

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1294
ANSWERED ON:30.07.2003
NANO-BIOTECHNOLOGY
S. SAIDUZZAMAN

Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the work done by Pat Mooney regarding nano-biotechnology and its threat to the health of people brought out in his publication `The Big Down` has come to the notice of the Government;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government propose to set up a high powered Scientific Task Force to look into the matter; and
- (d) if so, the details in this regards?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI BACHI SINGH RAWAT)

- (a) : The Government is aware of the publication: `The Big Down` by Mr. Pat Mooney, Executive Director, ETC Group, Canada.
- (b) : The publication covers aspects from genomes to atoms giving historical, ETC evaluation, the production risks, how will the technology work, who and where will it impact and who cares for this including scientific institutions, civil society, organizations, governments etc. The report has introduced a set of tools and techniques called Atomtechnologies, which includes nanoparticles, nanobiotechnology, nanofabrication and molecular manufacture. It describes the coming convergence of biotechnology, information technologies and cognitive sciences with nanoscale manipulation of matter as the unifying force. Several applications of nanotechnology and nanobiotechnology in the area of pharmaceuticals and healthcare have been mentioned. It will have impact on every form of work and enterprise. It has both tremendous opportunities and social and environmental risks. The impact of converging technologies at the nanoscale is either unknown or underestimated.
- (c) & (d) A Task Force on `Basic Research in Modern Biology` in the Department of Biotechnology has examined various research and development proposals on Nano-biotechnology for financial support. Areas include: Biosynthesis of Nanoparticles, Nanoparticles for diagnostic/ therapeutic use and Bionano composites. An expert committee on Nano-Science and Technology has been set-up by Department of Science and Technology for generation and understanding of new materials.