

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4033

ANSWERED ON:15.12.2009

HIGH YIELDING VARIETIES OF CROPS

Das Shri Ram Sundar;Shankar Alias Kushal Tiwari Shri Bhisma

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether adequate funds are made available to the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) and Agricultural Universities for the research and development works on high yielding varieties of crops;
- (b) if so, the funds allocated and utilised during each of the last three years;
- (c) whether the Government has explored the potential of promoting public-private partnership in the field of biotechnology to achieve constant growth in the agriculture sector, if so, the steps taken thereon;
- (d) whether the Government proposes to create a special venture fund and develop a proper regulatory system to promote research in biotechnology and high yielding varieties of crops; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS)

(a) Yes, Madam.

(b) The allocation for 2007-08 is Rs.310.52 crores, 2008-09 is Rs.383.50 crores and 2009-10 is Rs.394 crores. The expenditure for 2007-08 is Rs.317.58 crores, 2008-09 is Rs.377.24 crores and 2009-10 is 167.64 crores (up to September).

(c),(d) & (e): Yes, Madam. The Department of Biotechnology (DBT) had launched public-private partnerships programme namely Small Business Innovation Research Initiative (SBIRI) since 2007-08 to provide support as grants and loans to small and medium companies, for pre-proof-of-concept research in biotechnology to accelerate the commercialization of biotechnologies in the healthcare, food and nutrition, agriculture and other sectors.

In the year 2007-08, a new scheme Biotechnology Industry Partnership Programme (BIPP) has been also approved by DBT for implementation in partnership with Industries for public support on a cost sharing basis. The scheme also considers projects in agriculture biotechnology particularly with reference to path-breaking research in frontier, futuristic technology areas having major economic potential and making Indian industry globally competitive.

The Government of India is in the process of setting up of a regulatory authority for biotechnology, product and processes. the Department of Biotechnology, Ministry of Science & Technology is the nodal agency to establish `National Biotechnology Regulatory Authority` (NBRA) through an act of parliament. Accordingly, a consultative group of experts have prepared draft establishment plan of NBRA and the proposed Bill is in process for consideration of the Cabinet and Parliament.