GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

MINISTRY OFENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS

RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO06.12.2010

ANSWERED ON

GENETICALLY DEVELOPED CROPS .

368 Shri Birendra Prasad Baishya

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :-

(a)whether it is a fact that genetically developed crops (foodgrains, vegetables and fruits, etc.), though good for increasing the agricultural production, are a threat for human generation as reported by various scientific communities;

(b)if so, the details thereof;

(c)whether extensive study has been done indigenously by our scientists in this regard;

(d)if so, the details thereof; and

(e)if not, the reasons therefor ?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS

(SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH)

(a) to (e)A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN THE REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (e) OF THE RAJYA SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 368 BY SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA REGARDING GENETICALLY DEVELOPED CROPS DUE FOR REPLY ON 06.12.2010

(a) to (b)No, Sir. Genetically Modified (GM) crops are being cultivated in 25 countries and consumed in several countries (including developed countries like Japan, EU, Australia and New Zealand) for many years. There is no conclusive scientific proof that GM crops approved for commercial cultivation are toxic to human and animal health.

(c) to (d) In view of various concerns related to the safety, efficacy and agronomic performance of GM seeds, the Government of India is assessing the merits and demerits of each GM crop on a case by case basis even if it is approved for cultivation in other countries. Before any GM crop is approved for commercial cultivation, extensive evaluation and regulatory approval process takes place. This includes generation of relevant biosafety information and its elaborate analysis to ensure food, feed and environmental safety. The environmental safety assessment includes studies on pollen escape, out- crossing, aggressiveness and weediness, effect of the gene on non-target organisms, presence of protein in soil and its effect on soil micro -flora, confirmation of the absence of terminator gene and baseline susceptibility studies. The food and feed safety studies include assessment on composition analysis, allergenicity and toxicological studies and feeding studies on fish, chicken, cows and buffaloes. In case, the GM crop is not found suitable for release in the environment or human consumption, the product is rejected during the trial stage itself. A final view on the commercialization of GM plants is taken only when scientific studies establish that it is safe for the human health and environment.

(e) Does not arise.