

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ATOMIC ENERGY
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:323

ANSWERED ON:10.11.2010

DEVELOPMENT OF SEED VARIETIES USING RADIATION TECHNIQUES

Singh Shri Jagada Nand

Will the Minister of ATOMIC ENERGY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has fixed any fresh target for the agricultural production by using radiation technology in next two years;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the details of seed varieties developed through radiation technique during last one year;
- (d) whether the Government proposes to use radiation technology for preservation of food articles; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY AND EARTH SCIENCES (INDEPENDENT CHARGE), PMO, PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS. (SHRI PRITHVIRAJ CHAVAN):

(a) to (e) The Department of Atomic Energy does not fix any target for increasing agriculture production using radiation technology. However, it has been carrying out extensive research in developing new mutant crop varieties, especially oil seeds and pulses. 39 crop varieties developed at Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC) were released for the use of farmers through various agricultural universities in the country. BARC on an average every year releases 2 to 3 new varieties of crop for commercial cultivation at national level. BARC has also developed technology for preservation of food, such as spices, onion, potato, rice, mangoes, etc., by radiation processing. It has two plants, one at Navi Mumbai and the other at Lasalgaon, near Nasik, Maharashtra. A breakthrough has been achieved in demonstrating commercial feasibility of radiation technology in overcoming quarantine barrier to international trade and obtaining market access. The export of radiation processed mangoes to US began in 2008. The success in this area has resulted in the Department of Atomic Energy signing more than 24 MoUs with entrepreneurs for setting up radiation processing facilities in private and cooperative sectors.