

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:5508

ANSWERED ON:29.04.2013

RE INVESTIGATION OF BT. BRINJAL APPROVAL PROCESS

Panda Shri Baijayant

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

(a) whether the Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee (GEAC) has acted upon the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Agriculture's specific recommendations that Bt. Brinjal approval process be re-investigated;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the GEAC has acted upon the Committee 's specific recommendation that Bt cotton's safety to animals, based on a 2008 Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) study, be assessed; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN)

(a)&(b) Based on the testimony of one Expert that requisite number of tests was not done on Bt. Cotton and Bt Brinjal in the country, the Standing Parliamentary Committee on Agriculture has recommended that Bt. Brinjal approval process be re-investigated. The additional studies recommended by the Expert are currently only research tools and under review by international agencies and in the absence of validated methodologies and protocols, the additional studies are not prescribed by regulatory agencies in countries like even European Union, Australia and others. The GEAC is committed to follow a case by case appraisal of each GM crop event which is in accordance with internationally harmonized systems under the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, CODEX Alimentarius Commission and International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC)., Food and Agricultural Organization and Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety.

(c) &(d) As regards the report on animal feeding studies with Bt cotton seed meal conducted at Central Sheep and Wool Research Institute in Rajasthan in 2008, the Standing Parliamentary Committee on Agriculture has recommended that findings be evaluated by an expert committee comprising of eminent scientists from ICMR, pathologists, veterinarians and nutrition experts. The ICMR has constituted an Expert Committee to review the adequacy of Bt. brinjal and Bt. cotton toxicity studies. GEAC will take into consideration the findings of the Expert Committee.