

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
AGRICULTURE  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4605  
ANSWERED ON:23.04.2013  
DEVELOPMENT OF GM COTTON SEEDS  
Jindal Shri Naveen

**Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:**

- (a) whether the Union Government has released indigenously developed Genetically Modified cotton seeds;
- (b) if so, the details thereof along with the contribution of various public sector organisations/institutions in developing the said GM cotton seeds;
- (c) whether these seeds were subsequently withdrawn from the market;
- (d) if so, the details thereof along with the reasons therefor;
- (e) whether these seeds were found to have a gene, which is an intellectual property of a global agro-biotech company and in spite of it, this seed was approved by the country's regulator; and
- (f) if so, the details thereof along with the reaction of the Government thereto?

**Answer**

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SHRI TARIQ ANWAR)

- (a) Yes, Madam.
- (b) Bikaneri Narma Bt (BN Bt) cotton variety was developed by University of Agricultural Sciences, Dharwad with collaborative effort of National Research Centre on Plant Biotechnology (NRCPB), New Delhi. The Central Institute for Cotton Research (CICR), Nagpur commercialised the BN Bt cotton variety.
- (c) Yes, Madam.
- (d) Due to non-satisfactory performance of the variety in the field and reported presence of Monsanto's MON 531 event, further commercial cultivation was stopped by end of 2009.
- (e) The ICAR withdrew the Bikaneri Narma Bt variety in the year 2009 as soon as evidence became available that the seeds reportedly contained the Monsanto's cry1Ac gene (Mon 531). Subsequently the NRCPB, New Delhi and UAS Dharwad were instructed to provide the original BN Bt seeds and/or undertake purification steps to obtain the original BN Bt seeds which did not contain the Monsanto's cry1Ac (Mon 531).
- (f) Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) constituted an Expert Committee under the Chairmanship of Dr. S.K. Sopory, Vice Chancellor, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi to look into various aspects of development of BN Bt. Cotton variety. The report that has been submitted by the Committee is being looked into for way forward for appropriate action. ICAR is continuing research on cotton improvement including high density cotton cultivation, organic and desi cotton cultivation besides transgenes pyramiding.