

[12 August, 2002]

RAJYA SABHA

department for Biotechnology/transgenics. The final release of transgenics is approved by the Ministry of Environment and Forests after their effective evaluation.

**Loss of standing crop by drought and floods**

2504. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have assessed the loss of standing crop and sowing of new crop, in the areas reeling under drought due to scanty or no rains and affected flash floods, in different States/UTs;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the steps being taken to prevent the situation becoming worst through contingency plan; and

(d) what steps were taken to avert the drought and flood situations, when there were such indications in the forecast of natural calamity?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) to (d) There are reports of serious setback in agricultural operations during the current kharif mainly due to widespread and prolonged dry spell in the South West Monsoon but in certain areas due to floods also. It will be pre-mature to assess specific losses at this stage. It is, however, estimated that there is a shortfall in area shown in respect of various crops. Union Agriculture Minister has taken a meeting of Agriculture and Relief Ministers of affected States. Central share of Calamity Relief Fund (CRF) of all affected States have been released. While there are a number of programmes for drought and floods prevention, such programmes, while affording reasonable protection to large areas, cannot altogether rule out occurrence of such natural calamities.

**Assistance to drought hit States**

2505. SHRI A. VIJAYA RAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have released any special assistance recently to the drought hit areas in the country;