

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1824
ANSWERED ON:12.03.2008
GENETICALLY MODIFIED PADDY
Bose Shri Subrata

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

- (a) whether Central Approval Committee has given the permission to use genetically modified paddy in the country;
- (b) if so, details thereof;
- (c) whether the basmati rice producing areas in West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh, where the use of genetically modified paddy has been allowed are likely to be destroyed by the infection caused by the modified paddy and;
- (d) if so, the effective steps to be taken by Government to prevent the damage likely to be caused by genetically modified paddy?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA)

(a) & (b) No, Sir. However, the Genetic Engineering Approval Committee (GEAC) has approved the confined experimental field trials of genetically modified (GM) paddy developed by M/s. Maharashtra Hybrid Company, Mumbai during Rabi-2007 to generate biosafety and agronomic data at 11 locations, viz. Anand in Gujarat, Bhandara and Rajgad in Maharashtra, South 24 Parganas and Midnapur in West Bengal, Gaya in Bihar, Ranchi in Jharkhand, Davangere and Mandya in Karnataka and Tanjore and Coimbatore in Tamil Nadu.

(c) & (d) As no experimental field trials on GM Paddy are being conducted in proximity to basmati growing area, the question of destroying the basmati rice producing areas does not arise. To prevent the possible contamination due to gene flow during experimental field trials, the GEAC, in accordance with the Indian Minimum Seed Certification Standards, 1988, stipulates stringent norms which include a minimum of 200 m isolation distance as well as biological and physical barriers. The Government has also taken a decision not to permit transgenic research in crop commodities such as Basmati where international trade may be affected.