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Title:Need to carry out Tests to ensure suitability of transgene cotton seeds sold by multinationals in India.

SHRI K.P. MUNUSAMY (KRISHNA GIRI): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I wish to bring to the notice of the Union Government a dangerous situation created by the sale of a variety of cotton seeds by a multinational company in Dharmapuri district of Tamil Nadu.

An American multinational seed company known as Monsanto has set up 40 centres in India with the permission of the Government. It is selling various seeds of transgene genes variety. This company is also selling cotton seeds in Dharmapuri district of Tamil Nadu. Since this variety of cotton was not grown in India, the farmers of Dharmapuri district are in the grip of fear about the nature of these seeds.

Since terminator seeds have been successfully developed in cotton and soyabean, the farmers are afraid that the seeds sold by Monsanto could be terminator seeds. This variety of cotton is known as Bollgard. It is reported that these seeds, like terminator seeds, will affect the soil and the water resources. The farmers are not sure whether they can save seeds even for one crop.

This fear in the minds of the farmers might lead to abandoning the cotton crop. Therefore, I request the Government to direct the Indian Agricultural Research Institute and similar organisations to test all these seeds including transgene seeds sold by multinationals in the country. Only if these seeds are found to be suitable and harmless in Indian situation, they should be allowed to be sold.

I hope, the Central Government will take immediate action to alleviate the fear of the farmers.