

persica) at the Greater Gir Region including the Gir PA System” for an amount of Rs. 226.08 crore. The main activities proposed under the project are:

- (i) Management planning and capacity building.
- (ii) Wildlife research, education and nature awareness.
- (iii) Anti-poaching/protection activities.
- (iv) Strengthening of infrastructure.
- (v) Veterinary care.
- (vi) Strengthening staff welfare activities
- (vii) Habitat improvement.
- (viii) Addressing man-animal conflict.
- (ix) Relocation of forest dwellers including Maldharis from Gir.
- (x) Eco-tourism
- (xi) Over all O and M.

Such proposals are considered by the Central Government subject to the availability of funds and fulfillment of procedural requirements.

Receding of water bodies in NER

3230. SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government’s attention has been drawn towards the fast receding water bodies in Assam and other parts of the North-Eastern region;
- (b) how far it has affected the rain fall in the region over the last two decades; and
- (c) whether any study has been made and scheme developed, to recharge the water bodies?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) to (c) The Government has approved a programme for Repair, Renovation and Restoration of Water Bodies with any outlay of Rs. 10,000 crore in the Eleventh Plan. The programmes covers all states of the country and aims at improvement of water bodies, improvement of catchments areas of tank commands, increase in storage capacity of water bodies, ground water recharge, improvement in agriculture and increased availability of drinking water. The State Governments including the North Eastern States have been requested to submit proposals under the scheme.

Bio-safety mechanism on Bt. Brinjal

3231. SHRI M.V. MYSURA REDDY: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of bio-safety mechanism that the Ministry has on Bt. Brinjal;
- (b) whether this information is available in the public domain;
- (c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, why open air trials have been allowed in a large scale without bio-safety being cleared?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) Bt brinjal expressing *cry 1Ac* protein tolerant to fruit and shoot borer, a major pest which attacks brinjal crop, has been developed by M/s Maharashtra Hybrid Seeds Company Ltd., in accordance with the biosafety regulations prescribed under the 'Rules for the Manufacture, Use, Import and Export and Storage of Hazardous Micro-Organisms/Genetically Engineered Organisms or Cells, 1989', notified under the provisions of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986. These Rules cover the areas of research as well as activities involving manufacture, use, import, export, storage and large scale applications of Genetically Modified (GM) organisms and products made therefrom. The Rules are supported by biosafety guidelines for evaluating environmental and health safety aspects of GM products. The guidelines and protocols are updated regularly and are in line with the international norms prescribed by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, CODEX Alimentarius Commission and International Plant Protection Convention.

(b) and (c) Biosafety data for Bt. brinjal which includes environment safety assessment (pollen escape out-crossing, aggressiveness and weediness, effect of the gene on non-target organisms, presence of the protein in soil and its effect on soil micro-flora, and baseline susceptibility studies etc.) and health safety assessment (composition analysis, allergenicity and toxicological studies, and feeding studies on fish chicken, cows and buffaloes etc.) are available in the public domain and can be accessed at [http://www.envfor.nic.in/divisions/csurv/geac/geac home.html](http://www.envfor.nic.in/divisions/csurv/geac/geac%20home.html) and <http://www.igmoris.nic.in>

(d) Does not arise.

Ban on plastic bags

3232. SHRIMATI T. RATNA BAI:
SHRI SAMAN PATHAK:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is taking any steps for complete ban on plastic bags all over the country to save the environment and to save our children from many diseases;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons for not banning the plastic bags in Andhra Pradesh; and

(d) whether any new technique has been developed as an alternative to plastic?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) and (b) The manufacture, sale and use of plastic bags and recycling of plastic wastes are regulated under the Recycled Plastics Manufacture and Usage Rules, 1999 (as amended in 2003). As per these rules, manufacture, sale and use of carry bags less than 20 micron in thickness and less than 8x12 inches in size is prohibited. Exercising the