

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ATOMIC ENERGY
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2734
ANSWERED ON:05.08.2015
Genetically Modified Bananas
Chavda Shri Vinod

Will the Minister of ATOMIC ENERGY be pleased to state:

- (a) the benefits associated with Genetically Modified (GM) bananas;
- (b) the time by which the GM bananas developed by Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC) scientists are likely to be available to general public; and
- (c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken to provide the GM bananas especially to the school children?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES & PENSIONS AND PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (Dr. JITENDRA SINGH) :

- (a) Genetic engineering technique enables development of disease resistance as well as nutritional quality improvement. Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC) is developing iron biofortified banana for nutritional quality improvement. The other parameters of this genetically engineered banana plant include incorporation of Vitamin A and fungal and viral disease resistance which is undertaken in other Institutes participating in Department of Biotechnology (DBT) project on transgenic bananas.
- (b) Genetically Modified (GM) bananas under development by Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC) would be available to general public only after completion of trial and Government's approval. It is too early to give a time frame for this.
- (c) Genetically Modified bananas can be given to public or school children only after their usage has been approved by regulatory authorities (Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee (GEAC) for open field planting. The transgenic plants need to be evaluated in a contained facility initially before planting in the open field.
