

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTIONNO. 1306
TO BE ANSWERED ON 06.12.2021

Approval of GM Cultivation

1306. SHRI GAURAV GOGOI:
SHRI DULAL CHAND GOSWAMI:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government intends to approve commercial cultivation of any genetically modified (GM) rice varieties in the country and if so, the details of the varieties of GM rice under field trial, including institution and the States conducting trial in the country at present;
- (b) whether the Government is aware that GM crop varieties undergoing field trial are contaminating organic and non-GM crops and if so, the steps taken to contain it, if not, the reasons therefor;
- (c) the steps taken to ensure monitoring and implementation of safety protocols to prevent contamination by GM crops;
- (d) the details of the steps taken to prevent illegal commercial cultivation of GM crops such as brinjal;
- (e) whether any monitoring system has been set up by the Government to restrict import of banned genetically modified seeds in the country and if so, the details thereof; and
- (f) whether hundreds of ton of restricted genetically modified seeds are being imported for agriculture in the country and if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
(SHRI ASHWINI KUMAR CHOUBEY)

- (a) to (e) Till date, the Government of India has approved only GM cotton for commercial cultivation in India and no instances of contaminating organic and non-GM crops were reported. The following guidelines are in place for ensuring monitoring and implementation of safety protocols are as below:
- i. Regulations & Guidelines for Recombinant DNA Research and Biocontainment, 2017
 - ii. Guidelines for the Environmental Risk Assessment of Genetically Engineered Plants, 2016
 - iii. Guidelines for the conduct of Confined Field Trials of Regulated, Genetically Engineered (GE) Plants, 2008
 - iv. Guidelines for the monitoring of Confined Field Trials of Regulated,

Genetically Engineered (GE) Plants, 2008

- v. Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for Confined Field Trials of Regulated, Genetically Engineered (GE) Plants, 2008
- vi. Confined Field Trials of Genetically Engineered (GE) Plants, 2015

All States/Union Territories (UTs) have been directed to constitute and strengthen State/UT Biotechnology Coordination Committees and District Level Committees for monitoring instances of illegal cultivation of GM crops including brinjal for taking appropriate action under Environment (Protection) Act, 1986. Further, Department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare has issued advisories to States to take appropriate necessary action to curb and control the spread of unapproved GM crops. Also State Governments have given the directions to all District Administration to take necessary legal steps to curb the production and selling of illegal GM crops for farming. In addition, the Seed Inspector notified under Section, 13 of the Seeds Act, 1966 and under Clause 12 of the Seeds (Control) Order, 1983 are empowered under the Environment Protection Act, 1986 to draw the seed samples of GM seeds and to test in the notified seed testing laboratories in case of sale of prohibited GM seeds.

- (f) As per the information received from Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT), Ministry of Commerce and Industry and Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, no permission for import of unapproved genetically modified (GM) seeds on bulk scale were allowed in India so far.
