

engineered organisms or cells, shall not be produced, sold, imported or used except with the approval of the Genetic Engineering Approval Committee (GEAC). The GEAC has not fixed GM certification norms for import of food products.

**Auction of tobacco**

630. SHRI NANDIYELLAIAH:  
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Andhra Pradesh Agriculture Minister had urged him for immediate market intervention by the Tobacco Board to lift the tobacco from the auction platforms;

(b) if so, whether he has pointed out that even though the auction platforms were opened on January 24, 2002, so far not even 40 per cent of stocks were lifted;

(c) whether he had given any assurance in this regard; and

(d) if so, what steps were taken by Government on the proposals made by Andhra Pradesh Agriculture Minister?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDI): (a) to (d) Yes, Sir. A proposal in this regard was considered. However, on overall consideration, it was felt that market intervention by the Tobacco Board was not warranted at that stage. As on date, around 108 million kilograms of a total estimated crop of around 115 million kilograms have already been auctioned.

**Protection to domestic tea companies**

†631. SHRI KHAN GHUFRAN ZAHIDI:  
SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN:  
SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE:  
SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN:  
SHRI V.V. RAGHAVAN:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have allowed hundred per cent foreign investment in tea plantations; if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.