

under the natural mangrove forests. The Government of Orissa has demanded assistance from the Ministry of Environment & Forests of the Central Government for mangrove plantation in coastal areas of Kendrapara, Jagatsinghpur and Puri Districts under Management Action Plan (MAP) on Mangroves under 100% Central Assistance to save the areas from damage being caused by tidal waves. During the period from 2000-2001 to 2008-2009, an amount of Rs. 4.46 Crore has been released to the State Government of Orissa for Conservation & Management of Mangroves. During the Current Financial Year (2009-10) an amount of Rs. 83.40 lakh has been released to the State Government of Orissa for conservation and management of mangroves. The State Government of Orissa has also received an amount of Rs. 3.67 Crore from Japanese Bank of International Cooperation under Central Plan Scheme during 2009-10 for Conservation & Management of Mangroves.

(c) The mangrove plantations along with creation of greater public awareness and protection of mangrove forests are being done to maintain the ecological balance in coastal areas.

Implementation of noise regulations

1113. SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA:

SHRI N.K.SINGH:

SHRI Y.P. TRIVEDI:

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

(a) whether the Central Pollution Control Board has decided to implement noise regulations in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the noise pollution particularly in the cities is increasing and there is a need to systematically monitor it; and

(d) if so, what concrete measures would be adopted to ensure noise monitoring mechanism?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) and (b) The Central Government has recently amended the Noise Pollution (Regulation And Control) Rules, 2000 on 11th January, 2010. The said Noise Rules, 2000 require the States/UT Administration to designate an 'Authority' responsible for maintaining the ambient noise standards in respective States/UTs. The designated 'Authority' has to be an officer not below the rank of Deputy Superintendent of Police.

(c) and (d) The Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) and the State Pollution Control Boards (SPCBs)/ Pollution Control Committees (PCCs) have been carrying out sporadic noise monitoring in urban areas, mainly during festivals such as Deepawali. A few SPCBs and PCCs have initiated regular noise monitoring since 2008-09. As per available data, the laid down noise norms for respective zones (Industrial, Commercial, Residential or Silence) are exceeded at many locations. However, a definite trend can not be ascertained since data is available only for a limited period.

The Government of India has undertaken the task to introduce a National Ambient Noise Monitoring Network for systematic monitoring of ambient noise and creation of a baseline data for policy makers and implementing agencies.

Moratorium on GM foods

1114. SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA:

SHRI N.K.SINGH:

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

- (a) whether noted scientists and experts have called for a moratorium of at least eight years on GM food products in India;
- (b) if so, Government's reaction thereto;
- (c) whether Government proposes to have extensive research on GM products before considering commercial production in the country; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) Some of the State Governments, NGOs and some sections of the scientific and farming communities have expressed apprehensions on the safety of Bt brinjal and have called for extreme caution as Bt brinjal is the first Genetically Modified (GM) food crop to be introduced in the country.

(b) The Government has imposed a moratorium on commercialization of Bt brinjal event EE-I on February 09, 2010 till such time independent scientific studies establish the safety of the product from the point of view of its long-term impact on human health and environment including the rich genetic wealth existing in brinjal in the country.

(c) and (d) The Government of India is following a policy of case by case approval of GM crops. In view of various concerns related to the safety, efficacy and agronomic performance of transgenic seeds, extensive evaluation and regulatory approval process takes place before any GM crop is approved for commercial cultivation. This includes generation of relevant biosafety information and its elaborate analysis to ensure food, feed and environmental safety. The environmental safety assessment includes studies on pollen escape out-crossing, aggressiveness and weediness, effect of the gene on non-target organisms, presence of protein in soil and its effect on soil micro-flora, confirmation of the absence of terminator gene and baseline susceptibility studies. The food and feed safety studies include assessment on composition analysis, allergenicity and toxicological studies and feeding studies on fish, chicken, cows and buffaloes. In case, the transgenic crop is not found suitable for release in the environment or human consumption, the product is rejected during the trial stage itself. A final view on the commercialization of GM plants is taken only when scientific studies establish that it is safe for the human health and environment.