

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2043
ANSWERED ON:04.08.2000
GENETICALLY ENGINEERED FOOD
M.A. KHARABELA SWAIN

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government are aware that `Genetically Engineered` food has sneaked into this country by way of international relief to the super cyclone hit areas of Orissa;
- (b) the details of the harms this `Genetically Engineered Food` can cause to the human body; and
- (c) the steps being taken by the Government to test those food before entering it into the country and before being consumed by the people?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRIRAM CHAUHAN)

(a) The Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) had received a communication from the Ministry of Environment and Forests, Government of India, together with a copy of a reference from Research Foundation for Science Technology and Ecology enclosing analysis reports about genetically engineered corn-soya being distributed by US Government under Food Aid Programme to the victims of super cyclone in Orissa. Copy of the reference along with copy of the analysis reports were sent by the MOA to the Government of Orissa to have the contents of analysis reports examined and to send a detailed report to the MOA. Detailed report from the Government of Orissa is awaited by the MOA.

(b) & (c) : All genetically engineered life forms as well as products produced by genetic engineered organisms are controlled commodities under the Indian Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 and the Rules, 1989. The Government of India have not yet permitted any transgenic crops for commercial cultivation in the country. Scientific evaluation of transgenic crops about their safety to environment and safety to human and animal health are the main issues under study under Environment (Protection) Act before the transgenic crops are put to use for human kind. Like transgenic crops, transgenic food is also subjected to evaluation of safety to human and animal health. Further, as per available information, there has not yet been any reported adverse effect of marketed transgenic crops in any other parts of the world on human health.