

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH & EDUCATION

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 665
TO BE ANSWERED ON 08/12/2023

AVAILABILITY OF 32MM STAPLE FIBRE DESI-COTTON SEED

665. SHRI ANEEL PRASAD HEGDE:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Desi-cotton Species 'Gossopium Arborium' is robust against insects, diseases and drought;
- (b) whether Desi cotton was earlier known for 18mm short-staple fibre, but due to efforts of scientists Dr/s. Ansankar, Deshpande, Baig, Devsarkar, Chinchane et al achieved the impossible by creating 32mm varieties from Desi-cotton;
- (c) whether it is a fact that some Desi-cotton fibers passed spinning test with spinning-consistency-index, when tested in Vardhaman Mills in the past; and
- (d) whether research to increase length of Desi-Cotton staple fibre continues, if so, details of approximate quantum of such seeds available for farmers for sowing in the next sowing season?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE & FARMERS WELFARE
(SHRI NARENDRA SINGH TOMAR)

- (a) Yes, Sir. Different studies have found that Desi cotton species '*Gossypium arboreum*' is immune to Cotton leaf curl virus disease, comparatively tolerant to sucking pests (whitefly, thrips and jassids) and diseases (bacterial blight and alternaria diseases) but susceptible to grey mildew disease. Desi cotton species also show tolerance to moisture stress.
- (b) Out of 77 *G. arboreum* cotton varieties released for commercial cultivation in various cotton growing Zones/ States of the country, four long linted varieties viz., PA 740, PA 810, PA 812 and PA 837, developed by the scientists of Vasantnao Naik Marathwada Krishi Vidyapeeth (VNMKV), Parbhani (Maharashtra) are having 28-31mm staple length; and rest 73 varieties have staple length in the range of 16-28 mm.
- (c) The VNMKV, Parbhani centre of ICAR-All India Cotton Research Project on Cotton has tested Desi cotton varieties for spinning tests including Upper half mean length, Ginning out turn, Micronaire value at ICAR-Central Institute for Research on Cotton Technology, centre at Nagpur and fibres of these varieties have passed spinning test.
- (d) The research efforts to increase length of *desi* cotton staple fibre is an on going process. During 2022-23, 570 kg seed of these varieties was produced. Sufficient amount of seed is available for farmers for sowing in the next sowing season.
