

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA**

STARRED QUESTION NO:508
ANSWERED ON:02.05.2005
REPORT OF AGRICULTURAL BIOTECHNOLOGY TASK FORCE
Panda Shri Prabodh

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has accepted the report of the Agricultural Biotechnology Task Force;
- (b) if so, the main features of this report;
- (c) whether the Government has decided to implement all the recommendations of this report; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR)

(a) to (d): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (d) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 508 DUE FOR REPLY ON 2ND MAY, 2005.

(a): The Government have examined the report of the Task Force on Agricultural Biotechnology and have decided priorities for implementation. Certain other recommendations with wider implications are under consideration.

(b): The main features of the report inter-alia, include recommendations providing directions to research and development, application of biotechnology in agriculture, animal husbandry, and fisheries sector, capacity building in biotechnology, conservation and protection of centres of genetic diversity, promotion of organic farming zones, creation of biotechnology parks in each State, strengthening of regulatory/approval mechanism with a view to expedite the process of evaluation and release of products, liability and compensation, setting of National Biotechnology Regulatory Authority and promoting public awareness on matters relating to biotechnology.

(c)&(d): On the basis of Inter-ministerial consultations on the recommendations of the Task force with various Ministries/Departments, the Government has decided ten priorities for implementation. The details are enclosed in Annexure-1.

Annexure-I

Priorities for Agri-Biotechnology

1. Finalisation of National Biotech Policy by the Department of Biotechnology.
- 2 Rationalisation of approval process under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 as suggested by Prof. M.S. Swaminathan's Task Force.
- 3 Release of B1. Cotton varieties for North Zone.
- 4 Post-release monitoring to be started by Department of Agriculture & Cooperation and Indian Council of Agricultural Research.
- 5 Capacity building for post-release monitoring and training.
- 6 Public awareness campaign to be launched by the Department of Agriculture & Cooperation in association with State Agricultural Universities and other scientific organizations/institutes.
- 7 Finalising combined strategy for arresting spread of non-approved Bt. Cotton seeds.
- 8 Developing the testing facilities for Genetically Modified seeds.
- 9 To finalise Action Plan for the components relating to Agri-biotechnology in the National Biotech Policy.
- 10 Identification of crops and traits for use of application of biotechnology.