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# *Our Seeds – Ourselves*

## ***Press Release***

26<sup>th</sup> April 2015, on the occasion of International Seed Day

Seed has been the centre of life for all our cultures. Farmers have been sowing harvesting, preserving and re-sowing seeds, a cycle through which they are not only revitalizing seeds and life but also a valuable culture passed down from generation to generation.

On the international Seed Day this is the knowledge and tradition that all of us shall celebrate this year on 26<sup>th</sup> April, 2015. People all around the world will be with us in this celebration of human wisdom and ingenuity by singing the poems of our seeds and taking pledges to protect this wealth of knowledge from a concerted assault by national and transnational corporations who are determined to take over this seed wealth of ours and make us slaves under their seed regime. They will also use these as a gateway into India for un-natural seeds such as genetically engineered seeds.

Thus they will not only spread poison into our soils and waters but also compel farmers to surrender themselves to commit suicide as the last option.

“We will flood your market with our seeds in such a manner that you can't but surrender” had said a Monsanto official in Canada in early 2000. The same threat has been repeated in India in 2015, our market is so flooded with seeds of bt cotton that the farmers have no option but to plant them. And then the industry turns around and claims triumphantly that farmers are not opting for Non B.T. Seeds. They forgot the fact that they are the ones who have manipulated the disappearance of traditional cotton seeds from the market. They have the blood of cotton farmers on their hands. This will be the kind of sordid saga that will

haunt our agriculture if we let the current corporate-free-ride on our farming. To stop this, and to strengthen the great tradition of our seed keeping in this country we need to firmly resolve that we are going back to our traditional seed systems and strengthen farmers hands in retaining them and fight Government laws and policies which pro-corporate have to be driven back. We must act now to make this possible through farmers meetings, public meetings, media conferences, rallies and demonstrations.

Let us make the voices of our farmers resound all over the country so that their views and seeds get a priority over corporate seeds on the Indian agrarian landscape.

I am sure you will join this fight with MINI and make our farmers feel that they are not alone in this struggle.

P.V. Satheesh

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