

जयराम रमेश
JAIRAM RAMESH



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MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE)
ENVIRONMENT & FORESTS
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
NEW DELHI - 110 003

Dear Shri Sharad Pawarji -

21st January 2010

My attention has been drawn to some newspaper reports today that you have said that the GEAC 's decision on the introduction of Bt-Brinjal will be final and that the Centre does not have any say in the issue. I beg to completely disagree with this view, if indeed, the newspaper reports have quoted you accurately.

GEAC may well be a statutory body but when crucial issues of human safety are involved, the Government has every right and, in fact has a basic responsibility, to take the final decision based on the recommendations of the GEAC. I understand that my predecessor Shri T.R. Baalu gave the final nod to Bt-Cotton in April 2002.

The GEAC recommendations on commercialization of Bt-Brinjal came to me on October 14th, 2009. Since Bt-Brinjal will be the first genetically modified food crop and since I am very well aware of the concerns that have been raised on this issue, I decided that I will have public consultations in seven cities - Kolkata, Bhubaneswar, Ahmedabad, Hyderabad, Bangalore, Nagpur and Chandigarh. I have also written to Chief Ministers of six important brinjal cultivating states - West Bengal, Orissa, Bihar, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka. In addition, I have sought feedback from over 50 top scientists both from India and abroad.

By February 20th, 2010, I will be in a position to take a considered view on GEAC recommendations regarding Bt-Brinjal. I will then be sharing my final view with PM as well as with you and the Health Minister.

I am sure that you will agree that in a democracy like ours, we have to take decisions that have far-reaching consequences with the greatest degree of caution, with the greatest degree of transparency and after ensuring that all stakeholders have been heard to their satisfaction. This is what I have sought to ensure ever since the GEAC recommendations reached me. I respect the GEAC and the work that it has done. However, as the Minister concerned and as a concerned Minister I am sure you will agree with me that when I say that I am personally entitled to take my own time arriving at a decision on what to do with the GEAC recommendations. I have no personal agenda whatsoever in this matter except to listen, to study and then take a decision.

With regards

Yours sincerely,

Jairam Ramesh
(Jairam Ramesh)

Shri Sharad Pawar
Minister of Agriculture
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