

Title: Requests the Central Government to take steps to prevent new plant gene, terminator III developed by the United States Department of Agriculture entering into Indian traditional crops.

DR. SUGUNA KUMARI CHELLAMELLA (PEDDAPALLI): Sir, I want to draw the attention of this august House towards an important matter relating to the United States' destructive gene which is a threat to the Indian traditional crops. A new plant gene, terminator III has been developed by the United States Department of Agriculture. Terminator allows seeds to self-destruct after producing a single crop. This terminators' self destructing traits could spread through cross pollination and cause gradual extinction of India's traditional crop varieties. It is nothing short of a bio-technological warfare.

India has responded to it by banning import of the seeds containing this gene. However, there is no way of ensuring that this gene does not cross Indian borders as this can happen by accident or by design.

The United States now plan to introduce this technology into cross pollination crops as well. This will have serious consequences for Indian farmers who produce 200 million tonnes of wheat, rice and sorghum annually which are traditional crops.

I would like to request the hon. Minister for Agriculture to take necessary steps to prevent this gene entering into our traditional crops and to take strict preventive measures.