

Regarding need to impose prohibition on use of Paraquat, a highly toxic herbicide used for weed management in crops in Telangana and other parts of the country-Laid

SHRI RAMASAHAYAM RAGHURAM REDDY (KHAMMAM): I would like to express grave concern over the continued use of Paraquat, a highly toxic herbicide across agricultural regions, particularly in Telangana. Despite being banned in over 60 countries, Paraquat remains legally available in India, leading to alarming rates of poisoning, environmental degradation, and potential food contamination. Field reports and medical studies confirm that Paraquat exposure has caused numerous fatalities, with farmers and agricultural laborers—often unaware of its hazards and lacking protective equipment—being the worst affected. In Telangana and neighboring Andhra Pradesh, Paraquat has been linked to several farmer suicides and fatal accidental poisonings. Additionally, Paraquat residues in staple crops such as wheat and pulses exceed permissible limits, posing serious public health risks. Given its irreversible health effects, environmental persistence, and the availability of safer alternatives, I urge the Hon'ble Minister for Chemicals and Fertilizers to consider a phased ban on Paraquat. Simultaneously, efforts must be made to raise awareness, promote sustainable weed management practices, and strengthen farmer protections. Swift and decisive action will safeguard lives, protect our food systems, and uphold the dignity of India's farming community.