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Title: Need to ensure availability of Bt. Cotton seeds to the farmers at affordable prices. – Laid.

SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI (BAPATLA): I bring to your notice the exploitation of our poor farmers by the very high sale price fixed by M/s Monsanto Company enjoying exclusive monopoly for providing technology to the farmers for Bt. Cotton seeds. The company is charging through seed companies a royalty for technology by giving it a different name because under the Indian law genes are not patentable. Each farmer has to pay about Rs. 1800/- for a 450/- gram pack of seeds, which costs only Rs. 400/- The balance is taken as 'trait' value. The licensee company adds it to be seed cost and collects the total costs from the farmers. The company has been banned in Andhra Pradesh but it is functioning in other parts of the country. The government must provide relief to our farmers and make Bt. Cotton available at affordable prices. The Patent (Amendment) Bill passed recently, may if necessary, be invoked protect farmers against such gross exploitation.