

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:5913  
ANSWERED ON:08.09.2011  
MEET ON DEMYSTIFYING CROP BIOTECHNOLOGY  
Choudhry Smt. Shruti

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

- (a) whether a meet on Demystifying Crop Biotechnology was held recently;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the outcome thereof; and
- (c) the views expressed by each of the State Governments, especially Haryana and other experts in this regard?

**Answer**

MINISTER OF STATE FOR THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING, MINISTER OF STATE FOR THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF STATE FOR THE MINISTRY OF EARTH SCIENCES (ASHWANI KUMAR)

(a) Yes, Madam. The meet on Demystifying Crop Biotechnology was held on June 27, 2011 in Hyderabad. The meet was an international media colloquium jointly conducted by the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT), Asian Media Information and Communication Center (AMIC) and the International Services for the Acquisition and Application of Agri-biotech Applications (ISAAA).

(b) The colloquium aimed to share contemporary challenges, issues and concerns related to crop biotechnology; enhance the appreciation and understanding of Asian media practitioners and researchers on crop biotechnology; and share science stories on crop biotechnology for the Asian media. The media colloquium was attended by more than 100 Asian senior media practitioners, academicians and researchers. This event was widely covered by 12 major TV-radio networks and about 40 print/electronic media releases through the Asia News International, Reuters, Press Trust of India, United News of India and Indian News Network.

(c) None of the State Governments representatives including Haryana participated in the meet so as to express their views. The experts participating in the event expressed that rigorous regulatory and safety assessment processes are a key, in view of the public's skepticism about the claims of scientists on the safety of genetically engineered foods. Public-funded initiatives should be strengthened for achieving sustainable food production, giving farmers access to transgenic seeds, and improving the lives of the poor by making major food crops more productive, nutritious and affordable. The public must be continuously engaged through multi-stakeholder dialogues on crop biotechnology for improved public policy, greater public confidence and stronger support for regulatory decisions.