

>

Title : Need to compensate the losses suffered by the farmers due to supply of sub-standard Bt. Cotton seeds by M/s Bayer Crop Science Limited in Krishna District of Andhra Pradesh.

SHRI L. RAJAGOPAL (VIJAYAWADA): I thank the Chairman for the opportunity. I would like to raise the issue about BT Cotton. In India, a lot of farmers are sowing and cultivating BT in all the uplands and mostly dry lands after the BT hybrid variety has come in. In India more than 10 lakh hectares is under cultivation by the farmers by sowing BT Cotton.

I would like to give an example. In Andhra Pradesh, in my Parliamentary Constituency, there is a company called M/s. Bayer Crop Science Limited. They have assured the farmers that they would get a yield of 16 to 18 quintals with around 90 balls per tree. But in practice, after 120 days of sowing, they could hardly get 10 balls, which would result in a yield of hardly two quintals. The yield has dropped to two quintals from 16 to 18 quintals! We raised this issue with the District Administration and the State Government.

I am also happy that our hon. Minister of State in the Ministry of Textiles, Shrimati Panabaka Lakshmi, is present here. The Government has taken up the issue with the company saying that since they have assured the farmers that it would yield 16 to 18 quintals, but the yield has dropped to two quintals. So, there has to be some proper compensation for them. I am saying this because for every acre of BT Cotton they have to invest around Rs. 45,000. Earlier, the market price used to be Rs. 3,000, and with 18 quintals the farmer used to get around Rs. 50,000 and they used to get Rs. 5,000 profit. Now, the yield has dropped to two quintal. Of course, the market rate has gone up and the market rate is around Rs. 6,000, but they are hardly getting Rs. 12,000. Hence, there is great loss to each farmer as they are losing around Rs. 35,000. M/s. Bayer Crop Science Limited says that they are not responsible, and they said that they are not responsible as they have got a yield for it.

I want the Ministry of Textiles and the Ministry of Agriculture to ensure that there is a proper mechanism and legislation in place. I am saying this because all these companies are multi-national companies, and they have advertised that they are going to get such and such yield, and innocent farmers -- thinking that they are going to get a better yield -- are buying from all these companies. So, whenever there is a drop in yield, that company should be made accountable and proper compensation has to be paid to these farmers, especially, in Vatsavai Mandal, Penuganchiprolu Mandal and Chandarlapadu Mandal of my Parliamentary constituency where farmers have cultivated BT Cotton in around 3,500 acres of land. I want the Government of India to take some action in consultation with the State Government and the District Administration so that farmers are adequately compensated.