

Navdanya Campaign in support of farmers victims of BT Cotton failure in Punjab

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By Dr Vandana Shiva — 21 July 2015

[...] Today, Indian cotton farmers are facing a genocide that has resulted in the death of at least [300,000 of their brothers and sisters between 1995 and 2013](#), averaging 14,462 per year (1995-2000) and 16,743 per year (2001-2011). This epidemic began in the cotton belt, in Maharashtra, where 53,818 farmers have taken their lives. Monsanto, on it's own [website](#), admits that pink bollworm “resistance [to Bt] is natural and expected” and that the resistance to Bt “posed a significant threat to the nearly 5 million farmers who were planting the product in India”. 84% of the farmer suicides have been attributed to Monsanto's Bt Cotton, placing the corporation's greed and lawlessness at the heart of India's agrarian crisis.

There are three outright illegalities to Monsanto's existence in India.

Read more: <http://seedfreedom.info/how-monsanto-wrote-and-broke-laws-to-enter-india/>

[Save our annadas](#)

By Dr Vandana Shiva – The Asian Age, 20 May 2015

“Farmers’ suicides are the result of an economic model seeking to maximise corporate profits. The answer to this is to recognise that small farmers are the backbone of national food security.”

The peasants and farmers of India are the most resilient and independent community I have ever known. They have defended their rights and fought injustice and bounced back after every flood, drought and crop failure.

Why then are they giving up on life today? Why are they committing suicide in such large numbers? Addressing these questions has become a critical survival imperative not only for farmers, but also for all of us who rely on the food they put on our tables

Read more: <http://seedfreedom.info/save-our-annadas/>

PRESS COVERAGE

[Refusing to learn from past mistakes](#)

by Bharat Dogra — The Statesman, 17 October 2015

Massive crop losses have been caused by the white-fly to the cotton crop in Punjab. Most of these farmers had grown Bt cotton. Large-scale damage to cotton crop has also been reported from parts of Haryana and Rajasthan.

Genetically Modified crops like Bt cotton were supposed to offer protection from pests. Where is the protection as crops over huge areas are being destroyed? From the point of view of farmers it is not relevant whether boll worm destroys the crop or white-fly or some other pest. The farmer's concern is that damage from pests should not be too high. He was promised that GM crops would give this protection. So he agreed to pay heavily for this. He borrowed at high interest rates for this. But now what he sees is that damage from pests is higher than before.

Read more: <http://www.thestatesman.com/mobi/news/opinion/refusing-to-learn-from-past-mistakes/97428.html#BaKEcZocF7qKc4rQ.99>

[Whitefly destroys 2/3rd of Punjab's cotton crop, 15 farmers commit suicide](#)

The Times of India, 8 October 2015

BATHINDA: [“It was just like the Japanese air strike in the film, Pearl Harbour,” said Naresh Kumar Lehri, a seed and pesticide dealer at Singho village in Punjab's Bathinda district.](#) “They appeared out of nowhere and left a trail of destruction.”

Lehri was referring to the devastating attack by whitefly, a common pest, on the cotton crop in Punjab's Malwa region this year. It has affected about two-thirds of standing cotton crop in the state, causing an estimated loss of Rs 4,200 crore.

Read more:<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/Whitefly-destroys-2/3rd-of-Punjabs-cotton-crop-15-farmers-commit-suicide/articleshow/49265083.cms>

[GM seeds cause of loss of cotton crops by whitefly: NGO](#)

Business Standard, 8 October 2015

Amidst destruction of cotton crops by whitefly in [Punjab](#) leading to reported suicides by farmers, a green body today blamed industrial agriculture and GM seeds for the “reign of death” and debt of farmers and said that the state is headed for an agrarian crisis.

Green NGO Navdanya, led by environment activist Vandana Shiva, accused the genetically modified (GM) seed companies of “luring” the farmers with “false” promises and demanded fair compensation and promotion of local varieties of seeds to prevent another “catastrophe”.

“Navdanya stands against the victimisation of Punjab farmers, who were lured by GM seed companies’ false promises of 800 Kg yield per acre.

“We demand that fair compensation be given to these farmers and local varieties of seeds should be promoted by the agricultural departments to prevent another catastrophe in the future,” Navdanya said in a statement.

Read more: http://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/gm-seeds-cause-of-loss-of-cotton-crops-by-whitefly-ngo-115100800993_1.html

[Trains Stopped, Diverted Due to Agitation of Farmers in Punjab](#)

NDTV, 7 October 2015

Chandigarh: Thousands of passengers in Punjab were hit hard today as a few trains were stopped by protesting farmers on the first day of their two-day agitation and some others were diverted by the railway authorities.

The ‘rail roko’ agitation call was given by eight farmers organisations, including various factions of the Bharatiya Kisan Union (BKU), to protest against the “anti-farmer policies” of the Punjab government.

The farmers are particularly agitated with the Parkash Singh Badal government’s response to the white-fly attack on the cotton crop in the Malwa belt which led to over 60 per cent of the crop being damaged and losses of farmers running into hundreds of crores.

Read more: <http://www.ndtv.com/india-news/trains-stopped-diverted-due-to-agitation-of-farmers-in-punjab-1229425>

[Enact law to ensure relief: Farmers to govt](#)

The Tribune, 6 October 2015

Farmers have urged the state government to pass the Compensation Guarantee Act for farmers who suffer damage to their crops due to various reasons, warning that the deepening farm crisis could cause social unrest. “We have been suffering because of the Badal government’s misrule and not due to a natural calamity,” said Hardev Singh Sandhu, president of the Kirti Kisan Union, which has been taking part in the ongoing farmers’ agitation in the state. “The state government’s failure to duly compensate farmers for the last one-and-a-years has forced us to plan on stopping trains on October 7 and 8,” said Sandhu. He warned that they would intensify their agitation if the issues raised by farmers were not resolved.

Read more:<http://www.tribuneindia.com/news/punjab/enact-law-to-ensure-relief-farmers-to-govt/141735.html>