

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:372

ANSWERED ON:24.07.2001

INDO-SWISS JOINT PROJECT FOR DEVELOPMENT OF WHEAT VARIETIES

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Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal for a joint project with Switzerland for development of new wheat varieties that are disease and drought resistant;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the extent to which the new varieties are likely to help farmers in large scale production of wheat ?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI BACHI SINGH RAWAT)

(a), (b) & (c) : The Department of Biotechnology(DBT) in collaboration with Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation(SWDC) Government of Switzerland had launched a new phase of collaboration in biotechnology since October 1999. Under this collaboration, there is no proposal to develop drought resistant wheat varieties. However, a joint research network project to develop agronomically desirable wheat lines with resistance to important fungal diseases such as leaf rust, head scab and karnal bunt using molecular markers and genetic engineering has been supported. Five research institutions and universities of India are collaborating with three Swiss research institutions in this wheat research programme. It is expected that the research would result in development of improved wheat varieties resistant to fungal diseases to increase productivity.