water User Association
ZBNF zero budget natural farming

