

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

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 270
TO BE ANSWERED ON 01/12/2015

GM CROPS

270. SHRI K. PARASURAMAN:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE
कृषि और कृषक कल्याण मंत्री be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) has emphasized the importance of genetically engineered crops to bridge the gap between demand and supply for foodgrains in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the ICAR in its vision 2015 has identified genetically modified organisms amongst the key areas that need to be harnessed to enhance nutrients and farmers' income and if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether some groups which are opposing the cultivation of GM crops have urged the Government not to give the nod to GM Crop as many States have denied permission for GM field trials; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken by the Government in this regard?

A N S W E R

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE
कृषि और कृषक कल्याण मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री
(DR. SANJEEV KUMAR BALYAN)

- (a) Yes, Madam.
- (b) National Agricultural Research System comprising Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), Central and State Agricultural Universities (SAUs) are developing transgenic rice, sorghum, watermelon, tomato, papaya, sugarcane, groundnut, mustard, brinjal, banana, castor and potato for various economically important traits under Network Project on Transgenics in Crops.

Employing marker assisted selection, bacterial leaf blight resistant rice varieties like Improved Pusa Basmati I, Improved Samba Mahsuri, Improved Lalat, and submergence tolerant Swarna Sub-1 and quality protein maize Vivek QPM 9 have been developed. Gene specific molecular markers have been employed to develop lipoxygenase-free soybean genotypes NRC 109 and NRC 110.

(c) ICAR in its Vision 2020, Vision 2030 and Vision 2050 documents focusses the integration of the present knowledge of plant breeding, genetics, and molecular biology to realize the full potential of agricultural biotechnology. *Bt* cotton is the only transgenic crop approved for commercialization in India since 2002 after extensive evaluation and regulatory process. Yields of cotton stagnating at about 300 kg/ha from 1992-2002 rose to 523 kg/ha during 2014.

(d) & (e): Some social groups are opposing the promotion of genetically modified crops in the country. Since, agriculture being a state subject, a few states permit field trials of GM crops while most of them are not giving the permission for such trials. However, SAUs and various ICAR institutes spread almost throughout the country are actively involved in biotechnological research including the development of GM crops. The Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee in its 111th meeting decided that the applicants may be advised to obtain No Objection Certificate from the concerned State Government to carry out field trials of GM crops before granting approval for the same.
