

Indian farmer suicides: Compelling media narrative with no basis

In his Collide-a-Scape column, Keith Kloor quotes [from](#) *The Economist's* Demography and Development blog, several months ago:

Facts can be stubborn – and irritating. It is satisfying—perhaps even gratifying—to accept the idea that genetically modified crops are causing thousands of Indian farmers to commit suicide (as [this article](#) claims). ... Their cause has been adopted by high-profile campaigners such as Britain's [Prince Charles](#) and India's [Vandana Shiva](#), who blames the spate of deaths on Monsanto, an American biotech firm.

Shiva, a prominent environmentalist, has spread this false narrative in the media for years. She raises it when she references Monsanto or GMOs in her many writings, media interviews, and public talks. Shiva's words are treated with earnest respect in liberal and environmental circles, where she is held in great esteem. If she insists that Monsanto and its GMO seeds have driven hundreds of thousands of Indian farmers to suicide—and she has said this frequently—then there must be something to it. [There isn't](#). But that doesn't matter, because a compelling media narrative—no matter how false—builds on itself in such a way that it becomes received wisdom.

Read the full, original article: [The Exploitation of Indian Farmer Suicides](#)