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Title: Need to impose ban on the production of Bt Brinjal, a GM food crop, in the country keeping in view its adverse impacts on health.

DR. R. SENTHIL (DHARMAPURI): I rise to bring forth my concerns over the entry of Bt Brinjal, a GM food on the Indian soil. This genetically modified Brinjal is going to be the first GM food crop in India and the first GM Brinjal ever to be commercialized in the world.

It is unfortunate that our regulatory regime in India does not insist upon a comprehensive bio-safety assessment including long term impacts for reproductive health, for carcinogenicity assessment etc. It is more alarming that no independent research is being taken up to guide our regulatory decision-making process. All decisions are now being taken based on the data supplied by the crop developers who obviously have a vested interest in the matter.

A recent official Austrian study showed that GM foods will cause reproductive health problems including infertility. There is another Italian study released last month which showed that immune systems of very old and young mice were affected with GM food diets.

Farmers as well as consumers across the country have been protesting against GM crops/foods like Bt Brinjal.

I urge upon the Government of India to pay heed to these ordinary citizens and uphold their right to safe food and food of their choice and stop the entry of GM food into the country.